

News story: Dennis Thompson to step down as Managing Director of LLWR

Dennis Thompson has announced his intention to step down from the role of Managing Director of LLW Repository Ltd at the end of September to pursue new opportunities within his parent organisation AECOM.

Over the next few weeks, Paul Pointon will be appointed as Acting Managing Director, with Martin Walkingshaw taking on the role of Acting Deputy Managing Director.

Both of these appointments are for a period of not less than six months to ensure stability and continuity. Paul will retain oversight of the Repository Development Programme, at the same time fulfilling leadership and governance roles.

Martin will retain his current role as Head of Commercial and Strategic Development and support Paul in the execution of oversight and governance activities.

Both of these appointments have been agreed in principle by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), Parent Body Organisation (PBO) and Site Licence Company (SLC) Boards and will be formally enacted on 28th September 2018, subject to completion of the Management of Change process.

Dennis will remain as Chairman of the SLC Board, to support the organisation as it goes through this transition.

We are sure that all at LLWR will support Paul and Martin in their new roles, and we wish Dennis every success in his future endeavours and a fond but short lived farewell as he takes up the mantle of Non Executive Chair of LLWR and pursues new opportunities.

News story: Tackling child sexual exploitation online

Today (Monday 3 September), the Home Secretary set out the scale of online child sexual exploitation (CSE), with a 700% increase in child abuse images being referred to the National Crime Agency (NCA) in the last five years, up to 80,000 people in the UK presenting some kind of sexual threat to children online and material increasingly featuring younger and younger children.

In a speech at the headquarters of the [National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children \(NSPCC\)](#) the Home Secretary vowed to lead the cross-

Government effort in the response to the evolving threat of online CSE, including funding for law enforcement, intelligence agencies and a new prevention drive.

He called on the technology industry to work in partnership with each other and with government to stop online child sexual abuse, sharing solutions and best practice to improve the response.

In his [speech](#), Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

I've been impressed by the progress the likes of Google, Facebook, Microsoft, Twitter and Apple have made on counter-terrorism.

Now I want to see the same level of commitment for child sexual exploitation. In recent years there has been some good work in this area. But the reality is that the threat has evolved quicker than industry's response and industry has not kept up. And there are some companies that refuse to take it seriously.

I am not just asking for change, I am demanding it. And the people are demanding it too.

And if web giants do not take more measures to remove this type of content from their platforms, then I won't be afraid to take action.

How far we legislate will be informed by the action and attitude that industry takes.

He said that he expects technology companies to:

- block child sexual abuse material as soon as companies detect it being uploaded
- stop child grooming taking place on their platforms
- work with government and law enforcement to shut down live-streamed child abuse
- for companies to be much more forward leaning in helping law enforcement agencies to deal with these types of crimes
- show a greater level of openness and transparency and a willingness to share best practice and technology between companies

Today, the Home Secretary announced an extra £21.5 million investment in law enforcement over the next 18 months to reduce the volume of offending and pursue the most hardened and dangerous abusers. The majority of this funding

will go to UK law enforcement and intelligence agencies to tackle the most tech-savvy and dedicated abusers.

The Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse estimates that 15% of girls and 5% of boys experience some form of sexual abuse before the age of 16 while NSPCC research shows some children are being groomed online and blackmailed to perform sexual acts in less than 45 minutes from initial contact.

Director General Lynne Owens at the NCA said:

There are a significant number of sophisticated offenders including those involved in grooming, streaming of live abuse and transnational sex offending, who are very dangerous. The NCA and the police prioritise these investigations to prosecute offenders and safeguard vulnerable children. However, investigators are facing a constant uphill struggle because of the significant numbers of offenders committing preventable crimes, such as viewing and sharing images and videos that are easily accessible online.

The technology exists for industry to design-out these offences and to stop this material from being viewed. Some online platforms have taken important steps to improve safety, but we are asking for more. We want industry to invest in preventing these online offences from happening in the first place. It is not just a matter for law enforcement. We need industry to make it harder for anyone to access indecent images on the internet.

A further £2.6 million will be made available for prevention work, including to the child protection charity the [Lucy Faithfull Foundation](#). The charity works to reduce demand for online sexual images of children and prevent offending before it occurs.

Chief Executive of the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, Elaine McConnell said:

For the last 3 years we've been working to deter illegal online behaviour by highlighting to offenders and potential offenders that viewing or sharing sexual images of children is a crime, that it's incredibly harmful to the children in the images and that the consequences of the behaviour are serious.

