

News story: Trade Union Facility Time Publication Service: 2017-2018 Data published

Today the Cabinet Office published all [public sector facility time data](#) submitted by organisations using the [facility time reporting service](#).

Under the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 all public sector organisations that employ over 49 full time employees are required to publish certain data relating to facility time usage within their annual reports, on their organisation website and also through the Cabinet Office reporting service, by the 31st July.

Over 55% of the total expected returns for most sectors were received, including the NHS and Local Authorities. However there are still many public sector bodies who have provided no data and are still required to do so. The Cabinet Office will be following up these late returns to ensure there is a full dataset in due course.

The Facility Time regulations are intended to ensure transparency of facility time and the associated costs to the taxpayer. Organisations should ensure the costs to the taxpayer of facility time are proportionate to the benefits in the delivery of public services.

Minister for Implementation Oliver Dowden said:

The regulations provide a framework for open and transparent monitoring. Greater accountability has already been introduced within the Civil Service, resulting in sensible savings.

Press release: Important role of festivals in Scotland to be recognised by UK Government

The Scottish Secretary David Mundell will be joined by other UK Government cabinet ministers in Edinburgh this week in a show of support for Scottish festivals and to celebrate the international profile and significant economic boost they bring.

Latest figures show that Edinburgh's festivals as a whole contribute £313 million to the Scottish economy.

The Scottish Secretary will today (Monday August 20) host a reception to thank organisers for their efforts and will be attending performances across festivals this week.

Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

Scotland's festivals are of immense importance to the UK and internationally. Running not only in August but throughout the year they are a hotbed of home-grown and international talent spanning so many disciplines.

The Edinburgh festivals are a phenomenon which contribute so much to the economy as both significant employers and tourist attractions. Their excellence makes them of worldwide significance and embodiments of what Scotland has to offer on a global stage and the UK Government looks forward to the festivals going from strength to strength for future generations to enjoy.

Earlier this month, the [UK Government announced £100,000 in funding for this year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#) to help it deliver a step change in showcasing emerging artistic talent to the world. The UK Government has a commitment to promote Britain on a global stage and Scotland's festivals exemplify this.

Edinburgh is the home to 12 iconic festivals and the season goes well beyond August, encompassing the likes of Edinburgh's Hogmanay and the Edinburgh International Science Festival.

Key organisers of Scotland's festivals have been invited to the annual Office for the Secretary of State for Scotland Festivals Reception today. Hosted by the Scottish Secretary, the event celebrates the important role the festivals play in Scotland's economy and their cultural contribution to the UK.

The reception will include a performance by Circus Abyssinia from Ethiopia. Featuring the Konjowoch Troupe, their show "Ethiopian Dreams" is a retelling of the cast's own journey towards founding a circus in the country. Showcasing exciting stunts and circus skills, the performance tells the story of brothers Bibi and Bichu joining the circus.

Tomorrow (Tuesday August 21) Mr Mundell will see the "Sowhereto Africa" performance at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe followed by visits to Edinburgh Art Festival and Edinburgh International Festival. Finally, Mr Mundell will visit Army @ The Fringe to see "The Troth Akademi", a story of how Indian men fought for the Allies in World War One.

News story: Giant crane to help bring historic chimney down

The 110m structure – the scene of Britain’s worst nuclear accident – will begin to disappear later this year.

A giant crane has been constructed to bring it down.

Timelapse of crane erection

The 152m crane is the tallest structure ever built at Sellafield, just six metres shorter than the Blackpool Tower.

It will begin work this autumn, removing and lowering chunks of the chimney cut out using diamond wire saws.

Duncan Thompson from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority said:

The complex task of decommissioning and demolishing the Windscale Pile One stack has reached an important stage.

It is another example of the ingenuity that goes into solving the UK’s decommissioning problems.

Once demolition begins it will be a very visible demonstration of the work being done to make Sellafield a safer place.

The Windscale Pile One chimney, with its distinctive top-heavy appearance, has dominated the Sellafield skyline for nearly 70 years.

Famously, its filtration system was a last-minute addition, placed unusually at its summit.

Despite being mockingly referred to as ‘Cockroft’s Folly’, after its designer Sir John Cockroft, it turned out to be a masterstroke.

In 1957, fire broke out in the Windscale Pile One reactor. The sky-high filters captured an estimated 95 per cent of the radioactive dust created.

Now, the chimney is a decommissioning project.

Teams from Sellafield Ltd and its supply chain are working together to safely pull it down.

The first piece to go will be the square-shaped ‘diffuser’ at the top.

Because buildings containing nuclear material surround the stack, traditional

demolition techniques like explosives cannot be used.

