News story: MAIB safety digest 1/2018 published

Speech: Flying through Fire and Ice

On the occasion of the 95th anniversary of Chile's Naval Aviation, including commemoration of 50 years since the evacuation of British and Chilean scientists from Deception Island.

'Antarctica – where it is possible to see the splendours and immensities of the natural world at its most dramatic', so said Sir David Attenborough, our leading broadcaster in the recent television series 'Blue Planet'.

Drama was certainly seen by those on Deception Island, over 50 years ago. The British base had been occupied since Feb 1944, but on 5 Dec 1967, there had to be a temporary evacuation, after volcanic eruptions. The scientists returned but had to evacuate again in February 1969 when further eruptions damaged the station buildings. The only previous report of volcanic activity had been in 1842.

In 2016 we celebrated together the centenary of the rescue of Shackleton's men from Elephant Island by Chile's Piloto Pardo in the steamer Yelcho. In 1967, and 1969, it was ships named after that important part of our shared history, that came to the aid of the British and Chilean personnel, stranded on Deception Island.

My colleagues at the British Antarctic Survey have looked back in the archives to find some of the first hand accounts of that time, 50 years ago, and the appreciation of the help from Chile.

The accounts of 1967 relay the heavy ash and poor visibility, and record the concerns about both the Chilean and Argentine bases on the Island. The 27 Chilean personnel were able to join the 15 men at the British base after a very difficult and dangerous journey. The buildings were covered in c. 1 foot

of ash and hail. The heavy and rapid rise and fall of the water in the bay meant it was not possible for the Chilean ships – Piloto Pardo and Yelcho – to reach the Island. Helicopters were sent from the Piloto Pardo to effect the evacuation. The report states:

> An extremely fine show of flying skill and efficiency had been given by the Chilean Navy.

In 1968 scientists returned to examine a new island which had appeared as a result of the 1967 eruption. But on 5 February 1969 there was a further evacuation because of heavy tremors. The account reads:

> Two helicopters from Piloto Pardo arrived through ash and wet snow cloud and picked up whole party and returned them to ship. Landing on ship was extremely difficult as cockpit dome was completely obscured by ash and wet snow. A heavy sea was also running with 30 knot wind… All on board consider rescue efforts by the Chileans a superb example of skilful seamanship and flying carried out under appalling conditions.

Today, the Antarctic Treaty System, our collaboration, and the science being undertaken in Antarctica is more important than ever. Through the Scientific Research Memorandum of Understanding, with INACH, signed when President Piñera visited London in 2012, BAS scientists have extensive collaborative links with Chilean scientists, involving joint activities in Antarctica, the Southern Ocean and in and around Chile. The projects include investigating aspects of glaciology, physical and biological oceanography and marine and terrestial ecosystems.

Just a few weeks ago the Chilean authorities helped ensure the smooth transit of vital and unique science instrumentation to move from Antarctica to Iceland. The equipment had been used as part of a collaboration between BAS and the University De Santiago, and funded by INACH, on a joint project to measure atmospheric conditions over Chile's stations at Marsh. It was then transferred to be used on a polar plane, as part of a major international collaboration, to measure atmospheric conditions in the northern hemisphere. This work will yield important insights into climate change.

Those working in Antarctica face many hazards and arduous conditions. Thank you to those pilots of the Armada de Chile, who 50 years ago flew through fire and ice, illustrating the great spirit of collaboration and commitment of all those involved in one of the most beautiful, but harshest places on the planet. Thank you to all those who work in Antarctica to preserve this special place for the benefit of all and to to help us understand the world around us.

We are building a new polar research ship – named appropriately the RRS Sir David Attenborough. The facilities on board will transform ship borne science in the polar regions, and I hope some of those insights will be through

further collaborations between the UK and Chile.

News story: MOD confirms death of Lance Corporal George Partridge

Lance Corporal George Partridge.

Lance Corporal George Partridge joined the Army on 13th June 2010 at the age of 19.

After completing his basic training at Bassingbourn in Cambridgeshire, where he was awarded the prize for Fittest Recruit, he moved to 3 Royal School of Military Engineering Regiment at Minley in Surrey for combat engineer training, and from there to Leconsfield for vocational driver training, qualifying as a Military Engineer (Driver) in April 2011.

