

News story: Operational Honours and Awards List: April 2019

The latest Operational Honours and Awards List has been published today. The list recognises the bravery, commitment and commendable service of service personnel within the military.

The serving personnel who have won from the array of awards and decorations have shown outstanding examples of courage and dedication to their work while on operation.

The service they have given to the country ensures that Britain remains ready to face intensifying threats at home and abroad.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

The Operational Honours and Awards show how our armed forces personnel go above and beyond the call of duty to keep this country safe.

The breadth of achievement is testament to the bravery and commitment of our service personnel. They make us proud.

I congratulate all those who have been awarded.

The full list is below:

Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

Acting Captain (now Captain) Donald James MACKINNON, Royal Navy

Lieutenant Colonel James Maccoll CHRISTIE, The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Wing Commander Matthew John BRESSANI, Royal Air Force

Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Lance Corporal Lewis STATON, Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Squadron Leader Benjamin David DURHAM, Royal Air Force

Distinguished Flying Cross

Flight Lieutenant (now Squadron Leader) Alex Fraser VAUGHAN, Royal Air Force

Mentioned in Dispatches

Flight Lieutenant Jonathan Blakelock MEADOWS, Royal Air Force

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service

Commander Elaine Marie BOYD, Royal Navy

Captain Frances Marie BYRNE, Intelligence Corps

Acting Lance Corporal Jacob Francis Campbell FISHER, Royal Army Medical Corps

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Sholto James HEDDERWICK, The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Lieutenant Colonel Samuel David HUGHES, Corps of Royal Engineers

Brigadier Mark Peter KENYON OBE

Major Lucy Diana KIRKPATRICK MBE, Intelligence Corps

Staff Sergeant Patrick Robert Jean LIA, Corps of Royal Engineers

Lieutenant Colonel Owain David LUKE MBE, The Royal Welsh

Colonel Richard Thomas MAUNDRELL MVO

Acting Lieutenant Colonel (now Major) Francis Simon PARKE-ROBINSON, Intelligence Corps

Acting Major Frazer Murray STARK, The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Colonel Sion Duncan WALKER, Army Reserve

Acting Air Commodore (now Air Commodore) Roderick John DENNIS OBE, Royal Air Force

Dr Gregory Benjamin FREMONT-BARNES, Ministry of Defence Civil Servant

Queen's Gallantry Medal

Sergeant Stuart Michael GRIFFITHS, Royal Tank Regiment

Corporal Saimone Matasarasara QASENIVALU, Royal Tank Regiment

Queen's Commendation for Bravery

Lieutenant Colonel Craig PALMER, Royal Regiment of Artillery

Press release: CMA to investigate online gaming companies' roll-over contracts

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is concerned about whether some of these companies' business practices are legal, such as their use of auto-renewals for online gaming contracts, their cancellation and refund policies, and their terms and conditions.

As well as buying consoles and games, people can pay for online services, such as playing against other gamers, communicating with other players, and extra games.

These services can involve a membership which is often entered into on an auto-renewal basis. This means that money will be automatically taken from a person's account as the membership rolls over.

The CMA has written to Nintendo Switch, PlayStation and Xbox requesting information about their online gaming contracts to help better understand their practices. It is also calling on customers who use these services to [get in touch with the CMA and share their experiences](#) in order to assist the investigation, which will examine several issues, including:

- are the contract terms unfair? – do the companies' terms give them wide discretion to change the quality of the deal, for example, by reducing the number of games included or increasing the price?
- how easy it is to cancel or obtain a refund? – are there any factors that make it difficult for people to cancel their contract or get their money back?
- how fair is the auto-renewal process? – are customers clearly told that their membership will be rolled over, are they regularly reminded that they are on a roll-over contract before further payments are taken, and is auto-renewal set as the default option?

At this early stage, the CMA has not reached a view as to whether or not companies have broken consumer protection law. However, if the CMA thinks the companies' practices are misleading or their terms are unfair, such that they are breaking consumer protection law, it could take enforcement action.

Andrea Coscelli, Chief Executive of the CMA, said:

Roll-over contracts are becoming more and more commonplace and its

essential that they work well for customers.