George Frost from Sellafield Ltd, said:

We're making visible progress on this demolition, and it won't be long now until we start to see the diffuser removed.

The chimney is one of the iconic legacies of Sellafield's past, so the skyline change as the chimney is removed will be significant.

This has been a challenging piece of work, so everyone is pleased to see work progressing. This is thanks not only to the Sellafield and supply chain teams involved now, but over more than a generation.

News story: Teens tackle cyber security programme

Around 45 students, aged 13 to 17, have taken part in the CyberFirst scheme, a government-recognised programme, developed by GCHQ's National Cyber Security Centre and run by Energus in west Cumbria.

The group worked alongside industry specialists to gain an insight into the critical role they could play in securing the nation's digital infrastructure and services.

Training took place in a cyber lab environment, all aimed at giving the students a realistic experience of working in the cyber industry.

The STEM-related course underpins the skills and knowledge needed to prepare young people for the complex field of cyber security.

It included sessions on security devices, understanding networks, dealing with insecure devices, and securing yourself.

Cyber security and resilience has become a priority for industry and in January the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) funded the launch of the Cyber Lab classroom at Energus, with the aim of closing the skills gap in cyber security.

It forms part of an NDA cyber programme that is designed to grow capability and capacity for the NDA and its businesses, bolstered by an £80 million investment over the next 5 years in cyber safety.

CyberFirst students

Brad Cleaver, Business Services Manager at Energus, who ran the CyberFirst course, said:

We started recruiting for this course in October through drop-in sessions at schools across Cumbria. CyberFirst is an opportunity for our staff to spot potential cyber experts while encouraging computer science at school and future careers paths into apprenticeships and specific courses.

Yasmin El Mozer, aged 17, took part in the CyberFirst programme. She said that she'd had the chance to talk to cyber tutors and learn more about future career paths in the industry. The hands-on opportunity offered by the programme helped her understand the need for cyber security and how systems can be hacked.

Rob Higgins, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's Security Information and Services Director, added:

The CyberFirst initiative is a pivotal part of the government's National Cyber Security Programme. Cyber security and resilience is vital to the NDA and its estate, so encouraging young people into cyber-related careers will go a long way in helping to keep us safe in the future from the growing cyber threat.

News story: Our commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR)

As a government organisation and a large employer, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is important to us. We're committed to ethical and sustainable business practices. This means we take account of our social, economic and environmental impact. CSR is good for the planet, our employees, customers and communities.

There are 4 main strands to our CSR activities.

1. Environment (estates and environment)

We're committed to reducing our direct impact on the environment by actively managing our waste, emissions and consumption of natural resources.

2. People (human resources, health and wellbeing)

We aim to create a workplace that encourages diversity and equal

opportunities for all. We actively encourage professional development through our 5-days-a-year learning programme and support employee health and wellbeing.

3. Procurement (finance and purchasing)

We seek out the most advantageous procurement route for the life of a project. This means 90% of our supply chain contracts are through government frameworks, where suppliers have been tendered, audited and checked against important criteria like financial stability and environmental compliance.

4. Community (volunteering, skills matching and fundraising)

To play a positive role in society, we've built a culture that promotes employee volunteering, skills matching and fundraising. We actively support local businesses and the communities in which we operate.

Origins of our CSR

In 2014, we created our CSR strategy. Its aim was to bring together and recognise the range of CSR activities we were already doing and to outline future commitments under each of the 4 main strands. We wanted to show how we're contributing to sustainable development and adopting responsible behaviours that reflect our core values as an organisation.

Our CSR today

Since 2013, we've raised over £50,000 for charity and this year we've been accredited with the [MIND gold award](#) and the [IIP gold award](#).

Our CSR activities have grown significantly over the last 5 years. We've increased our volunteer days from 3 to 5 days a year. This means each employee now gets 5 days a year to go out and support local projects and charities. We also have CSR ambassadors across the organisation, who help the CSR team set up and run various community projects.

Some of our current team volunteer days include:

- Bute Park Litter Pick
- Cardiff Food Bank
- Cardiff Dogs Home
- Ty Hafan Craft Centre

Our CSR Coordinator, Leanne Hugglestone, spoke to us about her passion for CSR and our responsibilities as a government organisation to help the local community.

Leanne said:

According to 'Business in the Community', a good goal to have for staff volunteering is around the 18 to 20% mark. Last year we hit

28% unique volunteers in Companies House.

[Listen to our podcast.](#)

Leanne explains how we've impacted our community, and the future of CSR at Companies House. From donating our office furniture worth over £40,000, to helping local charities through the knowledge and skills of our staff volunteers.

To stay up to date with our CSR activities, [follow us on Twitter](#) and search #CompaniesHouseCSR.