

News story: David Mundell urges Scottish businesses to get exporting

The British Business Bank, the UK Government's national economic development bank, hosted a discussion in Glasgow about how to support growth ambitions of small businesses – and get them exporting more.

SMEs are the backbone of the Scottish economy, providing 1.2 million jobs. They are particularly important to rural economies, where nearly half of all Scottish SMEs are located.

But Scottish SMEs are less likely to export than counterparts in the rest of the UK – just one in seven compared with one in five across the UK.

Scotland Secretary, David Mundell, said:

I'm very pleased to support the British Business Bank's efforts to drive economic growth for small businesses, both in Scotland, and right across the UK.

SMEs are the beating heart of the Scottish economy, offering exceptional skills, products and services. The UK Government is determined to do all it can to support them.

I sincerely hope companies who are thinking about expanding into international markets engage with the British Business Bank and make it a reality.

The UK Government acknowledges the fundamental role of business in driving the economy and creating jobs – and also understand the challenges.

That's why in the Budget last year, the Chancellor committed an additional £2.5 billion to the British Business Bank, along with a further £500 million for technology initiatives.

The bank already supports nearly 7,000 businesses in Scotland, providing hundreds of millions of pounds in finance and start-up loans to SMEs.

Economists at the British Business Bank estimate that, if the availability of 'patient capital' was increased to the same level as the US, Scottish businesses could benefit from up to £500 million of additional funding per year.

The Department for International Trade is also providing strong leadership in this area and working more closely than ever with the devolved administrations.

The Board of Trade has been reconvened, offering opportunities to engage with

regional expertise and ensure that the benefits of free trade are spread more evenly across the country.

The recently published Export Strategy sets an ambitious target to increase UK total exports as a proportion of GDP to 35%.

[Press release: Khan al-Ahmar: France, Germany, Italy, Spain and UK joint statement](#)



A Foreign and Commonwealth Office spokesperson said:

France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom have repeatedly expressed their concern about the village of Khan al-Ahmar, which is located in a sensitive location in Area C, of strategic importance for preserving the contiguity of a future Palestinian state.

We took note of Wednesday's decision by the Israeli Supreme Court leaving a demolition of Khan al-Ahmar up to the discretion of the Israeli government.

We therefore join High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini in reiterating our call to the Israeli government not to go ahead with its plan to demolish the village – including its school – and displace its residents.

The consequences a demolition and displacement would have on the residents of this community, including their children, as well as on the prospects of the two-state solution would be very serious.

Correspondence: eAlert: 10 September 2018 – Woodland Creation now available year round

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News story: Defence Minister sees Stockport firm finishing multi-million-pound military bridge order for Australian Army

- Defence Minister Stuart Andrew's visit to WFEL in Stockport signified the completion of the final Dry Support Bridge which is part of a £53m contract with the Australian Army.
- The Defence Minister described the firm, which has benefited from £600m-worth of export orders, as 'a model for how companies across the country can thrive on the global stage'.
- He witnessed a 90-minute demo build of a 46-metre bridge from the firm, who are renowned world leaders in the field.
- He visited with the Head of Australian Defence Staff London, Air Commodore Brian Edwards.

Defence Minister Stuart Andrew today visited a Stockport company which is world-renowned in building tactical military bridges. While there, he marked the completion of a multi-million-pound deal to supply the Australian Army with the vital logistics equipment.

The £53m deal with Australia is part of £600m-worth of export orders that WFEL has amassed over the past decade. The Defence Minister described the firm as 'a model for how companies across the country can thrive on the global stage' at a time when defence exports have surged by over 50% to £9bn.

The workers also demonstrated their world-class reputation by constructing a 46-metre Dry Support Combat Bridge in just 90 minutes whilst the Minister

toured the factory.

The bridges will be used in combat situations providing rapidly-deployable temporary infrastructure ensuring vital equipment and soldiers can navigate their way through the most challenging terrain. The military bridges can also be used in times of crisis during natural disasters maintaining essential lifelines to those who need it the most.

Defence Minister Stuart Andrew said:

Through WFEL, Stockport is leading the world in military bridges which help troops defeat our enemies and provide essential aid to people in disaster zones. Not only does WFEL bring hundreds of jobs and millions of pounds of investment to the UK, but it enables relations with some of our closest allies to flourish. As they finish an order for Australia, kick one off for America and look towards more opportunities to build British bridges, they are a model for how companies across the country can thrive on the global stage and play a key role in the defence of our nation.

