

Press release: National Schools Commissioner appointed

Dominic Herrington confirmed as National Schools Commissioner

News story: Faster publishing of air accident investigation reports

We are changing the way that we publish our [Field investigation reports](#).

Our routine Field investigation reports will now be published around 1000hrs on Thursdays throughout the month. Publishing throughout the month means that we can communicate the safety messages from our reports faster, removing the delay that was sometimes caused if reports were finalised just after the monthly bulletin had been produced.

We know that the monthly bulletin is a popular format for many of our readers. We will continue to publish it on the second Thursday of each month and its format will stay the same, with both Field and Correspondence investigations included. It will now be published around 1000hrs. Those receiving hard copies will continue to do so.

For those who subscribe to our reports alert service, we are aware that changes made by the Government Digital Service several months ago have resulted in multiple email notifications when our monthly bulletins are published, with an alert for each investigation within the bulletin. We are working with the Government Digital Service to fix the problem.

News story: Supply chain to play key role in decommissioning projects at Dounreay

Construction of a size reduction facility, shaft and silo decommissioning and demolition of historic active laboratories are just some of the major projects expected to be delivered as part of a decommissioning services framework, potentially worth up to £400 million, which has been announced

today.

Six framework contracts have been awarded, bringing together the capabilities of at least 28 companies and their supply chains, initially for up to 4 years with the possibility of extensions of up to an additional 3 years. It will take work at the site, delivered on behalf of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), into a new phase when historic wastes from the shaft, silo and low level waste pits are due to be retrieved, repackaged and consigned to modern waste facilities.

The companies, ranging from small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) within the local community to some of the industry's largest players, will now compete in 'mini competitions' for distinct packages of work that move the site towards its ultimate closure.

Stephen Adamson, Head of Commercial Services, said:

This agreement will deliver real and visible signs of progress towards achieving our mission. It is about forming long-term partnerships so that the successful companies can work alongside our own Dounreay staff, ensuring a first-class team combining the best site skills and experience with the wider industry knowledge and innovation that the supply chain can offer.

In addition to technical submissions, bidders were also required to consider how they will help create a positive legacy in Caithness and North Sutherland with a number of plans put forward including support for STEM and SME development schemes.

Once the UK's centre of fast reactor research, Dounreay is now aiming to be recognised globally for decommissioning excellence. The work is being delivered by DSRL, a company owned by Cavendish Dounreay Partnership, on behalf of the NDA.

Organisations appointed to DSRL's decommissioning services framework:

AECOM E&C UK; MW Hargreaves; Kier Infrastructure and Overseas; Morson Projects; NIS; NSG Environmental; Squibb Group; Westinghouse Electrical Company UK

Dounreay Decommissioning Framework (DDF) Alliance; Cavendish Nuclear; BAM Nuttall; KDC Contractors; JGC Engineering and Technical Services

Dounreay Wood Alliance (DWA); Wood; Aquila Nuclear Engineering; GD Energy Services; Orano Projects

Jacobs UK; Atkins

Nuclear Decommissioning Ltd (NDL); James Fisher Nuclear; REACT Engineering; Shepley Engineers; WYG Engineering; JBV Demolition; RPS Consulting Services

[News story: Biometrics Commissioner 2018 annual report: update](#)

On 29 March 2019, the Biometrics Commissioner presented his annual report for 2018 to the Home Secretary, as required under section 21 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (PoFA).

Once the Home Secretary has considered the report, it will then be laid before Parliament.

The role of the Biometrics Commissioner was established by PoFA and Paul Wiles was appointed as the second Commissioner on 1 June 2016.

His role is to provide independent oversight of the regime established by PoFA, which came into force on 31 October 2013, to govern the retention and use by the police in England and Wales of DNA samples, DNA profiles and fingerprints.

In addition to various casework responsibilities in relation to DNA and fingerprints, he also has a UK-wide oversight function as regards their retention and use by the police on national security grounds.

The Commissioner's 2018 report, which will be published once it has been laid before Parliament, deals primarily with developments since the publication of his 2017 report. It covers his casework activities, the general operation of the PoFA regime and a variety of wider issues that have arisen in connection with biometrics in both the normal policing and national security spheres.

If you have any queries, please contact Justin Hawkins on 0779 255 1301.

[News story: Government publishes new action plan to improve police forensics](#)

These commitments are designed to improve public confidence, support the criminal justice system, and ensure the quality and stability of forensics provision.

The plan is published alongside the findings of a Home Office commissioned review into the provision of forensic services in policing, such as DNA and fingerprint evidence. It finds that urgent action is required to make the current system sustainable.

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, Nick Hurd, said:

Forensic science is an invaluable tool for bringing criminals to justice.

We must ensure it's sustainable, works at a high standard, and has the confidence of the public.

This is why I commissioned this review and we are now taking action to strengthen the market.

The [review](#) makes a series of recommendations, including making providers adhere to the quality standards set by the Forensic Science Regulator and ensuring the market's commercial models are sustainable and open to investment.

The government is committed to meeting these aims with a 13-point implementation plan. This includes:

- stabilising the market through a new, long-term commercial strategy delivered by the Forensics Capability Network to better co-ordinate police forces' approach to forensics
- continuing to support Chris Green MP's Private Member's Bill to give the regulator statutory powers of enforcement, as well as supporting the regulator's accreditation timetable
- working with national bodies, such as UK Research and Innovation, alongside the Ministry of Justice to establish a new oversight mechanism for research and development

The Home Office carried out the review jointly with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) and the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC).

APCC Forensics Lead Martyn Underhill PCC and Deputy Lead Mark Burns-Williamson PCC said:

The effectiveness of our criminal justice system is often dependent on the evidence obtained by high quality dedicated forensic experts that help keep our communities safe.

We are world leaders in the provision of forensic science, but we have recently seen significant issues that need urgently addressing. This review highlights those issues and provides recommendations and actions to ensure we continue to provide excellent forensic provision into the future.

The APCC will continue to work with police chiefs and the government to ensure investment in forensic science is increased and that this is reflected in the forthcoming spending review.

National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Forensic Science, Chief Constable James Vaughan QPM said:

We welcome the findings of the forensic review which was undertaken jointly by the NPCC, APCC and Home Office and are now working to implement the recommendations which will assist us to stabilise the market while making further improvements around quality standards and accreditation.

The Transforming Forensics Programme, which secured police transformation funding is already delivering capability in line with the findings of the review. It provides a long-term opportunity to ensure this vital area of policing and criminal justice is sustainable and will enable forces to achieve and maintain high quality, efficient and standardised processes while acting as a single voice on behalf of policing with key stakeholders.