

News story: LLWR initiative is centre stage at safety conference

An innovative safety initiative that enables LLW Repository Ltd (LLWR) to measure its performance across a range of workplace criteria was in the spotlight at a major event that brought together representatives from across the nuclear industry.

The 'Perfect Day' initiative, borrowed from framework contract partner NSG and adapted to meet the needs of LLWR, attracted plenty of interest at the NDA's Safety, Health and Wellbeing Day at Energus, in west Cumbria.

A wealth of information on Perfect Day featured in a 'Sharing Zone', where NDA sites that had developed successful initiatives were invited to share information.

Gary Cunningham, Deputy Head of Site, hosted LLWR's exhibition and was impressed with the high level of interest from across the industry.

"All discussions around the Perfect Day were really positive, everyone commented that it was a really good initiative that addressed the wider issues other than just focussing on high level numbers regarding accidents and injuries," Gary said.

"I was surprised by the level of interest shown in our work management (schedule adherence) criteria aspect of the Perfect Day. Several of the other NDA sites thought that this was an excellent addition and were impressed with our performance improvement in this area since the start of the initiative.

"Several of them commented that this was an area for them that needed improvement and they were very interested in our planning and delivery processes. They suggested that they would be in touch with us in future to get more details, so watch this space."

Perfect Day employs a metric that enables LLWR to measure its safety performance against a set of criteria. These are Safety, Quality, Environmental Stewardship, Security, Stakeholder Relations, Schedule Adherence, Standards and Expectations.

A Perfect Day is achieved only if everything goes to plan, no harm is suffered, actions are closed out on time and stakeholders are not given any reason to be unhappy with LLWR.

A running total of Perfect Days achieved in the year to date is presented on LLWR's intranet, so the workforce can gauge progress. LLWR Perfect Day rate this year is running at around 70%.

Gary added: "To round the day off the NDA senior executive managers reviewed the day and summarised the event and outputs. In his closing thoughts David Peattie (Chief Executive Officer) mentioned LLWR's Perfect Day a couple of

times in a positive context, again hopefully giving an indication of the message that we are being recognised for what we are doing in this area.”

Press release: Dstl trio named as finalist for the 2018 Women in Defence UK awards.

After making the shortlist announced in September, Penny Brookes, Carolyn Stothard and Petra Oyston progressed to the final three for their respective categories. The awards recognise exceptional women, men and teams in UK defence and this year, organisers have received over 300 nominations from across the defence community, including the Armed Forces, the MOD civil service and the defence industry.

Penny is a finalist in the Most Collaborative Award category, highlighting individuals who can demonstrate that creating a collaborative working arrangement within their organisation or working with another one creating a positive effect.

Her nominator said:

Penny has built an international research team that is delivering cutting-edge forensic techniques to benefit defence and security. She is quick to give credit to others; members of her team frequently receive awards and are asked to be plenary speakers at conferences. Penny's role as the conductor of this diverse orchestra is often missed, and she deserves wider recognition.

Reflecting on her nomination, Penny said:

I'm really proud to be nominated for this award. Although this falls within the category for individual awards, this award is for all of my colleagues (women and men) who research and develop forensic techniques. We are a diverse project team of over forty staff across five divisions of Dstl engaging across government, with UK academia, commercial partners and international partners within Australia, New Zealand and the US.

Petra has made the final three in the Innovation Award category, for excellence in innovation that has multiplied the effect of the UK defence mission.

Commenting on her award and work Petra, said:

Dstl is a science and technology organisation, and innovation is at the heart of what we do. I work with so many motivated, talented people, doing rewarding innovative research that makes a real difference to our Armed Forces, and so being nominated for this award is just so amazing and really reflects the team effort. I have been leading an effort evaluating synthetic biology and the opportunities this technology creates for defence capability. Using the power of biology we have overcome some of the challenges that have held back progress in improved and affordable armour materials in recent years.

Carolyn is included as a finalist in the Unsung Heroines category, celebrating those women, who, on an enduring basis, have improved the 'lot' of people in defence, essential to an organisation's output but never seeking recognition for what they do.

Described as "caring, understanding and sensitive", Carolyn is a dedicated line-manager, mentor and mediator and has supported many with mental health difficulties and neurodevelopmental conditions. She improves people's lives while developing a productive and inclusive working environment.

Carolyn said:

I am both surprised and genuinely delighted to be nominated for this award. I am proud to be able to raise the profile of women in Dstl, and the many and varied roles they undertake. I am simply a representative of all the many unsung heroines within the organisation. I consider myself to be extremely lucky to work for Dstl, which delivers such interesting, and important work – and moreover having the opportunity to work with some exceptional individuals.

Congratulations also go to Debra Carr, who made the shortlist for the Most Collaborative award and Michelle Nelson, who was shortlisted in the Outstanding Contribution award category.

The awards dinner takes place on Tuesday 6th November, when the winners of each category will be announced in the presence of the Secretary of State for Defence, The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson MP.

