

News story: Joint Forces Command enjoy successful military exercise

Government personnel recently took part in Exercise Joint Horizon 17 (JH17), a real world 'mission rehearsal' of a government response to a complex crisis in the Levant.

The exercise confirmed the capabilities of a cross-government co-operation to deal with a complex crisis involving an evacuation of non-combatants who required military support.

The exercise included the rapid deployment of Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Teams to Lebanon and Jordan. It involved the activation of the Joint Contingency headquarters in British Forces Cyprus, with other personnel based in Northwood headquarters and Al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar. The mission scenario involved the evacuation of non-combatants from Beirut and military support to a humanitarian disaster in Jordan. The complexity of the exercise was increased by the need to protect forces and evacuees from violent extremist organisations.

A huge range of personnel took part, including staff from:

Colonel Kenyon working during the exercise. Crown Copyright. Photo: Lee Goddard. All rights reserved.

The UK Ambassadors to Beirut and Amman also joined in the exercise. Colleagues in the Standing Joint Force Logistic Component provided subject matter expertise and resilience.

Brigadier Charlie Stickland, Chief Joint Force Operations, said:

JFHQ are now better prepared, institutionally and physically, to cope with our most likely and most dangerous mission. Critically JH17 was enabled by our real world day to day relationships with cross government partners and agencies. In the future the mutual understanding, relationships and shared assessment of a real world problem developed on this exercise will pay dividends for UK crisis responses.

The exercise began with an Academic Forum in Lancaster House. Partners from across Whitehall and representatives from the Joint Force Lead Elements considered how they interact during crisis as part of a 'one government' approach.

News story: Prime Minister Appoints Sir Michael Hintze, Björn Savén, Sir Peter Stothard and Rachel Wang as Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery.

Sir Michael Hintze

Sir Michael is a businessman and philanthropist. He is the founder, chief executive and senior investment officer of CQS, a London-based global multi-strategy asset manager. Prior to establishing CQS, he worked at CSFB, Goldman Sachs and Salomon Brothers, having previously been an electrical design engineer and served as an army officer in the Australia.

In the charitable sector, The Hintze Family Charitable Foundation has provided funding to over 200 charities. Trinity Hospice, the Royal Naval and Royal Marines Charity, the University of Oxford Centre for Astrophysical Surveys, the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Old Vic Theatre in London are among those charities which have received support. Michael is a Trustee of the Institute of Economic Affairs, Vice Patron of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, and formally a Trustee of the National Gallery. Michael was made a Papal Knight (a Knight Commander of the Order of St. Gregory) in 2005 and Knight Grand Cross in 2008. In 2009, he and his wife Dorothy received The Prince of Wales Award for Arts Philanthropy. In 2013, he was made a Member of the Order of Australia and in June 2013, Michael was awarded a knighthood in the Queen's Birthday Honours for his philanthropic services to the arts.

Michael holds a BSc in Physics and Pure Mathematics and a BEng in Electrical Engineering both from the University of Sydney. He also holds an MSc in Acoustics from the University of New South Wales, an MBA from Harvard Business School and received a DBA (honoris) from the University of New South Wales.

Björn Savén

Björn Savén is Chairman of IK Investment Partners Limited. He is also Chairman of IKARE as well as deputy Chairman of the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in London. He was Chief Executive of IK Investment Partners since it started in 1989 until 2010. Previous corporate roles include twelve years with the Esselte Group (1976-1988) in Sweden, the UK and the USA as well as two years at Gulf Oil (1972-74). Mr Savén holds an MBA from Harvard Business School (1976) and a degree from Stockholm School of Economics (1972).

Björn has held various non-executive directorships including Nordea Bank, Orkla, Alfa-Laval (deputy Chairman), Konecranes (Chairman) and Vattenfall. He was deputy chairman of the Royal Swedish Engineering of Sciences Academy.

