

Press release: Met Office and DOST PAGASA partners to enhance weather services

The UK Met Office and the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (DOST PAGASA) established a three-year collaboration agreement on scientific weather-related research to improve weather and climate services. Last July 21, 2017, PAGASA Administrator, Dr. Vicente Malano, and Met Office Director for Meteorological Science, Dr. Simon Vosper, signed the agreement, which also marks the official launch of the Weather and Climate Science for Service Partnership (WCSSP) Southeast Asia Programme in the Philippines. The UK is investing an indicative amount of £2 million (PHP 130 million) with the Philippines providing an equivalent contribution.

Filipino and British researchers will work together to understand more about the region's severe weather conditions as communities in the Philippines have to endure periods of torrential rain, flooding, landslides, high winds and thunderstorms. Improving weather forecasts translates to effective and timely advice protecting Filipinos from the damaging effects of floods, typhoons and other high-impact events.

British Ambassador Asif Ahmad said:

With our experience in typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), we've learned that the best way to address the challenges of natural hazards is by working together. This partnership leverages on the expertise and resources of the UK and the Philippines to deliver effective weather services that will protect lives and livelihoods in the Philippines and South East Asia.

WCSSP SEA Philippines is part of the UK – Philippines Newton Agham Programme. DOST Secretary Fortunato T. de la Peña has recognised the programme's contribution since it began in 2014 saying:

The Newton-Agham Programme is a chance for our local scientists to thrive and progress through scholarships and research collaborations, reinforcing the development of their scientific fields which is crucial in our efforts to generate innovations and to provide creative sustainable solutions to present and future problems that we face. The Newton-Agham partnership allows us to fast track progress with the collaboration of our partners from the UK, helping us contribute to socioeconomic development through science, technology, and innovations.

The event was held at the Amihan Conference Room, PAGASA Central Office, Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Newton Fund

The Newton Fund builds scientific and innovation partnerships with 18 partner countries to support their economic development and social welfare, and to develop their research and innovation capacity for long-term sustainable growth. It has a total UK Government investment of £735 million up until 2021, with matched resources from the partner countries. The Newton Fund is managed by the UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and delivered through 15 UK Delivery Partners, which include the Research Councils, the UK National Academies, the British Council, Innovate UK and the Met Office.

In the Philippines, the programme is known as the Newton Agham (Science) Programme to reflect the collaboration between the UK and the Philippines in science, research and innovation. UK delivery partners and the UK Government, through its embassy, works with Philippine science and innovation institutions and funders, such as the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and the Department of Agriculture to co-develop and implement programmes that strengthen science and innovation capacity and create solutions to development challenges in the Philippines and in the region.

The UK delivery partners presently working in the Philippines include the British Council, Royal Academy of Engineering, Medical Research Council (MRC), Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) Research Councils UK (RCUK), Innovate UK, and the UK Met Office. Priority areas in the Philippines are: health and life sciences, improving environmental resilience, energy security, future cities, agritech, and digital, innovation and creativity.

Weather and Climate Science Services Partnerships Southeast Asia (WCSSP Southeast Asia) WCSSP Southeast Asia is a regional programme currently involving three partner countries: the Philippines and Malaysia. The partnership is led in the Philippines by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA), in Malaysia by the National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA), and in Indonesia by Indonesian Agency for Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics (BMKG). This project aims to jointly develop and improve underpinning capability in global and regional forecasting systems, and advance the understanding of high-impact weather events in order to provide better advice of high impact weather events and mitigate the socio-economic impact of these events.

WCSSP SE Asia – Philippines: Project Objective

The Met Office will work collaboratively with institutions in the Philippines and the UK to engage in scientific weather related research and to collaborate on the development of improved processes to provide advice related to high impact weather events.

The overarching aims of this project are to:

1. improve the understanding of the impact of large scale atmospheric processes on the weather and climate of SE Asia and the Philippines
2. assess, develop and improve convective scale models (local fine scale models) in order to make better forecasts of high impact weather over SE Asia and in particular for the Philippines
3. improve the processes which translate weather forecast models into advice that can help mitigate against high impact weather in the Philippines at a range of lead-times from hours to months
4. Ensure that the requirements of the users of weather forecasts influence the science carried such that advances of weather forecasts meet the needs of the users

WCSSP SE Asia Philippines: Work Packages There will be 3 work packages for WCSSP SE Asia to deliver the above goals:

1. Global scale science – improve the understanding of the impact of large-scale atmospheric processes on the weather of SE Asia and the representation of this understanding in global models.
2. Regional scale science – improve the understanding of regional to local scale processes in SE Asia and develop better convective-scale weather forecast models for SE Asia.
3. Improving advice and understanding needs – understand user needs, develop applications that support these needs and ensure the science in other work packages directly helps mitigate against high impact weather (HIW) in SE Asia, and in the Philippines particularly.

Press release: Director of Labour Market Enforcement warns rogue bosses of plans to use powers to jail worst offenders

Director of Labour Market Enforcement Sir David Metcalf today (25 July) warned rogue employers he would be consulting on how to make full use of powers to jail the worst offenders.

