

News story: Military support for snow relief

Updated: 05 MARCH UPDATE

– Military assistance in Lincolnshire, Devon, Shropshire, Hampshire, Manchester, Wiltshire and Scotland has now completed. One Chinook has been deployed to airlift supplies to areas of Cumbria on 05 March. 328 personnel and 124 4x4 vehicles have been used to assist emergency services with the snow response.

The military has used vehicles and personnel to transport essential NHS staff to hospitals and vulnerable people in the community. The military has supported local police forces to assist people stranded on motorways and have used aircraft to transport supplies to areas cut off by the snow.

On Friday 2 March, the Defence Secretary met with soldiers from 1 Royal Irish, who were carrying out vital work transporting health workers in the Shropshire area, which was hit by heavy snow.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Our Armed Forces are doing an incredible job up and down the country, helping the emergency services, local authorities, and the NHS supporting those in need.

From Scotland to Cornwall, more than 100 personnel from across the forces are making a real difference in getting nurses and doctors to vulnerable and elderly patients, and helping rescue those left stranded in freezing conditions.

I pay tribute to their professionalism, dedication and sense of duty. They are proving once again that Britain can always depend on our troops to protect us no matter the time, no matter the place, and no matter the problem.

I witnessed for myself the vital role they are playing in helping the British people during the treacherous weather which has caused so much difficulty for so many people.

I am extremely grateful for all that our personnel are doing and will continue to do over the weekend – and I want to thank them for answering calls for help across the country.

Military assistance to date:

- 20 RAF personnel and 10 4x4 RAF vehicles transported health staff to hospitals and communities in Lincolnshire.

- The military assisted Greater Manchester Police to enable them to access and assist motorists on the M62
- Army soldiers and 10 4x4 vehicles transported NHS Scotland staff needed to deliver critical care services to and from Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and the Western General Hospital. Reservists from the Scottish and Northern Irish Yeomanry were utilised alongside a further 20 4x4s from across the three services in Tayside and Fife to support NHS Scotland.
- 20 Army soldiers and 10 4x4s transported health staff to hospitals and support health workers in visiting vulnerable people in the community in Shropshire.
- 20 Royal Marines and 10 4x4 vehicles transported health staff to hospitals and communities in Devon and Cornwall
- The military provided 10 vehicles and personnel to transport NHS workers in the Salisbury and Swindon area
- One Chinook has been deployed to deliver supplies to communities in Cumbria that have been cut off due to snowdrifts.

Military assistance in numbers:

- 328 personnel have helped with the snow response
- 124 4x4 vehicles have been mobilised
- 1 Chinook has been deployed

Armed Forces personnel have also volunteered in their own time to help those in need.

There are always three UK standby battalions held at high readiness to respond to UK contingencies and emergencies, including support to local authorities. We have the right people with the right training to respond to a range of contingencies.

[News story: Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson visits Joint Forces Command](#)

The Secretary of State travelled to Defence Intelligence at Wyton and the Permanent Joint Headquarters at Northwood, gaining first hand insight into these organisations, their place within JFC, and how they support the defence of the nation.

At the Pathfinder Building in Wyton, the headquarters of the Joint Force Intelligence Group (JFIG), the Defence Secretary met with Deputy Chief of Defence Intelligence, Paul Rimmer, Commander Cyber and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, Air Vice Marshal Ian Vallely, and Commander JFIG, Brigadier Ben Kyte.

Secretary of State saw how all aspects of Defence Intelligence are

coordinated to provide the understanding he and others in government need to make decisions. Operators briefed him on, amongst other things, Cyber, Geospatial Intelligence, and what is known as Time Dominant Analysis; the continual process for providing rapid analytical response to events through the fusion of classified and open source information.

Commander JFC then accompanied the Defence Secretary to Northwood Headquarters, where he toured the Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ). Over a working lunch with the Chief of Staff (COS) Policy and Finance, Paul Wyatt, and COS Operations, Air Vice Marshal Gary Waterfall, he heard about the history of PJHQ and how it fits into today's operating environment, in support of MOD Head Office and other government departments.

This discussion covered the high number of operations being conducted by UK forces, with coalition partners, around the globe, and the significant range of contingency plans that are maintained by PJHQ.

The Defence Secretary also met PJHQ staff in the Operations Control Room, hearing from planners about how they ensure that the UK Armed Forces are readied for operations, and from operators on how events are managed on a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week basis.

Topics included Op Ruman, the UK's rapid response following the hurricanes in the Caribbean towards the end of last year, and Op Trenton, the UK's contribution to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), both superb examples of what the 3 UK armed forces can do when operating jointly.

Commander JFC and the Defence Secretary also discussed the role of JFC and its strategy, the guiding principle of which is to secure advantage for the joint force through innovation, integration and information. With his focus on modernising defence, the Secretary of State was particularly interested in the steps JFC is taking to make innovation happen in JFC, the role that the command plays in integrating the capabilities available to defence, and the digital acceleration that the command is in the process of delivering, through Miltech.

