

# Press release: Statement on the proposed merger between Sky plc / 21st Century Fox Inc

On 5 June I made a statement to the House in which I set out my decision in relation to the proposed merger between 21st Century Fox and Sky.

I announced that having considered the CMA's report, I agreed with their findings on the public interest grounds and their finding that undertakings to divest Sky News to Disney or to an alternative suitable buyer could potentially remedy the adverse plurality public interest concerns identified.

I also noted that there remained a number of issues with the undertakings that had been offered and that these would require discussions between my officials and the parties in order to reach agreement on an acceptable form of the remedy.

Following the successful conclusion of these discussions and the resolution of these issues, I am today publishing updated undertakings offered by 21CF along with new undertakings offered by Disney for the divestment of Sky News to Disney.

These undertakings are offered on improved terms and will include:

- a commitment from Disney to operate and maintain a Sky News branded news service for 15 years rather than 10 years
- a restriction on Disney from selling Sky News for 15 years without the consent of the Secretary of State
- an extension of the funding commitment from 21st Century Fox from 10 years to 15 years
- an increase in the total funds available to Sky News, to at least £100m per year, with operating costs protected in real terms
- a formal commitment from Disney to preserve the editorial independence of Sky News

In my view, these revised undertakings meet the criteria that I set out to the House on 5 June and will help to ensure that Sky News remains financially viable over the long term; is able to operate as a major UK-based news provider; and is able to take its editorial decisions independently, free from any potential outside influence.

Under the legislation, I am required to consult formally for 15 days on the undertakings, which I propose to accept. Views as to whether these proposals are sufficient to remedy the adverse plurality public interest concerns raised by this merger are sought by 5pm on Wednesday 4 July 2018.

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## **Press release: Preston drug dealer has sentence increased after Solicitor General's referral**

A Preston drug dealer has today had his sentence increased after the Solicitor General, Robert Buckland QC MP, referred his sentence for being too low.

Edward Marland, 46, was arrested after selling an undercover officer diamorphine or heroin on 3 separate occasions. This was part of an undercover operation in the Preston area which also led to the arrest of 18 others.

Marland was originally sentenced at Preston Crown Court in April, where he was given a sentence of 3 years 9 months' imprisonment. Today, after the Solicitor General's referral, the Court of Appeal increased his sentence to 5 years 7 months.

Commenting on the sentence increase, the Solicitor General said:

Drug-dealing offences have a devastating effect on the communities in which they occur. I am therefore glad that the serious impact of Marland's crimes has now been reflected in his increased sentence.

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## **News story: Crovect 1.25% w/v Pour-on Solution for Sheep – Product defect recall alert**

We wish to make wholesalers aware that Elanco Animal Health has issued a recall of Crovect 1.25% w/v Pour-on Solution for Sheep (Vm 00879/4017).

The recall is due to the possible presence of a defect in the pack, which may cause the caps to split. This issue impacts the following batches of 0.8 litre bottles only;

Product	Batch Expiry Date
Crovect 1.25% w/v Pour-on Solution for Sheep	20556 04/2019

Crovect 1.25% w/v Pour-on Solution for Sheep 20723 07/2019

Crovect 1.25% w/v Pour-on Solution for Sheep 20822 04/2019

For further information regarding the recall, please contact Matthew Edwards,  
email: [elanco\\_orders@lilly.com](mailto:elanco_orders@lilly.com) Tel : 01256 779519

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## **Press release: Home Office launches review into medical use of cannabis**

The review will be carried out by the Home Office and Chief Medical Officer Professor Dame Sally Davies. The Home Secretary confirmed to Parliament that if the review identifies significant medical and therapeutic benefits, then the intention would be to reschedule cannabis for medicinal use.

The [Home Secretary also announced](#) that a licence will today be granted for Alfie Dingley which will allow Alfie's clinicians access to the cannabis-based medicine he needs to treat his rare form of epilepsy.

The Home Secretary said:

Cases like Billy Caldwell's, Alfie Dingley's, and others like it, have shown that we need to look more closely at the use of cannabis-based medicine in healthcare in the UK.

The position we find ourselves in currently is not satisfactory. It's not satisfactory for the parents, it's not satisfactory for the doctors, and it's not satisfactory for me.

I have now come to the conclusion that this is the right time to review the scheduling of cannabis.

The review into cannabis-based medicines will be conducted in 2 parts.

Professor Dame Sally Davies will take forward the first part of the review, considering the evidence available for the medicinal and therapeutic benefits of cannabis-based medicines. This will inform which cannabis-based medicines should be taken forward to part 2 of the review.

The second part of the review will be led by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) which will provide an assessment based on the balance of harms and public health needs, of what, if anything, should be rescheduled.

The review will not look into the reclassification of cannabis as a Class B

drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and will not consider the legalisation of cannabis. The penalties for unauthorised supply and possession will remain the same.

Yesterday (18 June) the Policing Minister Nick Hurd told Parliament that the government will establish an expert panel of clinicians to advise ministers on any applications from senior clinicians to prescribe cannabis-based medicines. Today the Home Secretary confirmed the panel will be in a position to start considering applications within a week.

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## **Press release: Highways England gears up for M27 smart motorway upgrade**

15 miles of the M27 will have an extra lane created in both directions, with upgraded signs, signals and technology to inform drivers about conditions ahead.

Today (Tuesday 19 June) plans about the upgrade have gone on show ahead of the start of main construction.

Highways England delivery director Mike Grant said:

This upgrade of the M27 between Southampton and Fareham will tackle congestion and improve journey times not only for the tens of thousands of drivers who use the M27 every day, but also holiday makers using this busy stretch of motorway to get to the south coast ports as well as the South West of England.

Smart motorways are central to our ambitious plans for modernising the motorway network and will add 120 miles of new lanes to motorways in the South East by 2020. They add vital extra capacity, improve journey times and maintain high levels of safety. Drivers will also see better information about conditions through new smart motorway technology which helps us to manage incidents, smooth traffic flow and make journeys more reliable. I encourage anyone interested in this upgrade of the M27 to a smart motorway to come to meet the project team at one of the information events, starting this Friday, 22 June in Southampton.

Drivers, business owners and local residents are invited to find out more about the plans, which will add an extra lane in each direction to the M27 from junction 4 near Southampton (the interchange with the M3) and junction 11 for Fareham, to upgrade it to an all-lane-running smart motorway. New technology will help to manage traffic to reduce delays and give drivers up

to date information about conditions on the road ahead.

The M27 is a key strategic road which runs between Cadnam, to the west of Southampton, and Portsmouth and connects the M27 with the M3, and major routes into London and the rest of the UK. Around 140,000 vehicles use the M27 each day.

This stretch of the M27 is heavily used by traffic travelling along the south coast and suffers with heavy congestion, especially during UK holiday periods. The upgrade to a smart motorway will add a third extra capacity on this section, and will improve safety, ease congestion make journey times more reliable.

Under the plans, the hard shoulder will be permanently converted into a live running lane between junctions 4 and 11 in both directions. New signs and signals will be used to vary the speed limit to reduce congestion at busy times, and to control traffic if there is an obstruction on the road ahead.

Preliminary work is already underway, with main construction scheduled to start later this year. The smart motorway will be fully operational in 2021.

Public information events are starting this week (Friday 22 June, West End Parish Centre, Southampton) with a further 10 events running until Friday 11 August. People are encouraged to attend to find out more about the plans and put any questions directly to the project team.

For more information on the scheme including the public information event dates and locations, [visit the scheme website.](#)

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.