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Speech: UK & Samoa – A historic relationship set to become stronger

Fa'afetei i le talia o le tala ula atu a lenei ofisa ma le malo Peretania.

It is a great honour to be representing the Government and people of the United Kingdom here in Samoa, and a delight to be hosting you, friends and

colleagues, at a reception in Villa Vailima, this most beautiful of places.

And it is wonderful, just for one day, to fly the UK flag above this house. Many of you commented on it as you arrived – and joked that we had already found our new Residence in Samoa! But actually that flag is an antique: it flew over the British Consulate in 1800, and then, later, over this same building during the NZ Administration of New Zealand. But I promise that we will remove it at the end of today!

British High Commissioner Laura Clarke speaking at Villa Vailima

I came here to this house in March, during my first visit to Samoa when I presented my credentials. And I could see at once why Robert Louis Stevenson loved it so much that he made it his home: the climate is certainly kinder than that of his native Scotland! And in fact, when I looked around in March I found a small personal connection of my own to this place: a portrait upstairs of Robert Louis Stevenson, painted by my great great grandfather, the artist William Blake Richmond.

Of course, Robert Louis Stevenson wasn't the only person to fall in love with this country – with the "sacred centre of the universe" – and make it his home. There were, of course, British missionaries, before and after him, who made their lives here. John Williams of the London Missionary Society was, of course, one of the most notable – and it was the work of missionaries that perhaps set the tone for the friendship between our two countries.

Because although we are on opposite ends of the world, we share strong historical connections, and many similarities. We have a great deal in common:

- We are both island nations;
- We are both nations with long seafaring traditions
- our nations are built on the shared value of democracy, the rule of law, free speech and social equity
- we have a common legal tradition and common language;
- we are both part of the Commonwealth of Nations;
- and we share a commitment to tackle the existential threat that is climate change, and to protect and preserve our oceans.

This year the UK hosted the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, and Her Majesty the Queen was pleased to welcome Prime Minister Tuilaepa to London. And that was one of many occasions – most recently perhaps at the UN General

Assembly – that has seen the Prime Minister of Samoa use his voice on the world stage to champion the importance of urgent action on climate change. That is a shared priority for the UK and Samoa, and one on which we will continue to coordinate closely. As indeed is protecting our Oceans, and tackling plastic pollution: so I am delighted that Samoa is joining the Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance, which aims to reduce plastic pollution of our seas. On that note, the small gift bags that we have produced for the evening are eco-friendly, minimising our impact on the environment.

Samoa is a leader in the Pacific, it has convening power (whether that is hosting PIF, or indeed the Pacific games, which we are all looking forward to!) and it also had the courage to confront and tackle the challenges it faces.

And when I returned from my visit to Samoa in March this year, I advocated strongly, to London, for the UK to increase its presence in Apia. And – fortuitously – conversations were happening at the same time about how and where we should increase our diplomatic presence around the world.

So I am delighted that the UK will be opening a British High Commission in Apia next year. Our high-level relationship to date has been coordinated by High Commissioners, like me, who are based in Wellington, and with the support of Honorary Consuls like the fabulous Brenda, who is here tonight. But the time is right to increase our diplomatic presence in Samoa, to take the relationship and co-operation to the next level.

So part of the reason for my visit this week has been to consult widely, across Samoan Government, civil society, business, and with the Diplomatic Community, on how the UK should focus its increased presence – and where there is the greatest complementarity of interests. So it has been a privilege to meet with many of you and hear your thoughts in the course of that consultation.

And I have not come alone – as you can see! So I would like if I might to introduce my team who have come with me this week, and are working with me as we work to further strengthen the UK -Samoa relationship.

They are: Vinay Talwar, Tony McLeod, Tom Lord, and Jackie Vaimoso.

They are all working to prepare the ground for our future presence. But it will not happen straight away, and there is a lot to be done. So in the meantime, I very much value and enjoy the role of British High Commissioner to Samoa, and I will be returning, at least two more times, before I (reluctantly) hand the honour over to the new High Commissioner to Samoa!

La manuia le po. Soifua. Thank you.

News story: Major new scheme launched to support young people leaving care

Businesses including Amazon, Rolls-Royce and Barclays LifeSkills have pledged to support care leavers through a landmark government scheme launched to raise their career aspirations and improve their life skills.

More than 50 businesses, charities and every government department in England have signed up to the [Care Leaver Covenant](#), which commits to provide work based opportunities to young people leaving the care system.

Children's and Families Minister Nadhim Zahawi has today (Friday 26 October) set out an ambition for the scheme to create 10,000 work opportunities over the next ten years helping these young people gain vital skills and experiences as they enter the jobs market.

Due to be launched today in Birmingham, the Care Leaver Covenant is part of an unprecedented package of support for young people leaving care and smooth their transition into adulthood.

Too many care leavers do not achieve the same outcomes as their peers, with 40 per cent of care leavers aged 19 to 21 not in education, employment or training (NEET), compared to 13 per cent for this age group overall.