The Defence Secretary said of his visit:

I thoroughly enjoyed visiting Joint Forces Command earlier this week. Organisations like the Joint Force Intelligence Group and the Permanent Joint Headquarters are a big part of the reason why the UK's armed forces make such a significant contribution to the defence of the nation, and our allies, in difficult and demanding circumstances around the globe.

Commander JFC also commented:

It was a great pleasure to host the Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson, at Wyton and Northwood, where he had the opportunity to meet some of the superb people who work tirelessly to provide

intelligence for defence and command UK armed forces on operations.

His visit also allowed us to showcase the work Joint Forces Command is doing to secure advantage, through innovation, integration and information, and thereby contribute to modernising defence.

Statement to Parliament: Armed Forces' Pay Review Body Appointments

The Secretary of State for Defence (Rt Hon. Gavin Williamson CBE MP): I am pleased to announce that the Prime Minister has invited Mr John Steele to continue to serve as Chair of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body for a further two-month term of office, commencing on 1 March 2018. This allows Mr Steele to draw Pay Round 18 to a conclusion.

I would also like to take this opportunity to announce that the Prime Minister has appointed Mr Peter Maddison as the next Chair of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body. His appointment will commence on 1 March 2018 and run until 28 February 2021.

Both the extension and the appointment have been conducted in accordance with the guidance of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

News story: Lift-off: Satellite launched into space on RAF mission

The RAF has been working with the MOD's Chief Scientific Advisor, Defence Science and Technology Laboratory and UK industry on the programme to deliver high-quality imagery and 3D video footage from space. The first satellite of its kind, the Carbonite-2 has completed its initial checks and is now supplying detailed imagery and footage.

The ambitious programme could eventually see high-tech satellites beaming video directly into the cockpit of fighter jets, improving the situational awareness of UK pilots by giving them the very best imagery and information anywhere on Earth in real-time.

Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier made the announcement at Surrey Satellite Technology Limited in Guildford, the company

behind the technology, to mark the successful launch and operation of the satellite.

Speaking at the launch event, Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier said:

It's entirely fitting that we have launched this highly capable satellite in the centenary year of the Royal Air Force. We have always been at the leading edge of technology, constantly innovating and expanding our horizons. This satellite will not only expand further the RAF's growing Air and Space capabilities, it will I hope also be an inspiration to those young people looking towards technology as a way to realise their potential.



The Chief of the Air Staff today announced the RAF's role in the launch and operation of a demonstrator satellite. Crown copyright.

Welcoming the news, Defence Minister Guto Bebb said:

The success of this satellite shows we are looking far beyond the skies when it comes to defending our country. We live in an increasingly dangerous world and satellite technology like this give our Armed Forces the extra advantage of quick video surveillance to keep us safe from a range of future threats, whether that's an airborne terror attack or a troop of tanks closing in on a foreign border. Investing millions into Britain's

most innovative companies is helping us propel the UK forward in the space domain.

The Carbonite-2 will play a crucial role in the MOD's understanding the potential for and shaping the RAF's vision of an international constellation for the future. This could unlock new opportunities using a range of sensors and ground stations, which has the potential to support emerging crises and combat intensifying threats, giving the UK the opportunity to lead in the area with several close allies having already shown interest in the concept.

The MOD invested £4.5m into the programme with Surrey Satellite Technology just eight months ago, and the satellite was successfully launched from Sriharikota in India. The 100kg spacecraft, roughly the size of an average household washing machine, carries an off-the-shelf telescope and HD video camera, both of which have been adapted for a space environment and integrated into a custom-built framework. The imaging system is designed to deliver high-resolution images and colour HD video clips with a swath width of 5km.

MOD's Chief Scientific Advisor, Professor Hugh Durrant-Whyte said:

MOD's science community is one of the driving forces of the UK's space revolution; and this is an excellent example of defence science and technology working with industry and the Royal Air Force to deliver affordable and pioneering space technology quickly for our Armed Forces.

The historic moment comes as the RAF celebrates 100 years since its formation, and demonstrates how the service is not only commemorating its history but also celebrating current success and looking forward to inspire future generations. To maximise the benefit of the experience and build expertise the RAF has placed a secondee with SSTL.

As set out in the Government's Industrial Strategy, the UK Space Agency is also working together with industry to capture a 10% share of the global space market.

The UK Space Agency's Director of Growth, Catherine Mealing-Jones said:

Space has applications across every part of our economy and is a vital part of our national capability. British companies like SSTL are the best in the world at what they do, making them a fitting partner for the RAF.

The MOD already has a world-leading role in satellite technology, with Skynet 5 delivering a resilient, sovereign capability until 2025, supporting secure communications for troops, command centres and cutting-edge unmanned vehicles. Beyond that, the MOD is fully committed to launching Skynet 6a and

is looking to change defence structures to bring better operational coherence to activities for the future.

