

# News story: New appointments made to strengthen HS2 Ltd board

The Transport Secretary, Chris Grayling, has today (12 April 2019) strengthened the board of High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd with the appointments of Dame Judith Hackitt and Stephen Hughes to the board as non-executive directors (NEDs).

Both candidates bring with them a strong set of experience to help guide the construction of the largest infrastructure project in Europe:

Dame Judith Hackitt was the Chair of the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety and is Chair of manufacturing trade body Make UK (formerly EEF). She also holds non-executive positions at Made Smarter Commission, Imperial College Court, City & Guilds Group, and High Value Manufacturing Catapult. An engineer by profession, Dame Judith holds a degree in chemical engineering from Imperial College, London.

Stephen Hughes is a highly experienced local government leader, having served as Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council for nearly 10 years, as well as previously holding an executive role at Brent Council. An accountant by profession, Stephen is currently a non-executive director for Housing & Care 21 and Big Band Limited, holding a degree in Economics from Cambridge.

Alongside these new announcements, the Secretary of State also for Transport announced the re-appointment of 2 existing NEDs – Ed Smith and Roger Mountford – for a further 3 years.

It has also been announced today that Andrew Wolstenholme has left the board of HS2 Ltd, having served on the board since June 2018.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

The appointments of Dame Hackitt and Stephen Hughes will ensure that HS2 Ltd continues to have a world-class leadership team under Allan Cook CBE. I am also delighted that Ed and Roger will continue in their roles.

Their collective wisdom and expertise will be invaluable in overseeing the construction of one of the UK's most important infrastructure projects, ensuring we deliver on the opportunity of huge economic growth for the north and Midlands and improved journeys for passengers right across the country.

Allan Cook CBE, Chair of HS2 Ltd said:

Serving over 25 towns from Scotland to the south-east, HS2 links

nearly half of the UK population. By better connecting the country it will boost economic growth and improve journeys for millions of people. With work on the first phase now well underway, I'm pleased to welcome Dame Judith and Stephen to the HS2 Ltd board. Their experience of industry, governance and leadership will add new strength to our board as we continue to deliver Britain's transformative new high speed rail link.

Dame Judith Hackitt said:

Modernisation of our national infrastructure is vitally important for future growth and prosperity and the development and delivery of HS2 is an essential part of that. I am very much looking forward to joining the HS2 Ltd board and being part of this national project.

Stephen Hughes said:

I am delighted to be appointed to the board of HS2 Ltd. I have been passionate about this project for many years. It is not just about solving the problems with rail capacity, but it will also deliver significant regenerative benefits to our major cities and the regional economies they support. I am pleased to be able to help deliver those benefits in whatever ways I can.

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## [News story: ONS funding boost for measuring the new economy](#)

The ONS will receive a funding boost of £9 million to develop cutting-edge methodologies for measuring how the UK economy is performing, the Chancellor announced today (11 April 2019). The new data will improve our understanding of the economy and ensure policy-makers can use new "super-fast" indicators to inform decisions that affect the whole country.

This new funding is part of our plan to build an economy fit for the future and will allow the ONS to:

- Implement the superior 'double-deflation' methodology of calculating GDP, improving how we measure costs, prices and production. This will bring the ONS in line with the best international standards, give us a more accurate picture of how the UK economy is performing, and provide

better estimates of productivity and output across the economy.

- Develop a range of “super-fast” indicators of economic activity, utilising new big data sets to create a clearer view of how the economy is changing in real time.
- Train 500 fully qualified government data scientists by 2021 to support better policy-making and understanding of the economy – a ten-fold increase from 2017.

Today’s services-dominated digital economy is more complicated and fast-moving than the goods-based economy of the past.

Today’s funding will help the ONS keep pace with this changing economy, ensuring that UK statistics more accurately capture economic activity, which is crucial for government policy-making like tax and spending plans. It will also help train the next generation of data scientists, making sure we have the skills to better understand our data-rich economy.

This funding will ensure we’re modernising our data measurement alongside our wider investments to build an economy fit for the future, including investment in AI research, speeding up the rollout full-fibre broadband and making tax digital.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, said:

Our modern economy is constantly evolving so it is vital we have the data and tools to understand it.

Funding for new data scientists, improving our statistics and harnessing the power of big data will help us to quickly identify and address the challenges of the new economy and seize the opportunities that lie ahead.