His first years in the Army were spent at 21 Engineer Regiment in Ripon, North Yorkshire, where he qualified as a Class 1 Royal Engineer Driver and deployed to Afghanistan on Operation HERRICK 17 in 2012-13. Successfully selected for promotion he moved to 26 Engineer Regiment in Perham Down, Wiltshire where he served as a motor transport Lance Corporal within 38 Headquarters and Support Squadron. He was responsible for allocating drivers to tasks on daily driving details as well as scheduling maintenance and repairs for the Regiment's large fleet of wheeled vehicles.

Popular and hard-working, Lance Corporal Partridge was at the hub of the Regiment and was always to be seen out in the vehicle park ensuring that his vehicles were in good condition and ready for the next task. A genuine expert in the complex area of motor transport management, he was well known across the Regiment for his frank advice and his ability to find a vehicle for every last-minute important job.

Whilst at 26 Engineer Regiment he deployed to Canada, supporting armoured engineer training and construction exercises as well as deploying in support of UK operations. He recently achieved a long-held ambition to commence training as an Army diver, successfully completed his Junior Commanders Course, and had just been selected for promotion to Corporal.

Lance Corporal Partridge loved sport and fitness. A regular in the Regiment's Gym every evening, he was also a talented sportsman who had represented the Regimental Rugby Team and the Army as part of the Under 23 Army Football squad. He also tried his hand at luge ice sports where he represented the Corps.

The loss of such a popular and capable soldier is hard felt by his Squadron,

the Regiment and the Corps, as well as everyone in the wider Army who had the privilege of working with him. He will be remembered fondly by his many friends and colleagues throughout the Corps. He leaves behind his wife Zoe, who is expecting their first child, parents Alyson and Stephen and siblings Lucy and Ben.

Armed Forces Minister Mark Lancaster said:

> It is with great sadness we must confirm the death of Lance Corporal George Partridge. It's clear from the testaments of his colleagues that he had a bright future in the Army and was held in the highest regard. Our thoughts are with his family and friends at this extremely difficult time.

Lance Corporal Ash Skerten said:

> If I could be half the man he was I would be proud, he was the best soldier.

Corporal Anthony Matthews said:

> George was a motivated and determined individual, who was a role model to all those around him. His peers also looked up to him and would come to him for advice. He was a family-orientated man who was looking forward to starting his family with wife Zoe. He was both a physically and mentally fit person who relished any challenge thrown in his direction.

Sergeant Chris Brignull said:

> I have had the honour and pleasure of knowing LCpl George Partridge for well over 2 years now, from the start he was an outstanding character and a great role model for younger Sappers within the troop.
>
> George had a very calm and collected approach to everything he did, robust and professional during all tasks put his way, which he always tackled head on. He was a true leader and had the potential to progress through all ranks. Well liked throughout the whole Regiment and Corps, he will be sorely missed by everyone who knew him. Royal Engineers like George are a special type of person who are hard to find.

His Troop Commander, Lt David Thornett said:

> Lance Corporal George Partridge was a gift to me as a Troop Commander. He had everything that I could have expected of a Junior Non Commissioned Officer. He could always be relied upon to carry out a task to the best of his ability and to get the best out the individuals who were working for him. Having already been selected to promote to Corporal, I have no doubt he would have climbed through the ranks with ease and had a very successful Army career. On top of this he was genuinely a good bloke who knew how to make people laugh, he will be sorely missed.

His Squadron Commander, Major Matt Walker said:

> Every member of the Squadron, regardless of rank, looked up to and respected Lance Corporal George Partridge – we all aspire to be as fit, humble and capable as he was. The loss of this epic Junior Non Commissioned Officer leaves a void in the Squadron that can't be filled.

His Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Simon Doyle said:

> Quietly determined, hard-working and immensely popular, Lance Corporal George Partridge was an exemplary soldier. Humble but hugely capable, he was always ready to lend a helping hand where it was needed the most and at some point everyone in the Regiment has had cause to be grateful for his ability to find you a car when the vehicle park seemed empty. Our clearest memories of him will always be on the rugby pitch and in the gymnasium, where he was the epitome of a Royal Engineer Junior Non-Commissioned Officer, always pushing himself and his soldiers to the next level, and always with a smile on his face. He will be sorely missed, and our thoughts are with his wife and family at this sad time.

Press release: Crackdown on rogue bailiffs

- Ministers announce that they will be launching a call for evidence after concerns are raised that some bailiffs are aggressively pursuing debts

- Review of government reforms highlights the positive impact of changes but reveals lingering concerns over aggressive behaviour by minority of

bailiffs.