[Sir David Metcalf](#) was appointed in January 2017 to oversee a government crackdown on exploitation in the workplace by setting the strategic priorities for the government's 3 enforcement agencies:

- HMRC's National Minimum Wage (NMW) enforcement team
- the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA)
- the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate (EAS)

Publishing his [introductory report](#), Sir David said he would work with the government's enforcement bodies to:

- better tackle illegal practices by implementing labour market enforcement undertakings and orders, which came into force in November 2016 and carry a maximum 2-year prison sentence for serious or repeat offences
- identify how best to ensure large employers' supply chains do not breach labour market laws, particularly in the fashion, construction and cleaning sectors
- review the effectiveness of current labour market enforcement efforts

Over the coming months Sir David will consult business and worker representatives, industry bodies and enforcement action groups ahead of publishing his first full labour market enforcement strategy later this year.

New [enforcement statistics](#) also released today revealed the government identified record back pay for workers, with almost £11 million for 98,000 workers in 2016 to 2017.

Sir David said:

Tackling labour market abuses is an important priority for the government and I am encouraged it has committed record funds to cracking down on exploitation.

Over the coming months I will be working with government enforcement agencies and industry bodies to better identify and punish the most serious and repeat offenders taking advantage of vulnerable workers and honest businesses.

The report is published alongside this year's National Minimum and Living Wage enforcement statistics. The figures show in 2016 to 2017 HMRC's enforcement teams identified a record £10.9 million in back pay for 98,150 of the UK's lowest paid workers – a 69% increase on those helped last year.

Businesses who failed to pay workers at least the legal minimum wage were also fined £3.9 million, with employers in hospitality and retail sectors among the most prolific offenders.

Business Minister Margot James said:

This government is firmly on the side of hard-working people and we are determined to stamp out any workplace exploitation, from minimum wage abuses to modern slavery.

While the majority of employers create a fair and safe environment for their workers, there are a small minority of rogue employers who break the law and we will use all enforcement measures at our disposal to crack down on labour market abuses.

Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability Sarah Newton said:

I welcome the director's introductory report which recognises the importance of a collaborative approach across enforcement agencies.

I am pleased that we have extended the reach and budget of the GLAA as it will enable them to do even more, using new powers to search premises, seize evidence, and arrest those who mistreat workers.

The new powers are working, multiple arrests have already been made, including for modern slavery offences, and I am confident that GLAA officers will continue to disrupt the unscrupulous criminals who exploit the most vulnerable.

The report comes after Matthew Taylor published his [independent review into modern employment practices](#) to achieve "good quality work for all". The government will study this review carefully over the summer and respond in detail later in the year.

Sir David will start consulting with stakeholders ahead of publishing his first full strategy later this year. To contribute please email directorsoffice@lme.gsi.gov.uk.

[Press release: UK Government Minister calls for urgent progress to address rural Wales' mobile 'not spots'](#)

The time has come to put all four corners of Wales on an equal footing when it comes to the standard of its mobile infrastructure, Wales Office Minister Guto Bebb will say when he visits the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show today (25 July 2017).

One year on since the Minister rallied the cries at the Showground for cross Government and industry action to address mobile connectivity issues in rural Wales, Mr Bebb will take the opportunity to amplify the calls for the Welsh Government to use the levers at its disposal to ensure more remote communities in Wales can enjoy a good mobile experience.

UK Government in Wales Minister Guto Bebb said:

The UK Government and businesses have been clear about the importance of good mobile connectivity for the future prosperity of Wales' rural economy.

Since taking office, the Secretary of State for Wales and I have made it a priority to pull partners together to tackle the very real issue of mobile 'not spots' across the country. That is why we hosted an industry summit at the start of this year to address the challenges and to find a solution to the problem. We now need action.

The planning system plays an important role in supporting service providers and communities to ensure that the infrastructure for supporting mobile connectivity is delivered in the right locations in a cost effective manner.

The UK Government has introduced mobile planning reforms in England which came into force in November 2016, which included new rights to build taller masts.

Mr Bebb added:

The UK Government is working to create an environment where the consumer can expect high quality connectivity where they live, work and travel.

And while we will not relent on that ambition for Wales, we cannot achieve this goal in isolation. Although I am pleased to see that the Welsh Government has been undertaking research in respect of telecoms masts and permitted development rights in Wales, it is now time that they bring forward their own mobile planning reforms to support mobile infrastructure roll-out in Wales which are long overdue.

During his visit to the Royal Welsh Show, Mr Bebb will also meet with Young Farmers, the Welsh Language Commissioner and meet with farming unions to discuss the issues and challenges facing the sector as Britain prepares to exit the EU.

ENDS

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY

Wales Office Minister Guto Bebb will visit the Royal Welsh Show on Tuesday 25 July and will be available for interview on request.

