

News story: Transport ministers call on industry to become leaders in gender equality

Ministers across the Department for Transport (DfT) have written to industry leaders calling on them to take action to increase the availability of opportunities across the sector to women.

This action is the culmination of weeks of activity in which ministers across the Department for Transport have reached out to raise the issue of getting more women into the transport sector.

Drawing this together, the DfT announced that it will shortly be holding a major round-table to look into the barriers preventing women from joining the sector. It will seek to drive positive change similar to that seen within DfT over the last couple of years.

Currently, just 6% of pilots and 7% of train drivers are female, and women account for just 18% of the transport sector workforce overall. At the DfT, 2 of the 5 current ministers are women, as is the Permanent Secretary.

This year International Women's Day is being celebrated on Friday 8 March, with the theme of #BalanceforBetter to drive gender balance across the world.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

It is unacceptable that out of every 100 airline pilots, only 6 are women and that for every 100 train drivers only 7 are women.

There are some good initiatives across all transport sectors but it is clear that much more needs to be done by the industry to provide opportunities for women, as we work with them to better understand the reasons behind poor female representation across the transport workforce.

The round-table I am announcing today will help industry develop plans to bring more women into the sector and help ensure the widest possible talent from across the whole of society is engaged and able to access the great careers the transport sector offers.

Department for Transport ministers have been highlighting this issue across the industry and are asking them to work towards profound change.

Baroness Sugg visited Stansted Airport last week to meet a group of children who heard from female pilots about careers in the aerospace industry, and has written to Airlines UK, UK airlines and the Airport Operators Association. She also recently spoke at the launch of the British Airline Pilots

Association's Baby on Board campaign on maternity pay provision for pilots.

Nusrat Ghani continues to motivate the maritime industry through the [Women in Maritime Charter](#), which challenges companies to make progress on diversity, and last week signed the Women in Maritime Pledge alongside Hutchinson Ports. She is also supporting the Women in Maritime Taskforce and has today (March 8 2019) announced £100,000 for the 1851 Trust to support 10 roadshows to get young women interested in STEM subjects and maritime careers.

On Tuesday Chris Grayling [spoke at the Airport Operators Association about the under-representation of women in the aviation industry](#), and has ensured that gender balance in the rail sector is part of the [Williams Rail Review](#). Today he is announcing an industry-wide round-table which will explore the barriers for women to get into the transport sector.

Andrew Jones visited Doncaster on Thursday in the latest of many visits to where he has seen the work the rail industry is doing to improve female participation in the workforce, particularly at apprentice level, he has written to the Rail Delivery Group and Rail Supply Group encouraging them to do more at all levels of the industry.

Jesse Norman has reached out to the entire logistics sector by writing to the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, the Freight Transport Association, the Institute of Couriers, and the Road Haulage Association calling for greater representation of women across the sector. The department is also working with a representative group from across the logistics industry to develop a year of events and guidance to help the sector improve its gender diversity.

[Press release: Foreign Secretary affords Nazanin Zaghari Ratcliffe diplomatic protection](#)

Affording diplomatic protection in Nazanin's case represents formal recognition by the British Government that her treatment fails to meet Iran's obligations under International law and elevates it to a formal State to State issue.

The legal proceedings brought against Nazanin failed to meet international standards and during her time in prison, Nazanin has periodically been denied access to the medical care recommended by doctors.

Diplomatic protection is a rarely-used mechanism through which a state can seek protection on behalf of one of its nationals if it believes they have been wronged by another state.

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe is an innocent woman who has spent the last three years in an Iranian jail, separated from her daughter and husband. We have been working hard to secure her release but despite repeated efforts have not been successful. We have not even been able to secure her the medical treatment she urgently needs despite assurances to the contrary.

So I have today decided that the UK will take a step that is extremely unusual and exercise diplomatic protection. This represents formal recognition by the British Government that her treatment fails to meet Iran's obligations under international law and elevates it to a formal State to State issue.

I have not taken this decision lightly. I have considered the unacceptable treatment Nazanin has received over three years, including not just lack of access to medical treatment but also lack of due process in the proceedings brought against her. My decision is an important diplomatic step which signals to Tehran that its behaviour is totally wrong. It is unlikely to be a magic wand that leads to an overnight result. But it demonstrates to the whole world that Nazanin is innocent and the UK will not stand by when one of its citizens is treated so unjustly.

Iran is one of the oldest civilisations in the world. I know there are many in Iran who understand the unjustness of this situation. No government should use innocent individuals as pawns for diplomatic leverage so I call on Iran to release this innocent woman so she can be reunited with her family.

Mr Hunt informed in advance Nazanin's husband Richard to explain his decision. The Foreign Office continues to work to support all our dual national detainees in Iran.

