

## **Press release: Israeli space tech firm hiSky expands to the UK**

An innovative company looking to make satellite communications more accessible and affordable is set to create over 100 high-tech jobs in London and Oxfordshire.

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The Israeli company hiSky has established a UK limited company – hiSkySat Limited – based in London, with an R&D centre at Harwell to develop a satellite communications network management system (NMS) and operation centre.

The UK Space Agency provided £9 million of funding for hiSky to develop cutting-edge space telecoms technology at the Harwell Space Cluster, which is growing fast and already home to more than 90 space companies.

hiSky aims to be the world's first low-cost satellite network operator, bringing innovative technology to voice and data satellite communications, and leveraging existing satellite capacity to reduce costs associated with building and launching new satellites.

Part of the new project will integrate and develop 5G networks into their 'Smartellite' satellite receiving terminal and carry out a demonstration to show how it can connect seamlessly between different satellites and operators. This will help roll out the next generation of Internet of Things technology, connecting machines and vehicles around the world and enabling remote monitoring of infrastructure such as power lines and wind turbines.

Science Minister Chris Skidmore said:

The UK government's modern Industrial Strategy and commitment to the European Space Agency are bringing innovative companies like OneWeb, SatixFy and hiSky to Britain.

Our world-leading universities, modern regulatory environment, growing R&D spend and support for UK spaceports make this a great place to build a space business and create the high-skilled jobs of the future.

The UK Space Agency funding is allocated through the European Space Agency (ESA). This is targeted to support the development of hiSky's satellite receiving terminals, operations and management software for the devices and to help establish hiSky as a Virtual Network Operator – a supplier of network services using existing infrastructure – in the UK.

Shahar Kravitz , CEO, hiSky said:

We are honored to be partners with the UK Space Agency. It is our privilege to establish the first real low-cost global Virtual Satellite Network and to do it in the UK. hiSky's cutting edge technology and solution was developed in order to meet with the consumers needs and can easily adjust to different satellite operators, including forthcoming Low Earth Orbit telcoms constellations.

The UK Space Agency and Department for International Trade have been very supportive of our technology and our concept from the beginning. We are grateful for the chance given to us and look forward to grow within the UK.

ESA is independent of the European Union and has its European Centre for Space Applications and Telecommunications (ECSAT) in Harwell, Oxfordshire, reflecting the UK's world-leading position in satellite communications.

Magali Vaissiere, ESA Director of Telecommunications and Integrated Applications said:

Innovation and collaboration are the keys to keeping European industry at the forefront of the highly competitive global market for satellite communications. This is a great example of how partnering between the public and private sectors can drive the development of world-leading innovation.

Earlier this month (4 June) the government [announced ambitious plans](#) for the UK to lead the new space age, including further support to enable small satellite launch and the creation of a new National Space Council to strengthen UK space strategy.

The UK's investment in the ESA programme for telecommunications research and business applications (ARTES) has helped bring world-leading companies to the UK such as OneWeb and SatixFy.

The UK Space Agency, ESA and the Department for International Trade have worked together to bring hiSky to the UK.

The Harwell Space Cluster has grown by 19% over the past year, employing 950 people in 89 organisations including RAL Space, Oxford Space Systems and the Satellite Applications Catapult.

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## Press release: New powers to fine firms that exploit consumer loyalty

Tough new powers for competition watchdog to fine businesses directly who have broken consumer law.



- Tough new powers for competition watchdog to fine businesses directly who have broken consumer law
- move will help tackle the loyalty penalty and practices such as subscription traps and unfair cancellation charges
- government prepared to give regulators new legal powers if needed

Firms that overcharge or mislead their customers could be hit with direct fines without the need to go through a court, under plans unveiled by Business Secretary Greg Clark today (18 June 2019).

The government has confirmed it will consult on giving the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) new powers to decide itself whether consumer law has been broken, without having to go through the courts as is currently the case. New powers would enable the CMA to intervene earlier and more quickly to tackle these failings and would include being able to directly impose fines on firms for poor business behaviour.

This will act as a powerful deterrent to firms that are harming consumers with misleading claims, unfair terms and conditions and hard-to-exit contracts – practices that are central to many ‘subscription traps’. These measures aim to ensure subscriptions are as easy to exit as they are to enter. It also helps the CMA tackle bad practices in other consumer markets like secondary ticketing and unfair terms for care home residents.

The government also announced that it will legislate to give regulators, such

as Ofcom and the Financial Conduct Authority, new powers to stop loyal customers being taken advantage of if their existing powers are insufficient.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

For far too long, many big companies have been getting away with harmful trading practices which lead to poor services and confusion among customers who have parted with their hard-earned cash.

The system as it stands not only lets consumers down but it also lets down the vast majority of businesses who play by the rules.

It is high time this came to an end and today we are confirming our intention to give much stronger powers to the CMA, to strengthen the sanctions available and to give customers the protection they deserve against firms who want to rip them off.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

The key to successful markets and businesses is ensuring that they work for the benefit of consumers and that unfair practices are tackled effectively, as the majority do.

