

[Press release: Mark Field arrives in South Korea for talks on regional and global security](#)

The minister will reaffirm the UK's commitment to work alongside South Korea and the international community to tackle the threat to regional and global security posed by North Korea. His visit comes just three weeks after the United Nations Security Council unanimously agreed sanctions against North Korea, and during biannual US-South Korea military exercises, which also include UK participation.

He will meet with his South Korean counterpart Lim Sung-nam and South Korean parliamentarians, and pay a visit to the demilitarized zone on the border between South and North Korea.

Mark Field, Minister for Asia and the Pacific, said:

The UK has been clear that we stand alongside South Korea, and our international partners in the United Nations, in condemning the actions of North Korea and the destabilising impact the regime's pursuit of nuclear and ballistic weapons has had on this region.

I am here to express our support to South Korea in person and look forward to discussions on continuing the strong relationship between our two nations – not just on security issues, but also global political, defence and economic issues.

Mr Field is in South Korea as part of a wider visit to Asia, following on from talks in China and Hong Kong. After leaving South Korea he will travel to Singapore.

Notes to editors

1. This is Mark Field's first visit to South Korea since becoming Minister for Asia and the Pacific at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in June 2017.
2. Trade in goods and services between the UK and South Korea have increased by almost 65% to £11.1bn since 2011.
3. South Korea will host the Winter Olympic Games in Pyeongchang in 2018 and four British companies (Aggreko, iLuka, Global Infusion and Foamhand) have already secured contracts to provide services valued at more than £50m to the organisers.
4. The UK has provided 25 personnel for the biannual US-South Korea military exercise 'Ulchi-Freedom Guardian' taking place between 21-31 August.

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Press release: 16 Zambians awarded Commonwealth Scholarships

On 24 August 2017, British Council Zambia on behalf of the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK (CSC) hosted a pre-departure briefing for the award recipients at the British High Commission in Lusaka.

Speaking at the event, Fergus Cochrane – Dyet OBE, British High Commissioner to Zambia said;

These sixteen, fortunate Zambians have a wonderful opportunity to study in Britain at some of the best universities in the world. The UK has considerable advantages such as English language and an open, international outlook, which means our universities attract high-calibre students from every corner of the world. Most important of all, Zambia stands to benefit from the knowledge and expertise that the sixteen will bring with them on their return home.

Wayne Harper, British Council Zambia Country Director said:

The Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship programme in Zambia is a truly global programme, with over 30,000 individuals across the Commonwealth having benefited over the years. The first scholar on our records from Zambia is from 1964, and over six hundred Zambians have gone to the UK under the scheme since then. These scholars represent some of the brightest and most dynamic Zambians in the country, and as the British Council we're very proud that we've been able to assist in the development of their careers and their ability to contribute to the development of Zambia.

The programme is funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and is administered by the British Council and the Association of Commonwealth Universities in the UK (ACU). To date, over 629 Zambians have benefited from Commonwealth awards, many of them returning to contribute to Zambia's development and reaching the highest levels of their profession.

Commonwealth Scholarships, which are open to citizens of the Commonwealth, have been running for over fifty years. The scholarships are targeted at individuals with intellectual ability, leadership potential and a personal commitment to development, providing them with study opportunities in other Commonwealth countries. The scholarship programme aims to improve skills in the key sectors which drive country development and expose the beneficiaries to international networks.

The sixteen scholarship beneficiaries were congratulated at the British High Commission in Lusaka as they embark on Master's and PhD programmes at universities across the UK in a variety of disciplines including engineering, public health, economics, media & communication, education and agriculture science among others. Notably, three of the sixteen scholars have been awarded PhD scholarships, which will provide three years of full support towards the completion of a doctoral postgraduate qualification at a UK university

Further details

- The British Council is the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. We create international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and build trust between them worldwide.
 - For more information, please visit the [British Council UK website](<http://www.britishcouncil.org>) and [British Council Zambia website](#)
 - You can also keep in touch with the British Council through [Twitter](#), [Blog](#) and [Facebook](#).
 - Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships in developing Commonwealth countries are funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Scottish Government (for developed Commonwealth countries), in conjunction with UK universities, with the aim of contributing to the UK's international development aims and wider overseas interests, supporting excellence in UK higher education, and sustaining the principles of the Commonwealth.
 - For more detail visit the [Commonwealth Scholarships website](#)
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[News story: Home Office publishes second report on statistics collected under exit checks programme](#)

As part of legislation introduced through the Immigration Act 2014, carriers and port operators in the aviation, maritime and international rail industries were given the power to carry out embarkation checks. Since 8 April 2015 departure data has been collected on all scheduled commercial services departing the UK from air and sea ports and from international rail stations except those services not within the scope of the exit checks programme.

The analysis in the report focuses on individuals who had both valid leave and were identified as having entered the UK after April 2015, when the exit checks programme was introduced.