The Government is to launch a call for evidence following concerns that a minority of bailiffs are still acting aggressively when collecting money from debtors – particularly from vulnerable people.

The call for evidence, which will be launched shortly, will look to those directly involved to share their experiences to help stop this in its tracks.

Justice Minister Lucy Frazer said:

> The majority of bailiffs act professionally and within the rules, but we have been told by those working on the front line that this may not always be the case.
>
> Aggressive tactics will not be tolerated, and through our call for evidence we will identify where the problems are and, if necessary, take action to ensure all bailiffs operate professionally and with proper respect and sensitivity.

In 2014, the government brought in new laws to protect the public from aggressive enforcement agents, while at the same time making sure that debts could still be collected fairly.

The first review of those reforms is published today (2 April), demonstrating positive progress since our changes. This includes better awareness around debtor rights and how to complain, more clarity for debtors about the fees that can be charged, the processes that should be followed, and where to go for advice.

It also found the overall effectiveness of proper enforcement has improved, with a greater proportion of debts now being successfully enforced.

Read One year review of enforcement agent reforms.

However, following concerns raised by the advice sector, the call for evidence which will be launched shortly seeks to address those minority of bailiffs who continue to flout the rules and aggressively pressure vulnerable people.

Notes to editors

Debts which enforcement agents (formerly known as bailiffs) enforce include council tax arrears and unpaid debts owed to individuals and businesses.

In 2014 the Government introduced reforms to strengthen protection from rogue enforcement agents, while at the same time making sure that debts could still be collected fairly.

The reforms centred on the implementation of Part 3 and Schedule 12 of the

Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007. The reforms provided legal protection by introducing a comprehensive code governing, amongst other things:

- when and how enforcement agents can enter somebody's premises
- the safeguards to prevent the use of force against debtors
- what goods they can and cannot seize and, if necessary, sell
- what fees they can charge

The reforms also stopped enforcement agents entering homes when only children are present, and introduced mandatory training and a new certification process for enforcement agents.

Ministers pledged to review the impact of the reforms, and the first review is published today.

The review started in early 2015 and involved analysing a variety of data, and gathering views from key stakeholders including creditors, the advice sector, other government agencies and enforcement agents themselves.

For further information please call the Press Office 0203 334 3536.

Detailed guide: Rules for farmers and land managers to prevent water pollution

You must take steps to prevent manure, fertiliser and soil getting into watercourses – known as diffuse water pollution (pollution).

These rules apply to farming or horticultural practices, such as:

- using and storing organic manure (manure) or manufactured fertiliser (fertiliser)
- planting and harvesting
- soil management – for example, ploughing or planting cover crops
- managing livestock on your land

Organic manures are made from one or more animal, plant or human sources. A

cover crop is any crop with leaf cover that stops rain falling directly onto the soil.

These rules also apply if you:

- are in a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone
- receive funding from the Basic Payment Scheme, Countryside Stewardship or Environment Stewardship

Assess pollution risks

You must take into account the risks of runoff and soil erosion from these factors:

- the angle of slopes, in particular if the angle is greater than 12 degrees
- amount of ground cover
- distance to inland freshwaters, coastal waters, wetlands, springs, wells or boreholes
- soil type and condition
- presence and condition of land drains

You must identify the risks that apply to your land and your activities.

Before you use manure or fertiliser

You must plan each application of manure or fertiliser on your land.

Applying includes:

- spreading on the surface of the land
- injecting into the soil
- mixing manure or fertiliser with the surface layers of soil

For all farming and horticultural land you must plan:

- how much fertiliser or manure to use, so you don’t use more than your crop or soil needs
- by assessing the pollution risks
- by taking into account the weather conditions and forecasts at the time you want to apply manure or fertiliser on your land

You can use the Nutrient Management Guide RB209 to work out the nutrients your soil or crop needs.

Soil tests for cultivated agricultural land

If you’re applying manure or fertiliser to cultivated agricultural land, you must also plan by using the results of soil tests.

Cultivated agricultural land is both or one of the following:

- land you've ploughed, sowed or harvested at least once in the last year
- land where you've applied organic manure or fertiliser at least once in the last 3 years

The results of soil tests must show the pH and levels of:

- nitrogen – you can use the soil nitrogen supply assessment method (sns) instead of a soil test
- phosphorus
- potassium
- magnesium

Soil test results must be no more than 5 years old at the time of application.