John Pullinger, National Statistician said:

Recent investment in the ONS has driven some important new developments in the measurement of our rapidly evolving economy.

The continuing support of HM Treasury will enable the next stage in our transformation of the UK’s key economic indicators.

#### **Further information:**

- The ‘Double Deflation’ method represents a fundamental change to the way GDP is calculated by implementing a new framework which more coherently

brings together all the existing data used to calculate GDP and makes better use of data on price changes to improve the consistency between real and nominal estimates.

- In 2016 Professor Sir Charles Bean's independent review of UK economic statistics gave recommendations about how the ONS could adapt to the digital economy. This new funding will enable the ONS to continue implementing the Bean Review's recommendations and takes total government investment since 2016 to £25m. Since 2016 the ONS has:
  - established an Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence, bringing together academics and policymakers to deliver cutting edge research on how to measure the modern, digital economy;
  - established a Data Science Campus to harness the power of 'Big Data', including introducing a new regular publication of faster indicators of economic activity;
  - developed ONS's existing statistics, for instance as only the second major country to introduce monthly GDP estimates;
  - improved trade and productivity statistics, with substantially more granular data now available; and
  - boosted the ONS's analytical capability, including through a five-fold increase in number of economists in the ONS workforce to over 120.
- The government is also working to maximise the benefits new technologies can bring to our economy and society.
  - We've invested in next generation technologies in drug discovery, electric motors and the future of flight as well as a national retraining scheme and a centre for data ethics and innovation;
  - We commissioned the Furman review to examine how UK competition rules could be updated for the digital age; and
  - We have also launched the Business Productivity Review in partnership with BEIS to better understand how and why productivity varies across firms. The Review found that good management and technology adoption were the key drivers of the differences.

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## [Press release: New data shows illegal schools are a huge nationwide problem](#)

The data, which has never been published before, shows that Ofsted has investigated 521 settings, and inspected 259 since January 2016.

Ofsted estimates that as many as 6,000 children are being educated in the unregistered settings it has inspected to date. These children are

potentially at risk because there is no formal external oversight of safeguarding, health and safety or the quality of education provided.

Almost a quarter (23%) of the settings investigated are in London, with the rest spread fairly evenly across the country. Alternative provision is the most common type of setting (28%). Around a quarter (26%) of the settings are general education providers, and a fifth (21%) are places of religious instruction.

In total, 71 settings have been issued with a warning notice by inspectors. Today's data shows that 15 of those settings have since closed, while 39 have changed the way they operate in order to comply with the law, and 9 have registered as independent schools.

An unregistered school is defined as a setting that is operating as an independent school, without registration. It is a criminal offence to operate an unregistered independent school in England.

Ofsted's Deputy Director in charge of the unregistered schools taskforce, Victor Shafiee, said:

We continue to have serious concerns about unregistered schools. As today's data shows, this is not simply an issue with faith settings, nor is it limited to certain areas of the country. Unregistered schools come in many shapes and sizes, and not all of them are run with malicious intent. But, all children deserve the best. These settings deny children a proper education and can leave them at risk of harm.

The problem here is first and foremost about safeguarding. Many of these places are unsafe – with poor facilities and hygiene, badly trained or untrained staff, who may not have had any employment checks made on them, and little care for children's health and well-being.

We need to make sure children are safe and receiving a good education that prepares them for life in modern Britain. Ofsted will continue to do everything we can to investigate and inspect unregistered schools, and where necessary we will seek to prosecute those running them.

To be required to register as a school, a setting must be providing full-time education to at least 5 children of compulsory school age, or one child who is looked after by the local authority or has an education, health and care plan. The setting must operate from a building, and must offer a curriculum that includes maths and English.

There is currently no legal definition of 'full-time education'. The Department for Education (DfE) has issued guidance to say that 18 hours or more a week is likely to constitute full-time education. However, some providers circumvent the requirement to register by operating for 17 hours

and 50 minutes per week. By doing this, they are able operate on the cusp of the law and avoid scrutiny.

Settings that offer only religious instruction are also able to evade registration, even though they operate full time and their pupils do not receive an education anywhere else.

