

# News story: Independent chemical weapons experts invited to the UK to assist in Amesbury investigation

The UK has invited independent technical experts from the international chemical weapons watchdog to travel to the UK early next week to independently confirm the identity of the nerve agent which has resulted in the death of one British national in Amesbury, and has left another in a serious condition in hospital.

Peter Wilson, UK Permanent Representative to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), has written to the Organisation's Director General inviting them to assist in accordance with Article VIII 38 (e) of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

During their visit they will be able to collect samples to inform this work. These samples will be analysed at highly reputable international laboratories designated by the OPCW.

The use of chemical weapons is unacceptable and contravenes international law. The UK remains committed to upholding the integrity of the OPCW as the implementing body for the Chemical Weapons Convention overseeing the global ban on their use.

## **Further information**

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### **Further information**

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## **Press release: Heathrow's flying visit to West Cumbria**

Heathrow is creating four regional support hubs, in various locations, in order to spread the economic benefits of their expansion around the UK.

We submitted an expression of interest in turning the former Alcan site at Lillyhall into a 'Heathrow Hub' on behalf of our supply chain and local stakeholders, including Cumbria's Local Enterprise Partnership, Allerdale Borough Council, Copeland Borough Council, Britain's Energy Coast Business Cluster, Sue Hayman MP (Workington) and Trudy Harrison MP (Copeland).

If successful the site could be used as a base for logistics, manufacturing and construction. It has already made the 'long-list' after initial expressions of interest were whittled down from 121 to 65.

A delegation from Heathrow has been visiting each of the 65 sites over several months – today was our turn. As well as the Alcan site, the delegation visited the Port of Workington.

Our head of community and development, Jamie Reed, and our head of community relations, Gary McKeating, hosted the visit, which was also attended by stakeholders including Sue Hayman, Mark Fryer, deputy leader of Allerdale Borough Council, Pat Graham, the Chief Executive of Copeland Borough Council and John Grainger, from Britain's Energy Coast Business Cluster.

### **What has Heathrow's expansion got to do with Sellafield?**

Creating resilient economies is one of the objectives of our Social Impact Strategy – that means we've made a commitment to helping drive new economic opportunities for the region (as well as increasing the scale, diversity and development of existing sectors).

In short that means that we have a strategic aim to help improve the short and long term economic prospects of the region – and an opportunity like the one presented by Heathrow's expansion could have a significant and sustainable positive impact.

### **What happens next?**

Heathrow will take some time to further consider the next steps, and will come back to those long-listed to seek more information and invite formal bids after shortlisting.

If successful we'll work in collaboration with partners in West Cumbria to develop a formal bid.

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## **[News story: RAF receives 20th Atlas transport aircraft](#)**

Secretary of State for Defence Gavin Williamson announced the arrival today at a gala dinner at the Royal International Air Tattoo. The aircraft was handed over to the RAF at Brize Norton, home of the UK's Air Mobility Force. This coincided with crucial trials to test Atlas's ability to deliver cargo by parachute and undergo air-to-air refuelling using a RAF Voyager aircraft.

Atlas, which contributed to hurricane relief in the Caribbean last autumn as part of Operation Ruman, is currently deployed on operations in the Middle East and replaced C-130 Hercules in the South Atlantic this spring.

Secretary of State for Defence Gavin Williamson said:

From deploying troops to transporting armoured vehicles, the Atlas aircraft has played a global role in operations in the Middle East against Daesh and providing vital relief in the Caribbean. As we come closer to receiving the full fleet of aircraft, we can be proud of the role the Atlas has played in supporting the RAF lift-off into a new century of air power.

The newly-delivered aircraft has formally entered service with the RAF, ready to begin crew training ahead of operational deployment. The international Atlas programme, being delivered by Airbus, is supporting around 8,000 jobs in the UK. In total the UK has ordered 22 Atlas aircraft which are all expected to be delivered to the RAF by the early 2020s.

The Royal Air Force has taken delivery of the 20th next-generation Atlas transport aircraft. Airbus copyright.

Adrian Baguley, Director Air Support for Defence Equipment and Support, the MOD's procurement organisation, said:

The DE&S Atlas delivery team, based at MOD Abbey Wood and Brize Norton, is proud to be delivering the Atlas aircraft for the RAF which means the UK has a world-leading tactical and strategic airlift capability. We will continue to work hand-in-hand with Airbus and trials personnel to ensure that this fleet of world-leading aircraft is fully delivered and qualified for UK operations.

The cargo delivery trial, carried out by a UK aircraft crewed by Air Warfare Centre and QinetiQ personnel, involved containers weighing around one tonne in weight being dropped in sequence over Salisbury Plain.

For the air-to-air refuelling trial, which took place near Seville in Spain, an Airbus-owned Atlas, operated by a joint crew including Airbus and UK personnel, received fuel from an RAF Voyager tanker aircraft over a wide range of altitudes and air speeds. The results from both trials are now being analysed with a view to delivering operational clearances.

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**News story: Manchester seminar –  
Innovative commissioning to Engage  
offenders (13 Sept 2018)**

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