The Covenant will help care leavers navigate the work opportunities available and support them in fulfilling their ambitions. From today, they will have access to work placements and internships with big businesses, government departments, museums, theatres, or Premier League football clubs, as well as training workshops or life-skills coaching.

Ahead of the launch event in Birmingham, Children and Families Minister Nadhim Zahawi, said:

Becoming an adult is a daunting and challenging time for all of us, but I know from speaking to many young people leaving care, this transition can feel like facing a cliff edge.

This is a landmark moment on how businesses can support care leavers, who through no fault of their own have been dealt a difficult hand in life.

Young people leaving care have often overcome huge challenges but struggle to achieve the same positive outcomes in life as their peers, which is simply not fair. When we talk about burning injustices, this is what we mean – so we need to be more ambitious for these young people.

Working with businesses, charities and every government department, our new Covenant will improve the offer we make to these young

people, through work placements, skills training or access to university so that they can fulfil their potential and flourish as adults.

The Covenant, run by Spectra First, is part of the government's ambition to improve care leavers' outcomes so they go on to lead happy and successful lives. The pledges on offer include work placements with organisations such as Liverpool FC Foundation, the Science Museum Group and Rolls-Royce to help them get their first step into a career.

In addition to the private and voluntary sector offers of support, the package of support for care leavers includes:

- 12-month internships from every government department in Whitehall, including 100 12-month internships from January 2019;
- Support from universities, such as bursaries and accommodation, with Cambridge, Leeds, and Manchester universities committing to supporting care leavers – data shows that only 6 per cent of care leavers aged 19 to 21 go on to higher education; and
- Resources and tools from Barclays Life Skills to help care leavers to manage their money better, as they often lack the safety net of financial support from their families.

At the launch of the Covenant at Birmingham ICC today, the Children and Families Minister will urge more businesses to sign up and consider how to build on the offers of support, as well as challenging employers to offer dedicated mentors for care leavers taking up placements and internships.

The Covenant has been signed by 65 organisations, and dozens more have committed to sign, as well as attracting the support of advocates for young people in care including award-winning children's author Dame Jacqueline Wilson – whose series of books about Tracy Beaker tell the story of a young girl living between the care system and a foster parent.

Dame Jacqueline Wilson said:

I think it's fantastic that at last there's going to be a Care Leaver Covenant. About time too! If my fictional Tracy Beaker were real she'd be yelling 'Yay!'

Seriously though, I'm so pleased that care leavers will have the help, information and access they deserve so they can get on with their lives and fulfil all their hopes and ambitions.

The Covenant builds on a breadth of government work already underway to improve the lives of care leavers, including schemes such as Staying Put, allowing care leavers to continue living with their foster families after the age of 18, and piloting Staying Close so young people leaving residential care can keep links with people they trust.

The government is already providing £5 million for three Social Impact Bonds to help care leavers into education, employment or training post-18 and £3.2 million for 47 councils to employ specialist personal advisers to help care leavers most at risk of rough sleeping in 2019/20.

The role of these personal advisers has been extended to support care leavers up to the age of 25, and councils now have a duty to publish their offer of support for care leavers online. Many councils have chosen to exempt care leavers from council tax to support them financially.

Kirstie Mackey, Director of LifeSkills at Barclays, said:

LifeSkills helps young people to make the difficult transition from education into the world of work, whilst also preparing them for independent living and how to better manage their finances.

We've helped 6.7 million young people so far and are delighted to be working with Spectra First to use the knowledge we have gained and the educational resources we have developed to really help transform the lives and financial capability of young care leavers across the UK. I encourage other businesses to sign up to the Care Leavers Covenant so that we can work together to help some of the most vulnerable young people in society.

Paul Broadhead, Rolls-Royce Head of Community Investment and Education Outreach, said:

At Rolls-Royce we are committed to inspiring and equipping a future generation of innovators and pioneers. Every child deserves the opportunity to explore the world of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) and it is why we offer a wide variety of programmes and activities supporting this. This includes robotics challenges, nearly 700 work experience placements and our young apprentice programme.

We recognise the importance of attracting talent, which is equally distributed across our communities while the opportunity is not. This is why Rolls-Royce is committed to help change this and we are delighted to be supporting the Care Leaver Covenant.

Barnardo's Chief Executive, Javed Khan said:

Sadly young people leaving care often struggle to gain good qualifications and get their foot on the career ladder. That's why Barnardo's is committed to offering high quality work placements as well as specialist advice and support. We believe that all young people deserve the opportunity to follow their dreams. That's why our ambition is for care leavers to have the same life chances as

other young people, including access to employment, education and training.

Matthew Gordon, Chief Executive of Spectra First, delivery partner for the Covenant, said:

We are thrilled to be a part of this ground breaking initiative and are confident that we can use our creativity to find meaningful and practical opportunities for our care leaving community.