Björn currently he serves as a Trustee at Tommy's (the UK pre-natal care charity) and at the Heart/Lung Foundation of Sweden. He holds honorary doctorates from the Stockholm School of Economics and Business (2010), the Swedish School of Economics and Business in Helsinki (1999), from the Institute of Technology at Lund University (2013) and from the Bulgarian Science Academy (2015) where he is also a fellow. Furthermore, he is an Honorary Fellow at Harris Manchester College at Oxford University where he also holds an M.A.

Sir Peter Stothard

Sir Peter Stothard is an author and former Editor of The Times (1992-2002) and the Times Literary Supplement (2002-16). He was Chair of Judges for the Man Booker Prize for fiction (2012) and holds the President's Medal of the British Academy (2012). His books include the trilogy of diaries, On the Spartacus Road (2010), Alexandria (2013) and The Senecans (2016). He is an Honorary Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford.

Rachel Wang FRSA

Rachel Wang is an award-winning black British filmmaker with fifteen years experience producing digital content for museums and galleries. Rachel is the founder of Chocolate Films, a video production company based in Battersea where she oversees the production of factual content for a wide range of clients including National Gallery, TATE and Museum of London. Rachel is passionate about exploring portraiture and discovering human stories. She is currently spearheading the largest ever documentary series produced about a city; www.1000Londoners.com is an award-winning web series which comprises 1000 short video portraits of the most diverse range of people who identify themselves with the city. Rachel sits on the panel for Film London's Film Hub, contributing to policy and strategy for promoting non-mainstream cinema. As a Freeman of the City, she is an active member of the Guild of Entrepreneurs. In July 2017 she is to be presented with an Honorary Degree in from Middlesex University's Business School. Rachel studied at Bristol University and the College of Law, becoming SFA registered when she worked in the City as a Corporate Financier. Rachel is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery are not remunerated. This appointment has been made in accordance with the OCPA Code of Practice. It is a requirement of the Code that political activity by those appointed is declared. Björn Savén and Rachel Wang have declared that they have not carried out any political activity. Sir Peter Stothard has declared that he canvassed on behalf of the Hampstead and Kilburn Conservative Party candidate during the 2015 General Election. Sir Michael Hintze has declared that he has made recordable donations to the Conservative Party over the last five years – details of which can be obtained from the Electoral Commission website.

[Delay in the issue of rate bills](#)

There will be a delay in the issue of rate bills for 2017/2018. Plans are being put in place to allow bills to be sent out in May.

Letter to ratepayers

Usually at the beginning of April each year Land & Property Services (LPS) send annual rate bills to homes and businesses across Northern Ireland. This year, bills will be late due to a delay in the setting of the Regional Rate.

From the end of this week, LPS will be sending a letter to every ratepayer about the delay of 2017/2018 rate bills with advice and further information for ratepayers.

You can find details on this page:

Rate bill in May

The bill sent next month will cover rates assessed from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018, as well as any unpaid rates from previous years.

If you normally pay by Direct Debit, you don't need to do anything. No direct debit payments will be taken until a new bill is issued.

If you normally pay by Standing Order, online, or by cheque, LPS would encourage you to make a payment based on last year's assessment.

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[News story: Public sector pay awards for 2017-18](#)

Pay awards for armed forces, NHS staff and doctors and dentists set out by government.

The government has today (28 March 2017) set out the pay awards for armed forces, NHS Agenda for Change staff and doctors and dentists in line with the policy of an average 1% pay rise in 2016-17.

The government asked the following Pay Review Bodies to examine how an increase to base pay could be applied in line with the government's policy of an average of 1% across the workforces:

- Armed Forces' Pay Review Body (AFPRB)
- NHS Pay Review Body (NHSPRB)
- Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration (DDR)

The government has accepted the recommendations for the armed forces, NHS Agenda for Change staff and doctors and dentists to receive an average of a 1% pay increase.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury, David Gauke, said:

It is always important to recognise the amazing work undertaken every day by our armed forces, doctors and dentists and NHS staff. The settlement for these key workforces protects jobs and helps repair the public finances. The OBR has forecast that the current pay policy will protect approximately 200,000 jobs across the UK.

I am pleased that we are able to accept the recommendations of the independent pay review bodies, and I thank them for their work.