Brandon Lewis, Immigration Minister, said:

The Home Office introduced exit checks in 2015 to provide more comprehensive information on travel movements across the UK border.

This information has already been invaluable to the police and security services who have used it to help track known criminals and terrorists, supporting wider work taking place across government and law enforcement.

The report found that among the 1.34 million visas granted to non-EEA nationals which expired in 2016/17, 96.3 per cent departed in time.

Brandon Lewis said:

Today's report also gives us a more comprehensive picture of the compliance of visa holders, clearly showing that the vast majority of people are following immigration rules and that the action we're taking to clamp down on illegal immigration is working.

Exit checks is a long-term programme and the data collected will continue to be assessed and analysed to ensure that they become more robust and extensive over time.

Read the [second publication into exit checks](#).

News story: New Home Office Chief Scientific Adviser appointed

Professor Aston's role will be to ensure that departmental decisions are informed by the best science and engineering evidence and advice. The Chief Scientific Adviser offers advice directly to ministers and officials and works together with the [Chief Scientific Advisers'](#) network to advise on issues that cut across government.

Professor Aston's appointment follows the retirement of Professor Bernard Silverman earlier this year. He will join the Home Office on 4 September from the University of Cambridge, where he is Professor of Statistics.

Professor Aston specialises in applied statistics but will provide advice on a range of issues at the Home Office. He was, until recently, a trustee of the Alan Turing Institute, and has previously spent much of his career working in the United States and Taiwan.

Speaking ahead of starting his new role, Professor Aston said:

I am honoured and privileged to be joining the Home Office as its Chief Scientific Adviser. I'm looking forward to working with the scientific community to understand the issues facing the Department over the coming years and identify how science, engineering and analysis can help to overcome those challenges.

Patsy Wilkinson, Second Permanent Secretary at the Home Office, said:

Professor Aston brings with him a wealth of experience that will be of great value in ensuring the work we do to keep our country safe and secure continues to be supported by the latest scientific advice and research.

Professor Sir Mark Walport, the Government Chief Scientific Adviser, said:

Having access to high-quality expert scientific advice is critical to every government department. I am delighted to welcome someone with Professor Aston's expertise to the Chief Scientific Advisers' network and look forward to working with him.

Press release: Dorset farmer given suspended prison sentence for burning rubbish

A Dorset man has received a six-month suspended prison sentence and been banned from working in the waste industry for five years after burning waste at a site near Poole.

Environment Agency officers visited French's Farm, Watery Lane, Upton on 17 August 2015 to check whether David House had complied with a formal notice to remove illegal waste from the site. Earlier checks revealed the farm was being used for the illegal storage and disposal of domestic and commercial waste.

Inquiries revealed House, a tenant farmer, had been disposing of waste by burning at the site since 2013. In fact, the agency had evidence from reports of 64 fires during a five-year period at the site. Dorset Fire and Rescue dealt with 11 fires within six months in 2015.

During interview, House claimed he had given permission to others to dump and burn waste and promised to clear the site within a month. This was not done. In recognition of ill health, it was decided House would be given a caution as long as he removed the waste by a set deadline. Instead, waste fires began again and, despite being told not to, House spread the ash across his land. Tests revealed the ash contained arsenic, cadmium and lead.

During a second interview, House flippantly introduced himself as former Coronation Street character Ena Sharples before blaming others for the waste on his land.

Appearing at Bournemouth Crown Court, House pleaded guilty to knowingly causing the operation of a regulated facility without authority and disposing of controlled special waste in a manner likely to cause harm to human health.

He was given a six-month prison sentence, suspended for 15 months, and made the subject of a Criminal Behaviour Order that prevents him from being involved in the collection, transportation or disposal of waste from any premises.

Under the order, House is banned from setting or lighting any fire in the open for the purpose of burning controlled waste without obtaining permission, in advance and in writing, from the Environment Agency. He is also prohibited from importing or allowing any person in a vehicle to import or bring any waste onto any land, business premises or residential premises of which he has control or is the occupier. The ban runs for five years.

An Environment Agency spokesperson said:

While the vast majority of waste sites we regulate are well run and provide a much needed waste management service, we recognise there's an issue with a small number of operators who break the rule of their permit.

We tried to work with Mr House to rectify issues and to ensure he was operating within the law but to no avail. We will prosecute those willingly found flouting the law by undertaking illegal activity and causing harm to the environment and human health.

House was previously prosecuted for assaulting an Environment Agency officer who was trying to photograph waste at his site during a separate hearing in December 2016.

Waste crime can cause serious pollution to the environment put communities at risk and undermines legitimate business and the investment and economic growth that go with it.

If you see waste crime report it by calling our incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Editor's notes

House pleaded guilty to one count of operating a regulated facility without a permit under sections (38(1)(a) & 12(1)(a) of Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010 at Bournemouth Magistrates Court on 11 August 2017.

House pleaded guilty to disposal by burning under sections (33(1)(C) and (6) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 at Bournemouth Magistrates Court on 11 August 2017.