The DfE's proposal for a register of children not in school is a welcome first step to help identify and tackle unregistered schools. However, Ofsted will continue to call for the legislation to be strengthened, and for additional powers that would allow inspectors to collect evidence they find in unregistered schools.

Ofsted's unregistered school's taskforce was established in January 2016 to investigate and inspect suspected illegal schools. The team receives £1 million of annual funding from the Department for Education.

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## Speech: Increasing women's participation in peacekeeping

Thank you, Madam President. Let me start by saying how proud I am that the United Kingdom has already met and exceeded United Nations' targets set in 2015 for doubling female participation in peacekeeping by 2020. Women currently make up 7 percent of our contingent of peacekeeping troops and 18 percent of military observers and staff officers. This is not just a point of principle, nor about simply saying the right thing. It is about effectiveness. Just as in our countries, we suffer economically if we do not let all of our population participate in the workforce. So we suffer militarily if we exclude women from our armed forces and from promotion within that. We prevent ourselves getting the best people for the job by limiting the pool available and therefore we limit our fighting ability.

On the ground, aside from having the best available troops, we see real operational benefits from deploying more gender-balanced forces. We note, as others have, that deploying more peacekeepers enables missions to engage with a wider range of people in local communities, which, in turn, leads to better situational awareness. Asking peacekeepers to understand local conflict dynamics and risks without the ability to engage effectively with local women is like asking them to patrol with one eye closed. And having more female peacekeepers in missions can make it easier for women and girls who have survived sexual violence in conflict or sexual exploitation or abuse to come forward and speak about their experiences.

But we do recognise and share the challenges that most national militaries face in achieving gender parity. Women still make up only 10.5 percent of the United Kingdom's regular armed forces – only 13 percent of our military

officers. Examples set by trailblazing women such as Air Marshal Sue Gray, who became the first three-star female officer in the Royal Air Force this year, have yet to become the norm. So, although we are proud of the progress we have made in increasing female participation in the UK's armed forces and, by extension, in our peacekeeping contributions, we know there is much more to do.

And having said earlier, Madam President that this is not about just saying the right thing. It's about doing things. Let me set out a few things that we think can happen.

We need to keep changing mindsets, ensuring that expanding women's participation is seen as an essential operational enabler, part of the core function of the mission indeed and not as a box ticking exercise.

We need to keep taking concrete action to ensure women have equal opportunities to participate in peacekeeping. That must include equal access to information about opportunities to deploy; equal opportunities to develop relevant skills and experience; and equal access to adequate accommodation, facilities, equipment and medical services in the field.

The UK supports innovative approaches to tackling these and other barriers to women's meaningful participation. In peacekeeping, we are committed to focusing on practical action, sharing best practices and lessons learned and to keep ourselves learning from other troop and police contributing nations. To this end, as we announced in the margins of the Peacekeeping Ministerial, the UK is contributing \$1.3 million to the newly launched Elsie Initiative Fund for uniformed women in peace operations. And we fully support the Elsie Fund's focus on incentivising and assisting Member States to deploy more trained and qualified uniformed women and on maximising the impact of women's participation.

Now, Madam President, it is important that we increase the number of women, the proportion of women in peacekeeping. But of course all peacekeepers, male and female, share a responsibility to conduct peacekeeping operations in a gender sensitive manner. We are determined to equip our peacekeepers with the skills, knowledge and understanding that this requires. Since November 2016, all UK military personnel deploying on major international operations have received training in preventing sexual violence in conflict and on the Women, Peace and Security agenda. And as a training partner, we are committed to ensuring that the training we offer personnel from other countries is gender sensitive. Incorporating gender perspectives in peacekeeping does not only concern women. Gender equality is everybody's business. We all stand to gain from more effective, inclusive peacekeeping if we redouble our efforts towards achieving high ambition targets the women's participation.

And flowing from that, Madam President I have a question for our briefers, which is simply to ask, in the spirit of doing: what are the most urgent interventions you would recommend the United Nations and Member States adopt to make mission environments more women friendly? And what are the best examples of best practice – the best example of best practices, if you like – that you've seen in use at national level to make this agenda really go

forward?

Thank you, Madam President.

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## **Press release: Operation Brock – work to remove M20 contraflow starts tonight**

A contraflow installed on the M20 in Kent as part of new resilience measures for people living, working and travelling in the county is to be deactivated, Highways England has confirmed today (Thursday 11 April).