Our investigation will look into whether the biggest online gaming companies are being fair with their customers when they automatically renew their contracts, and whether people can easily cancel or get a refund.

Should we find that the firms aren't treating people fairly under consumer protection law, we are fully prepared to take action.

This announcement is the second in a series of actions taken by the CMA in response to the Citizens Advice 'super-complaint' on the [loyalty penalty](#). The CMA identified a number of damaging practices relating to the loyalty penalty, including costly exit fees; time-consuming and difficult processes to cancel contracts or switch to new providers; requiring customers to auto-renew; and not giving sufficient warning that their contract will be rolled over.

All information relating to this investigation can be found on [the case page](#). This also sets out how people can get in touch with information on the concerns identified above.

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law.
2. The key pieces of consumer protection legislation relevant to the CMA's investigation are: the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (CPRs); Part 2 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015 (CRA); and the Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 (CCRs). The CPRs contain a general prohibition against unfair commercial practices and specific prohibitions against misleading actions, misleading omissions and aggressive commercial practices. Part 2 of the CRA aims to protect consumers against unfair contract terms and notices, and requires contract terms to be fair and transparent. The CCRs regulate the information that should be provided to consumers before they make a purchase, cancellation rights for certain contracts and the use of pre-ticked boxes for additional payments.
3. Enquiries should be directed to press@cma.gov.uk or 020 3738 6460.
4. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#). [Sign up to our email alerts](#) to receive updates on the markets cases.

[**Press release: CMA to investigate**](#)

online gaming companies' roll-over contracts

The CMA has today launched a consumer law investigation into Nintendo Switch, PlayStation and Xbox to find out whether their auto-renewal terms are unfair.

Press release: Funding boost for aviation security innovation

The Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) is making more funding available for innovations that enhance aviation security measures, courtesy of the Future Aviation Security Solutions (FASS) programme.

FASS – a joint initiative between the Department for Transport (DfT) and Home Office which was set up to improve aviation security by funding and supporting the development of innovative science and technology solutions – will provide up to £1 million for innovative solutions that can boost the screening of passengers and cargo at airports.

This substantial funding will build on existing aviation threat detection capabilities by encouraging industry and academia to come up with novel ideas that reinforce screening processes at UK and international airports.

Cutting-edge science and technology developed with this funding could mean passengers see shorter queues and experience faster screening while benefiting from more effective security measures.

Security Minister, Ben Wallace, said:

Ensuring that the UK is a world leader in aviation security is a key objective of the government's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST.

This is another example of bringing together government, industry and experts to ensure that the UK remains on the front foot and a global leader in the development of technologies that keep the public safe.

I look forward to seeing new ideas which improve security and make for a better experience at airports for passengers.

This funding will be made available to experts from industry and academia

through DASA's Open Call for Innovation focus areas – many of which focus exclusively on aviation. Alongside ideas that could improve the airport screening process for passengers, DASA is also seeking novel proposals that can boost the screening of aviation cargo.

Around 80% of air cargo is carried on passenger aircraft so it is important that it is robustly screened to ensure that prohibited items are not part of flown cargo. Identifying and investing in the latest screening solutions will help keep passengers – and those who work at airports – safe and secure.

DASA is requesting proposals from industry and academia through its Open Call for Innovation focus areas as follows:

Finding suspected threats on passengers during airport screening:

We are interested in receiving proposals for the development of hand-held solutions that will help detect both metallic and non-metallic threats on the body while reducing the need for person-person contact, particularly in harder-to-search areas of the body.

Matching passengers with their x-ray trays during airport screening:

We're looking for innovative solutions to ensure airport passengers are correctly linked to the x-ray trays they are using to put their personal effects through scanners.

Improving aviation cargo screening speed

We're looking for novel ideas that would help increase the speed, accuracy and volume at which cargo is screened.

The next deadline to submit proposals for this security funding is 2 May 2019. Full details of these areas of interest can be found [on our website](#).

[Press release: Funding boost for aviation security innovation](#)

Up to £1 million will be available to industry and academic experts with enterprising ideas