[News story: Defence Secretary names new warship HMS Cardiff on St David's Day](#)

The third to be named in the City Class of eight brand new, cutting-edge, anti-submarine warfare frigates, HMS Cardiff will provide advanced protection for the likes of the UK's nuclear deterrent and Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, and offer an unrivalled anti-submarine warfare capability.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

HMS Cardiff will be a terrific tribute to Wales and its capital city. She will bolster the United Kingdom's defences across the seven seas – protecting our aircraft carriers and defending our waters from intensifying threats.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones said:

It's great to see the name HMS Cardiff returning to the Fleet as one of our new Type 26 Frigates, reflecting the Royal Navy's long-standing bond with the city and the people of Wales. The name HMS Cardiff brings with it a proud history. A century ago the light cruiser HMS Cardiff famously led the German High Seas Fleet into internment at Scapa Flow at the end of the First World War. The last HMS Cardiff, a Type 42 destroyer, also distinguished herself on operations around the world, including the 1982 Falklands campaign, the 1991 Gulf War and service in the Adriatic during the 1999 crisis in Kosovo.

This next generation of frigates will encompass the very latest innovations and technological advances to deliver a world class anti-submarine warfare capability within a globally deployable and highly versatile platform. For years to come, as part of a Royal Navy carrier-led task group or working with our international partners, HMS Cardiff and her sister ships will be ready to deliver a wide spectrum of operations from diplomatic and humanitarian missions to high end warfighting, promoting and protecting Britain's interests worldwide.

The naming was marked by an event at Mansion House in Cardiff this morning, led by students from the Welsh University Royal Naval Unit. The training establishment for a group of undergraduates from across the nation who show potential as future leaders of society.

Welcoming the news, Defence Minister Guto Bebb said:

As a proud Welshman, it is a great honour to herald another era of a warship with the name HMS Cardiff protecting the UK at home and abroad. These students have shown great passion for everything the Royal Navy stands for, and if they do go on to be captains of the future, they could be at the helm of a truly formidable, cutting-edge warship in HMS Cardiff.

The new HMS Cardiff is set to enter service in the 2020s and, along with her fellow Type 26 frigates, will deliver high-end warfighting wherever it is needed, whilst protecting the UK's interests as well as Britain's nuclear submarines. Its flexible design will also enable these capabilities to be adapted to counter future threats, and the ships will benefit from the latest advances in digital technology.

She will be the fourth ship to be named in honour of the Welsh capital city, and the announcement comes 100 years after the first HMS Cardiff led the surrendered German High Seas Fleet into Scapa Flow at the end of the First World War.

The St. David's Day announcement is a further example of Defence's commitment to Wales, where the MOD has today announced it spends £300 for every member of the population, £20 more per person than last year. The work being done in Wales includes the UK's biggest single order for an armoured vehicle in 30 years: the £4.5bn Ajax vehicles being built at General Dynamics' Merthyr Tydfil factory.

Also, this year's Armed Forces Day will be held in Wales, on the 30 June in the historic North Wales seaside town of Llandudno. The event, which will also mark Armed Forces Day's tenth birthday, will celebrate the work of our servicemen and women with a spectacular military parade, fly pasts and impressive displays of equipment.

North Wales has many current and historic links to the Armed Forces, including many Regular and Reserve Army units. Many North Walian are proud to serve in the Royal Welsh and nearby RAF Valley on Anglesey is home to a fast jet training base. Nearly 10,000 veterans live in Conwy, supported by a number of local and national charities.

The announcement also comes as BAE Systems have awarded Lockheed Martin a contract to equip the Type 26 with the only system of its kind capable of launching anti-air, anti-submarine, surface-to-surface and strike-length missiles. Three MK 41 Vertical Launching Systems will be fitted on each ship. The Royal Navy has ordered an initial nine modules for the first three ships, including HMS Cardiff.

A number of close allies, including Australia and Canada, are also considering the state-of-the-art Type 26 design. HMS Sutherland is currently in Australia demonstrating the UK's world-class anti-submarine capability.

The Royal Navy's Type 26 frigates are being built at the Clyde shipyards in Scotland. The MOD announced an unprecedented 20 years of work there in 2017, safeguarding over 4,000 jobs, with the £3.7bn contract for the first three of eight submarine hunting Type 26 frigates to be built there. Two other ships in the class have already been named HMS Glasgow and HMS Belfast. HMS Cardiff is the third ship to be named and will be the second to enter production.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

This is a very proud moment not only for the Royal Navy but for the whole of Wales.

Wales has a strong military footprint, and this announcement is a celebration of the contribution our nation makes to the defence of the UK.

I'm proud to see the name of our capital city on a Royal Navy warship that will take to international waters to defend our national security and protect our servicemen and women around the world.