I strongly believe that consumer loyalty should not be exploited and nor should consumers have to work so hard to get a fair deal. We have already shown our willingness to take action through our energy price cap, which means every household is protected from unjustified price rises.

We are committed to ensuring consumers are not unfairly targeted and penalised for their loyalty and that they can access quality products and services for a price that is competitive and fair.

A core part of how we do this is by making sure all consumers, including the vulnerable, can benefit from the emergence of smart data and technology to access better deals from innovative digital services.

The proposed measures come as the government publishes a clear and direct [response to the recommendations by the CMA](#) on the Super Complaint on consumer loyalty brought forward by Citizens Advice.

The new powers will be consulted on in the government's upcoming Consumer White Paper.

Other proposed measures in the response include legislating, if necessary, to ensure mobile providers end the practice of charging customers the same rate once they have effectively paid off their handsets at the end of the minimum contract period.

This comes after the government published its findings of the [Smart Data Review](#), as part of London Tech Week. These plans aim to shake-up the way markets work for consumers by making it easier for them to safely share their information with innovative new services that could find them better deals. The review also included measures to protect vulnerable consumers, including a new Vulnerable Consumer Challenge which will encourage innovators, charities and regulators to ensure their most vulnerable and least digitally engaged customers are able to enjoy the best deals.

Consumer Minister Kelly Tolhurst will be holding a Consumer Forum today (18 June 2019), which brings together government and regulators to ensure a cross-sectoral approach to improving consumer outcomes in these essential markets. This will also look at progress over the last 6 months from regulators.

The government also recently announced plans to create a new independent, statutory advocate for consumers in the telecoms sector, which will strengthen the consumer voice and help industry, regulators and government identify how to improve the consumer experience.

#### Notes to Editors

According to Citizens Advice research, customers who stayed loyal to their mobile and broadband providers, or to those providing financial services like savings, mortgages and insurance, were paying as much as £1,000 a year more than serial switchers – a total £4 billion overpayment across these sectors.

False reviews and enforcements, excessive holiday cancellation fees and unfair care home charges are all areas where the Competition and Markets Authority has acted to protect consumers recently.

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## [Press release: New powers to fine firms that exploit consumer loyalty](#)

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## [News story: New videos to help learner](#)

# drivers improve motorcyclist awareness

Thought-provoking new videos are being launched to encourage learner drivers to be more aware of motorcyclists.



The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) has made the realistic computer-generated (CGI) videos to encourage learner drivers to be more aware of motorcyclists. They've been made with the help of road safety campaigner and keen biker Ria Brisland.

The videos will become part of DVSA's official learning materials and education products. They will help to improve the safety of motorcyclists, by encouraging learner drivers to be more aware of them when driving.

The videos will not be part of the theory test.

Ria's 19-year-old son, Nick, died in April 2015 after being involved in a collision with a car while riding his motorcycle.



Nick Brisland was 19 years old when he died in April 2015 after being involved in a collision with a car.

Ria said:

Getting everyone to be aware of their fellow road users at all times is essential if we are to prevent collisions and the devastating consequences they can have on families.

These new clips are thought-provoking and will make a difference to the way people look for bikers. They may prove the difference between life and death.

## **Watch an example video**

## **Why the clips are being introduced**

In 2017, motorcyclists accounted for 19% of all deaths of Great Britain's roads, despite only making up around 1% of all road traffic.

During the year, 2,656 motorcyclists were involved in accidents resulting from a driver or rider failing to look properly. This was 17% of all accidents involving motorcycles.



19% of road deaths were motorcyclists in 2017

Source: [Reported road casualties Great Britain, annual report: 2017](#)

It's vital that all drivers know how to spot motorcyclists and other vulnerable road users and take appropriate action. This is particularly important for learners, which is why the clips are being made part of the learning materials.

The new videos show how easily motorcyclists can be missed by road users, resulting in tragic consequences.

## **Videos will be seen by millions of learner drivers**

Michael Ellis, Road Safety Minister, said:

Britain's roads are among the safest in the world, but still far too many vulnerable people are involved in fatal and serious injury collisions each year.

After reading Ria's story and her concerns for fellow bikers, I was determined to help her and I am delighted that these clips will now be seen by millions of learners, helping improve road safety.

Mark Winn, DVSA's Chief Driving Examiner, said:

DVSA's priority is to help everyone through a lifetime of safe driving.

These important new clips, created with Ria, will aid driver and rider training and protect vulnerable motorcyclists. We'll be using them in our educational products and on social media to help drivers keep a lookout for motorcyclists.

## **Looking out for vulnerable road users when driving**

[The Highway Code section on road users requiring extra care](#) explains what all road users should do to look out for vulnerable road users.

It includes:

- always looking for motorcyclists before you emerge from a junction
- when turning right across a line of slow-moving or stationary traffic, looking out for motorcyclists on the inside of the traffic you are crossing
- checking mirrors and blind spots carefully

The THINK! website has [more advice for all road users](#) and more information



about [motorcycle safety](#).