Please contact Lynette Bowley at the Office of the Secretary of State for Wales on 029 2092 4204 to arrange.

Press release: Major new cyber security innovation centre for London

- Will see established firms working alongside cutting-edge startups
- Big boost for capital's booming tech sector which has had £5.6bn investment this year
- London is also home to newly created National Cyber Security Centre

Major new cyber security innovation centre for London

London will cement its place as a world-leader in the fight against cyber attacks and threats with an investment of up to £14.5 million in a new innovation centre to develop the next of generation of cyber security technology to help keep the nation safe.

A competition to develop and design the new centre has been launched by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

The investment will be made over the next three years to bolster the UK's cyber security defences and help make the UK the best place to start and grow a digital business and the safest place to be online.

The innovation centre will see government bringing together large firms to work hand in hand with innovative startups and industry experts to develop the new technologies businesses will need to protect themselves. This will help make sure the UK's entrepreneurs are creating the solutions the market needs and securing crucial investment.

It will give startups access to expert technical mentoring, business support and advice to help them to grow in their early stages and contribute to the UK's thriving £22 billion cyber security sector.

Minister for Digital Matt Hancock said:

London is one of the world's most important tech sectors, with a record £5.6 billion investment in the industry in the past six months and a new tech firm formed every hour in the capital.

Our investment in a new cyber innovation centre will not only cement the city's position as a world leader but also boost the whole country by giving UK firms access to the latest cyber technology and allowing start-ups to get the support they need to develop.

The new centre will build on London's thriving digital start-up scene with one tech company estimated to be formed every hour in the capital. The city is also home to the headquarters of the newly created National Cyber Security Centre – a part of GCHQ – which opened earlier this year.

It is one of two new centres being developed to help make sure UK firms have access to the latest cyber technology to secure their businesses.

An innovation centre in Cheltenham opened earlier this year with the launch of the GCHQ Cyber Accelerator programme. Seven start-ups have so far graduated from the GCHQ Accelerator with a competition to find the next cohort due to close on 9 August.

In the last few weeks London has also been confirmed as leading a host of new research projects to exploring how society can benefit from the power of interconnected devices while remaining safe, secure and resilient.

The projects are part of a £25m national investment over three years and are funded by the PETRAS Research Hub (led by UCL), as part of the Government-funded IoT UK research and innovation programme, as well as Lloyds Register Foundation, industry and public sector organisations.

Notes to editors

Media enquiries – please contact the DCMS News and Communications team on 020 7211 2210 or out of hours on 07699 751153.

DCMS has published an Invitation to Tender for a cyber innovation centre in London.

The innovation centre is expected to open in early 2018.

This initiative is part of the Government's £1.9 billion investment to significantly transform the UK's cyber security. The 2016-2021 National Cyber Security Strategy sets out how the UK Government will deliver a UK that is secure and resilient to cyber threats; prosperous and confident in the digital world. The National Cyber Security Programme managed by the Cabinet Office coordinates the work undertaken to implement the UK's National Cyber Security Strategy.

Sources: Tech Nation 2017 and PitchBook data sourced by London and Partners.

[News story: Defence Secretary visits the nation's future Flagship](#)

The Defence Secretary landed by Merlin helicopter on the deck of the new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, which is currently on sea trials off the coast of Scotland. He met with members of the crew and thanked them for their contribution to UK defence.

While addressing the Ship's Company, Sir Michael announced the Britain's

second aircraft carrier, HMS Prince of Wales, will be officially named at a ceremony in Rosyth on 8th September 2017.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

Our carrier programme is a clear demonstration of British power and commitment to our global standing. With two aircraft carriers we will have one available at all times, providing a world-class carrier strike capability. They offer a prodigious promise to future generations of our determination to continue fronting up to aggression for years to come.

The magnificent HMS Queen Elizabeth provides us with power on a scale we have never seen before. Protecting us for the next half a century, she will be a highly versatile and potent force, capable of both humanitarian and disaster relief and high-end war fighting.

The Defence Secretary landed by Merlin helicopter on the deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Four weeks ago today HMS Queen Elizabeth sailed for the first time from Rosyth, under the authority of the Aircraft Carrier Alliance, which is responsible for building and delivering the ship to the Royal Navy. Celebrating a number of firsts as we bring the ship to life, she has now had her first helicopter landing, first passenger boat transfer and first port call in Invergordon. The Ship's Company, a crew of over 700 Royal Navy and 200 industry personnel, have settled in well to the routine of ship's life.

The initial period of sea trials, expected to last around six weeks, will test the fundamentals of the ship. The trials are monitoring speed, manoeuvrability, power and propulsion, as well as undertaking weapons trials and additional tests on her levels of readiness. [Last week the Defence Secretary announced the name of the first Type 26](#), HMS Glasgow, as part of the new City class frigates that will form the backbone of the Royal Navy until the 2060s.

HMS Queen Elizabeth is expected to enter Portsmouth to be handed over to the Royal Navy later this year.

The Defence Secretary landed by Merlin helicopter on the deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth.