

Press release: National Schools Commissioner appointed

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Dominic Herrington has today been confirmed as National Schools Commissioner by the Department for Education – after holding the position on an interim basis since September 2018.

Drawing on four years' experience as Regional Schools Commissioner for South London and South-East England, Dominic Herrington has spent recent months helping academy schools across the country to continue driving up standards – building on the recent milestone of more than 50 per cent of children in state-funded schools in England now studying in an academy or free school.

Herrington will now help to deliver operational changes to the work of Regional Schools Commissioners (RSC) in the coming months – to help schools, academy trusts and local authorities work with them by creating an even more joined-up team in each of the eight RSC regions.

National Schools Commissioner Dominic Herrington, said:

Over the last eight months I have thoroughly enjoyed working with academy trusts. I am very much looking forward to continuing to work with the team of Regional School Commissioners – helping them to support and challenge school leaders to deliver the best possible education for children right across England.

Academies Minister Lord Agnew said:

Having worked with Dominic extensively over several years at the Department for Education, I am delighted by his appointment. He brings great energy and deep expertise to this important role.

More than 8,300 schools in the country have become an academy or opened as a free school since 2010 and hundreds of schools each year make the positive choice to become an academy.

Today's announcement will help schools and trusts across the county to build on the successes to date – with [figures published earlier this year](#) showing that standards are rising faster in many sponsored academies than in similar council-run schools.

The department is in the process of confirming a permanent replacement for the Regional School Commissioner for the South East England and South London Region.

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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

Nuvia; Graham Construction; Oxford Technologies; Thompson of Prudhoe