Not all offenders want to stop – but we know many do, and we know that with our help they can change their behaviour – the challenge for us is reaching them. We would welcome more collaborative working with tech companies to spread deterrence messages and signpost to our services.

With funding from the Home Office announced today, we will be able to answer more calls through our confidential 'Stop it Now!' helpline to reduce offending, reduce demand for images, and protect more children.

To further support the response the Home Secretary also outlined measures to support law enforcement to track down offenders, build children's resilience, prevent abuse occurring and support victims. These include:

- the Home Secretary will be convening a meeting of industry experts in the US, in partnership with Microsoft to challenge companies to work together to come up with tools to detect online child grooming which will then be offered for free to other companies
- £250,000 being made available to support new ideas on how to detect and disrupt live streaming of abuse
- concerted international co-operation at the next Five Country Ministerial – a major meeting of the Five Eyes security partners – which will be held in London in 2019, focusing on targeting online CSE
- a new international network of Government advisers on serious and organised crime who will be stationed around the world and will help coordinate and drive action to tackle child sexual abuse in different regions
- a working group will be established with business and the advertising industry to look at stopping profit being generated from adverts on child abuse websites

The measures outlined by the Home Secretary builds on the government's substantial investment since 2015 in UK law enforcement capabilities to tackle child sexual exploitation. This includes:

- nearly doubling the number of officers in the National Crime Agency combatting CSE
 - investing £600,000 in Project Arachnid – a ground-breaking piece of technology that helps identify and remove Child Sexual Abuse material from the internet. It's already crawled 1.3 billion web pages for suspected child sexual abuse material, analysed 51 billion images and issued more than 800,000 takedown notices
 - establishing the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse to thoroughly examine the extent to which institutions in England and Wales have done their job at protecting children
 - announcing that relationship education will be made mandatory in primary schools as well as teaching children at every level about staying safe online
 - awarding 11 councils £13 million through the Trusted Relationships Fund to protect vulnerable children from exploitation and abuse
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Press release: Minister for Asia statement on the sentencing of Reuters journalists in Burma



Mark Field, Minister for Asia and the Pacific, said:

I am extremely disappointed that two Reuters journalists in Burma, Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, have today been found guilty and sentenced to seven years imprisonment for nothing more than doing their jobs. They provided valuable reporting on abhorrent human rights violations in Rakhine State, and I have consistently called for their immediate release, including directly with the Burmese government.

In any democracy, journalists must be free to carry out their jobs without fear or intimidation. This verdict has undermined both freedom of the media and the rule of law in Burma. Officials from the British Embassy in Rangoon have attended the trial throughout, and believe that the judge has ignored the evidence presented to him, as well as ruling against Burma's own laws.

This is a bad day for Burma, but those of us who have consistently called for Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo's freedom will not give up. We call again today for their immediate release. We will remain in close contact with Reuters, and maintain our support as they consider next steps.

Further information

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Press release: Minister visits Cox's Bazar camps ahead of International Development Committee evidence session

Last week Minister Burt saw first-hand UK funded shelters which are offering enhanced and sturdier protection to the Rohingya people during the inclement weather. He also met with UK-funded aid workers who are providing vulnerable children in the camps with psychosocial support and witnessed the life-saving work to ensure malnourished Rohingya children have access to food high in nutritional value.

The UK Government continues to lead the way in the speed and size of its response to this latest crisis and one year on the focus is on making sure the Rohingya have access to the further support they need while they are living in the camps.

UK aid will provide access to skills training to improve the prospects for Rohingya men and women, better equipping them for the future. In his visit to the camps Minister Burt witnessed first-hand the skills being provided to Rohingya at a small activities centre, where men and women are being taught to sew.

International Development Minister, Alistair Burt said:

Bangladesh is in the midst of the rainy season and there are almost one million Rohingya people depending on the international community during this precarious time. Seeing first-hand the UK-funded work to construct sturdier and more resilient structures is a positive sign and demonstrates that we are doing all that we can to protect them. The realities of the camp have become even more real for me but I have been reassured that our support to this persecuted community is helping them to rebuild their lives.

Minister Burt will appear before the International Development Committee (IDC) in September and will use his evidence session as an opportunity to clearly demonstrate how UK aid is playing an integral role in ensuring the safety of vulnerable Rohingya people, especially during the monsoon and cyclone season.

Research and analysis: West nile virus in owls in Germany

Updated: Added the updated outbreak assessment (17 October 2018).

Preliminary and updated outbreak assessments for west nile virus found in owls (*Strix nebulosa*) in Lower Saxony, Germany.