

News story: 100 years on, Defence Secretary and members of the Armed Forces attend Passchendaele commemorations

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon joined The Prince of Wales, The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, The King and Queen of Belgians, Prime Minister Theresa May, and other dignitaries at a commemoration at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Tyne Cot Cemetery.

The Tyne Cot cemetery is situated on the former battlefields of the Ypres Salient, within sight of the town of Ypres and holds 12,000 graves with 35,000 names on the memorial wall. The service reflected the story and experiences of those who fought in the Third Battle of Ypres and was watched by descendants and members of the public.

The battle began 100 years ago today on 31 July 1917 and was a major engagement in the First World War, claiming the lives of around 275,000 British and Commonwealth military personnel and around 200,000 German lives.

The Chief of the Defence Staff, Joint Force Commander and heads of the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force also attended the ceremony. A Guard of Honour was provided by the 1st Battalion Irish Guards. Musical support was provided by the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Plymouth, the Band of the Welsh Guards and the Central Band of the RAF.

The Band of the Welsh Guards and the Central Band of the RAF at the Tyne Cot Cemetery

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

These services provide us with the time to reflect on the sacrifice not just of the thousands of British and Commonwealth troops who gave their lives, but of the men on all sides who did not return home. This was a battle which touched communities across Europe and it is a privilege to be here in Belgium to stand as friends with the representatives of all the countries who took part in the Battle – friends who continue to be strong allies.

Earlier in the day Defence Secretary, Sir Michael Fallon also met with Belgian Defence Minister Vandeput to discuss security and defence cooperation between the two countries. Their meeting highlighted the enduring ties between the UK and Belgium, particularly the UK's commitment to NATO.

The Defence Secretary later toured the Esterline factory in Kortrijk, which specialises in display screens for use in military aircraft.

In the afternoon, a National Service of Remembrance took place at the Welsh Memorial in Flanders organised by the Welsh Government's First World War Programming Committee. This Service of Remembrance commemorated 100-years since the 38th (Welsh) Division attacked the German held frontline on the Pilckem Ridge at the beginning of the Third Battle of Ypres.

News story: VMD's Accredited Internet Retailer Scheme (AIRS) 5th Anniversary

The VMD's Accredited Internet Retailer Scheme (AIRS) has now been running for 5 years since its launch on 25 May 2012.

AIRS was developed in response to the general public's concerns about buying veterinary medicines over the internet. The aim of the scheme is to provide assurance to the public and professional keepers of animals, that by purchasing their veterinary medicines from an accredited internet retailer they are:

- buying the medicines from a reputable, UK-based retailer
- at less risk of buying unauthorised, inappropriate or ineffective medicines for their animals
- confident that the retailer meets the requirements of the Scheme and the law

There are now 41 accredited websites operated by 32 businesses and further applications are in the pipeline. Companies whose websites have been accredited are diverse and include some well-known organisations.

An [up to date list of accredited retailers](#) is available.

We have worked closely with retailers to explain the assessment criteria and what changes they need to make to their websites for compliance with both AIRS and the Veterinary Medicines Regulations. Whilst doing this, the VMD has built some very good working relationships with retailers and has gained a better understanding about how internet businesses operate. We have used this information to develop our guidance and to help applicants understand how to meet the accreditation standards.

With the aims of the scheme in mind, we reviewed its requirements in 2016 and made a number of changes, in particular:

- Accreditation is now focussed on the retail supply of authorised veterinary medicines (classes POM-V, POM-VPS and NFA-VPS) only
- Non-medicinal products are no longer included in the assessment. Instead, applicants have to declare that they do not make medicinal claims for non-medicinal products on their websites

- Applicants have to acknowledge that continued accreditation is contingent on a commitment to promptly correct all non-compliances brought to their attention

We believe that these changes have simplified the accreditation process whilst maintaining the appropriate controls on the sale of medicines by internet retailers.

AIRS is open to all UK-based registered veterinary practice premises, registered pharmacies and approved SQP retailers that supply POM-V, POM-VPS and NFA-VPS veterinary medicines online. Membership is voluntary and its free.

Retailers who meet the accreditation criteria display the special 'VMD Accredited Retailer' logo with their unique accreditation number [image of logo]

If you wish to apply to become an AIRS member, [application forms and other guidance is available](#)

News story: Digital Outcomes and Specialists 1 expires on 2 September 2017

If you're a buyer and you published requirements on the framework before 24 February 2017, you need to award the contract to the successful supplier before 2 September.

You'll need to [use the Digital Outcomes and Specialists 1 call-off contract](#).

You're not affected by the expiry of Digital Outcomes and Specialists 1 if you published requirements on the Digital Marketplace before 24 February and have signed the contract with the successful supplier.

If you published your requirements on the Digital Marketplace on or after 24 February, you will continue to award your contracts using the [Digital Outcomes and Specialists 2 call-off contract](#).

Email enquiries@digitalmarketplace.service.gov.uk if you have any questions.

Press release: Ciarán Maxwell sentencing

Speaking after the sentence was delivered, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

I pay tribute to the police and other agencies in successfully bringing this case before the courts. This has undoubtedly saved lives.

A large volume of dangerous material was seized and this significant jail sentence is an indication of the harm that this individual posed.

News story: Merchant ordered to pay £4,700 for buying fish while unregistered

Lancashire company pleads guilty to buying fish without appropriate MMO registration

Representatives of Dockside Ltd, a company that owns a wet fish shop in Fleetwood, Lancashire, were ordered to pay £4,715.27 by Blackpool Magistrates Court on 26 July 2017.

The company pleaded guilty to purchasing first-sale fish directly from a fishing boat other than as a registered buyer, contrary to regulation 8 of the Registration of Fish Buyers and Sellers and Designation of Fish Auction Sites Regulations 2005.

The court heard how the Marine Management Organisation acted after being made aware the company had been purchasing fish from a number of vessels without being a registered buyer with the MMO. Upon investigation marine officers found the company had purchased £18,487 of fish between April 2014 and September 2016 while being an unregistered buyer of first-sale fish.

The company was fined £2,000 and ordered to pay an additional £2,545.27 in costs and a victim surcharge of £170.

The Registered Buyers and Sellers Scheme is designed to help ensure that fish is traceable from net to plate and to monitor and protect fish stocks. The MMO has [produced a guide](#) on the regulations for buying and selling fish.