Applying fertiliser

You must not use fertiliser:

- on waterlogged, flooded or snow covered soil
- when the soil has been frozen for more than 12 hours in the past 24 hours
- within 2 metres(m) of inland freshwaters, coastal waters, a spring, well or borehole
- where risk factors mean there's a significant risk of pollution

Using manure

You must not use manure:

- on waterlogged, flooded or snow covered soil
- when the soil has been frozen for more than 12 hours in the past 24 hours
- within 50m of a spring, well or borehole
- within 10m of inland freshwaters or coastal waters unless you're using precision equipment or you're managing land for specific environmental benefits
- where risk factors mean there's a significant risk of pollution

6m exception for precision equipment

You can apply manure no closer than 6m from inland freshwaters or coastal waters if you use:

- a trailing hose or shoe band spreader
- a shallow injector (no deeper than 10cm)
- a dribble bar applicator

Exception for environmental benefits

There's an exception for land you manage for breeding wader birds or as a species-rich semi-natural grassland.

On this land, you can apply livestock manure (not slurry or poultry) within 10m of inland freshwaters and coastal waters if:

- the land is in an Environmental or Countryside Stewardship scheme or it's a site of special scientific interest (SSSI)
- you don't apply manure onto the surface of water
- you only apply the manure from 1 June to 31 October
- you apply no more than 12.5 tonnes per hectare per year

Reduce pollution risks

You must take reasonable precautions to reduce the risk of pollution when you apply manure or fertiliser.

Examples include:

- checking your spreading equipment is calibrated and doesn't leak
- working manure or fertiliser into the soil within 12 hours or as soon as possible after applying it
- checking the organic matter content and moisture level in your soil – you can use the Nutrient Management Guide RB209 or other resources to help you do this

Storing manure

You must take into account risk factors for runoff when deciding where to store manure on your land.

You must not store it:

- within 10m of inland freshwaters or coastal waters
- within 50m of a spring, well or borehole

Prevent erosion: manage livestock and soil

You must take reasonable precautions to prevent soil loss caused by horticultural and farming activities. Soil loss can lead to erosion and allow pollutants to get into watercourses.

Find out how inspectors check you're complying with the rules.

Planting, harvesting and soil management

You must take reasonable precautions to reduce the risk of pollution when you carry out activities such as:

- creating farm tracks or gateways
- establishing seedbeds, polytunnels or tramlines
- cleaning out ditches
- installing drainage or irrigation
- irrigating crops
- spraying crops with pesticides, herbicides or fungicides

Examples include:

- planting crops in early autumn and in dry conditions
- planting headland rows and beds across the base of sloping land
- undersowing or sowing a cover crop to stabilise soil after harvest
- breaking up compacted soil
- establishing grass buffer strips in valleys, along contours, slopes, field edges and gateways

Manage livestock

You must make sure you prevent livestock compacting soil by trampling it (poaching) within 5m of an inland freshwater or coastal water.

You must not place livestock feeders:

- within 10m from inland freshwaters or coastal waters
- within 50m of a spring, well or borehole
- where risk factors mean there's a significant risk of pollution

You must take reasonable precautions to prevent pollution from managing livestock.

Examples include:

- moving livestock to prevent poaching and bankside erosion – find out how inspectors check you're complying with the rules
- putting up fences to keep animals away from watercourses
- wintering livestock on well-drained, level fields

Enforcement and inspections

The Environment Agency is responsible for enforcing these rules. It will do this through its farm inspections work. This may include checking:

- you're meeting the distance restrictions in the rules
- for soil erosion affecting a single area of more than 1 hectare
- for poaching on a stretch of land (at least 2m wide and 20m long) next to an inland freshwater or coastal water
- for signs of fertiliser use in restricted areas – including excessive growth of vegetation on the margins of restricted areas
- fertiliser records, including records you keep on calibrating fertiliser equipment
- soil test results
- for evidence of pollution or if there's a significant risk it could happen
- the types of crops you're planting

How enforcement will work

If the Environment Agency finds you're breaching the rules, it will help you by:

- identifying the changes you need to make
- agreeing a timescale with you to make changes

To check you've made changes, the Environment Agency may:

- give you a follow-up visit
- ask for evidence, such as photographic evidence of a change

If there's already pollution or a high risk of pollution, the Environment Agency may take enforcement action. This may include prosecution.

This guide relates to The Reduction and Prevention of Agricultural Diffuse Pollution (England) Regulations 2018 which came into force on 2 April 2018.

Get advice

Contact the Environment Agency