Defence Minister sees Stockport firm finishing multi-million-pound military bridge order for Australian Army. Crown copyright.

Work continues at WFEL following the completion of this Australian order as the company has now turned its focus to new orders for the US Army, building upon the 116 military bridges that the company has already built for US forces.

Whilst 90% of its Stockport production is exported overseas, WFEL's contribution to UK defence can be traced back as far as 1915. The company has been designing and producing bridges for the UK military since the 1970s, and the relationship remains to this day – the British Army has over 50 sets in service. They have been proven in the field in the likes of Iraq and Afghanistan.

There are also potential UK opportunities in the pipeline for WFEL, with the company currently bidding to update and replace some of the MOD's military bridging systems. It could become part of the Mechanised Infantry Vehicle (MIV) programme's supply chain, which would support the current 227-strong local workforce.

The opportunities could mean a further boost to investment in the North-West, which already benefits from £2 billion of defence spending – supporting over 12,000 industry jobs in the region.

Ian Anderton, Chief Executive of WFEL, said:

As the leading tactical military bridge maker globally, WFEL continues to work to provide solutions for customers like the Australian Defence Force. Our long-standing relationship with the

ADF first began over 30 years ago, when they chose our Medium Girder Bridges. We have been delighted to continue to support them again today, not only with the supply of further MGBs but also with a significant capability enhancement with the latest mechanised Dry Support Bridges.

The adoption of the DSB not only provides the ADF's Manoeuvre Commanders with the ability to cross significant wet or dry gaps quickly and efficiently, it allows a level of inter-operability with an ever-growing user base. We have worked collaboratively with the Commonwealth's Managing Contractor to reduce risk for this contract and are pleased to be providing an off-the-shelf solution to the ADF's wide-gap tactical bridging requirements.

Defence Minister sees Stockport firm finishing multi-million-pound military bridge order for Australian Army. Crown copyright.

The Minister was also accompanied by the Head of Australian Defence Staff London, Air Commodore Brian Edwards.

Head of Australian Defence Staff London, Air Commodore Brian Edwards said:

The Australian-UK bilateral defence relationship has been forged over many years and is incredibly strong and enduring. In recent times, we have seen an increased emphasis in opportunities for collaboration from a defence industry standpoint. This project introduces into service the latest addition to the Australian Army's suite of combat bridging. It will ensure that the Australian Defence Force has an enhanced gap crossing capability which will enable land forces, both mounted and dismounted, to cross wet and dry gaps in support of operations.

The Australian deal was made up of two contracts, following an internationally competed tender. As a result, WFEL supplied its leading Medium Girder Bridges (MGBs) and Dry Support Bridges (DSBs) to the Australian Defence Force (ADF). This has resulted in a huge boost for the 132 organisations who have benefited from contributing the WFEL supply chain.

The UK enjoys a very close bilateral relationship with Australia, which has strengthened over recent years, with the introduction of annual conferences and close co-operation on many international issues – including a shared commitment to fighting extremism on coalition operations, especially in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Australia also recently decided to choose BAE Systems to build nine British-designed Type 26 warships. The deal, which could be worth up to £20 billion, has been hailed as the biggest Naval ship deal for a decade. It is not only another clear example of Britain's world-leading defence industry, but has been described by the Defence Secretary as 'the dawn of a new era in the relationship between Australia and Great Britain, forging new ties in defence

and industry in a major boost as we leave the European Union’.

Form: Monthly Shellfish Activity Return (MSAR 1)

Vessels are required to complete the monthly return form.

Those masters of the above vessels already completing an EU logbook as a record of their fishing activity can continue to do so, and will not be required to complete the form, as long as all trips within that month are submitted via the logbook.

Masters of vessels who commence logbook completion during part of the month will be required to submit a MSAR 1 form detailing the catch for the month prior to the date they commence completing the logbook.

The form must be completed daily, and must be submitted to the nearest [MMO coastal office](#) no later than the 15 day of the following calendar month. Nil returns are also required.

[Local office addresses and contact details](#)