[Foreign Secretary statement on Nazanin](#)

- Diplomatic protection is a mechanism under international law according to which a State may seek to secure reparation for injury to one of its nationals, on the basis that the second State has committed an internationally wrongful act against the national. It is the right of the State to raise with another State the question of treatment of one of its nationals by that other State and to call that other State to account on the international plane.
- Diplomatic protection is distinct from diplomatic immunity, which concerns the status of those accredited as diplomats in another state. It is also distinct from consular assistance where a state provides assistance to its nationals in another state;

- The general threshold conditions required in order for a State to consider whether or not to exercise diplomatic protection are generally accepted to be: (i) the commission of an internationally wrongful act; (ii) the exhaustion of local remedies; and (iii) proof of nationality, or, in the case of a dual national, predominant nationality. We assess that Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe meets these conditions;
- Even if the conditions for a State to consider whether or not to exercise diplomatic protection are met, there is no duty to provide it. It is an exercise of the Crown's discretion and a decision to be taken by the Foreign Secretary, taking into account all relevant considerations in the round;
- Diplomatic protection is rare, and the UK has previously stated that it will only exceptionally exercise diplomatic protection in the case of a dual national where the respondent state is the state of second nationality.
- Diplomatic protection does not automatically dictate any particular course of action. In this case, the Government's steps will be those which in all the circumstances are most likely to secure the objective of Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe's release;
- Diplomatic protection is a rarely used tool; the UK has not used it in recent memory.

Press release: Foreign Secretary affords Nazanin Zaghari Ratcliffe diplomatic protection

The Foreign Secretary has today (7 March) decided that the UK will exercise diplomatic protection in the case of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe as part of the Government's continuing efforts to secure her release.

News story: New Fisheries Minister celebrates International Year of Salmon

A project to help the revival of salmon on one of England's key rivers has been officially opened by Fisheries Minister Robert Goodwill today.

News story: New Fisheries Minister celebrates International Year of Salmon

Launched in the International Year of the Salmon, the fish pass at Linton-on-Ouse, in North Yorkshire, will allow salmon and other migratory fish, including trout and eels, to bypass a weir that blocks the way to their spawning grounds.

The scheme will also present a number of benefits for the local community, providing a source of green energy from the hydropower station and a new recreational facility for paddlers and canoeists.

The project is a partnership between the Canal & River Trust, Linton Hydro Ltd, British Canoeing, Sport England, Nun Monkton Estate and the Environment Agency.

Recent years have seen an international decline in salmon and stocks in many rivers in England are at the lowest levels on record.

It is one of many schemes that the Environment Agency is undertaking nationally with partners to improve migration for salmon and boost their numbers. Improvements to water quality have also meant that the number of salmon migrating up the Humber, along the River Ouse and the River Ure to spawn has begun to increase.

Fisheries Minister Robert Goodwill said:

I was delighted to open the Linton Lock fish pass today and I would like to thank our partners for their work on finding solutions to contribute to the recovery of salmon stocks.

It is only through continuing to take concerted action, and through

the co-operation of others, that we will successfully protect this iconic fish for future generations.

The pass encompasses state-of-the-art fish pass flights and an innovative lifting mechanism that moderates river flows to keep the route passable for fish while also benefitting recreational users of the river by creating a white water course for canoeists.

A series of drops and pools have been created for paddlers to practise and compete in and it is hoped that in the near future the white-water course will host slalom and freestyle competitions, attracting recreational paddlers from all over the region.

This scheme includes a new fish-friendly hydropower turbine in the form of a large, fish-friendly Archimedean screw, whose diameter of 5m (15ft) makes it the widest in the world. This innovative project was delivered by Mann Power Hydro Ltd, national hydro screw specialists who are based in North Yorkshire.

Pat O'Brien, Environment Agency fisheries technical specialist, said:

This is a fantastic partnership scheme that provides many positive environmental outcomes.

The hydropower station offers a source of green energy, it provides a new recreational facility for canoeists at a location close to York and fish passage for all species at no cost to the public purse.

The Linton Lock scheme is expected to produce around 1,870MWh of clean electricity each year which is enough to power 450 homes. A proportion of the electricity generated will go to Widdington Grange Farm, a family-owned free range chicken farm committed to sustainable farming.

Ben Seal, British Canoeing Places to Paddle Manager, said:

British Canoeing is very proud to have been part of the development of Linton White Water Course. It will be a fantastic regional facility of national significance. Its creative design fulfils both environmental and recreational needs, allowing canoeists to come and train, compete and play.

We certainly hope that this concept can be a blueprint for others to draw from in future.

Canal & River Trust, the wellbeing and waterway charity which looks after 2,000 miles of waterways in England and Wales are the navigation authority on the River Ouse.

Samantha O'Neill, from the Canal & River Trust, said:

This is a great project to help even more people enjoy the River Ouse. Our research shows that spending time by water helps make us feel happier and healthier. That's why we're working with partners, volunteers and communities across the country to transform canals and rivers into places where people can enjoy spending time and feel better – from boating and canoeing on the water to walking, cycling and fishing alongside.

International Year of the Salmon is a collaboration among organisations and countries throughout the Northern Hemisphere. It aims to support the conservation and restoration of wild salmon species, which are under threat worldwide.