

News story: Operational Honours and Awards List September 2017

A total of 50 members of the Armed Forces and one civilian have been named in the latest Operational Honours and Awards List.

The full list, which recognises and honours service on operations is below.

Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE)

Colonel Thomas Julian BATEMAN, MBE

Brigadier Robert Geoffrey LOWTH

Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

Major Simon Nicholas GUEST, Royal Army Medical Corps

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Keith TOMLINSON, MBE, Corps of Royal Engineers

Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Colour Sergeant Samuel Joseph McCORMICK, MC, Royal Marines

Surgeon Lieutenant Commander William SHARP, Royal Navy

Colour Sergeant George Ashley CHANNINGS, The Parachute Regiment

Major Michael John DEVENISH, The Rifles

Sergeant Dhaniram RAI, The Royal Gurkha Rifles

Military Cross (MC)

Marine Matthew David COTTRELL, Royal Marines

Acting Colour Sergeant Christopher MORRIS, Royal Marines

Colour Sergeant Simon Timothy COX, The Parachute Regiment

Queen's Gallantry Medal (QGM)

Sergeant Matthew Peter DOUGLAS, The Parachute Regiment

Mention in Despatches

Sergeant Will PAGE, Royal Marines

Marine David WOTHERSPOON, Royal Marines

Lance Corporal Gwyn Michael DAVIS, The Parachute Regiment

Colour Sergeant Gavin Peter HAILEY, The Parachute Regiment

Colour Sergeant Adrian Marcus MILLER, The Parachute Regiment

Queen's Commendation for Bravery

Lieutenant James Edward MYHILL, Royal Navy

Sergeant Mathew Robert LONGHORN, The Parachute Regiment

Captain Mark POWELL, The Royal Logistic Corps

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service

Lieutenant Commander James Alexander BROWN, Royal Navy

Chief Petty Officer Engineering Technician (Weapon Engineering) Darren John CULVERHOUSE, Royal Navy

Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Luciano DE REYA, MBE, Royal Marines

Leading Logistician (Supply Chain) Andrew James GILL, Royal Navy

Major Thomas Fergusson GLOVER, Royal Marines

Lieutenant Commander Ben Russell MARTIN, Royal Navy

Leading Medical Assistant Naomi MASON, Royal Navy Medical Service

Commander Richard Ashley NEW, Royal Navy

Acting Petty Officer Engineering Technician (Marine Engineering Submarines) Aaron SMITH, Royal Navy

Colour Sergeant Martin THOMSON, Royal Marines

Captain Benjamin Rogerson BARKES, The Light Dragoons

Colonel Nigel Jonathan BEST, OBE

Lieutenant Colonel Carl William BOSWELL, The Rifles

Sergeant David CLARK, The Royal Logistic Corps

Sergeant Matthew Peter COLLINS, Intelligence Corps

Corporal Luke John FLANAGAN, Royal Corps of Signals

Corporal Kieran Zen HAIG, The Royal Regiment of Scotland

Warrant Officer Class 2 Steven James MACTAVISH, The Royal Anglian Regiment

Corporal Christopher Carl MAY, The Rifles

Staff Sergeant Gary David MILES, Intelligence Corps

Acting Lieutenant Colonel Robert John NICHOLLS, The Parachute Regiment, Army Reserve

Lieutenant Colonel Edward David Lionel MASKELL-PEDERSEN, Royal Corps of Signals

Squadron Leader Thomas Charles John BENSON, Royal Air Force

Acting Flight Sergeant Stewart Andrew FORRESTER, Royal Air Force

Wing Commander Christopher John LAYDEN, Royal Air Force

Squadron Leader Gemma Ann LONSDALE, Royal Air Force

Squadron Leader Liam Anthony TAYLOR, Royal Air Force

Dr Gregory Benjamin FREMONT-BARNES, Civil Servant

NON-OPERATIONAL GALLANTRY

Queen's Gallantry Medal (QGM)

Leading Seaman (Seaman Specialist) Sally Louise HUGHES, Royal Navy

Queen's Commendation for Bravery (QCBA)

Sergeant Stephen John ALLCOCK, Royal Air Force

[Press release: £2 billion boost for affordable housing and long term deal for social rent](#)

Government has confirmed plans for a new generation of council and housing association homes. Funding for affordable homes will be increased by a further £2 billion to more than £9 billion.

The numbers of homes will be determined on type and location of housing, and bids received for funding. With a typical £80,000 subsidy, this £2 billion investment can supply around 25,000 more homes at rents affordable for local people.

Ministers also confirmed plans to create a stable financial environment by setting a long term rent deal for councils and housing associations in England from 2020.

The funding will further support councils and housing associations in areas

of acute affordability pressure, and where working families are struggling with the costs of rent and some are at risk of homelessness.

This complements recent announcements on supporting tenants in the private rented sector and on extending [Help to Buy](#).

The government's Affordable Homes Programme will increase from £7.1 billion of public funding to £9.1 billion, and the £2 billion additional funding for affordable housing could lever in total investment by housing associations and councils of up to £5 billion.

Since April 2010, around 333,000 affordable homes have been delivered, including 240,000 for rent. More than twice as much council housing has been built since 2010 than in the previous 13 years.

As set out in the [Housing White Paper](#), to help encourage more investment in social housing, government will create a stable financial environment by setting a long term rent deal for councils and housing associations in England.

Under the proposal set out today, increases to social housing rents will be limited to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1% for 5 years from 2020. This will give social tenants, councils and housing associations the security and certainty they need.

Previously, the government's affordable housing policy primarily supported 'affordable rent' – rents of up to 80% of local market level – and low-cost home ownership. This announcement now extends support for 'social rent' – which are lower rents, set according to national guidelines.

These latest measures reinforce this government's approach to back housing of all tenures – with more social housing; extra security for those in the private rented sector; and helping people get onto the housing ladder.

With a typical £80,000 subsidy, this £2 billion investment can supply around 25,000 more homes for social rent over the course of Parliament.

The announcement on rent policy beyond 2020 will be reflected in a direction to the Social Housing Regulator, which the government will consult on next year.

Latest council housing build figures can be found within the [Live Tables on house building – table 244](#).

[News story: Prime Minister announces](#)

review to tackle detention of those with mental ill health

Prime Minister Theresa May has announced plans for an independent review of mental health legislation and practice to tackle the issue of mental health detention.

There have been concerns that detention rates under the Mental Health Act – passed more than 3 decades ago – are too high. The number of detentions has been rising year on year. Last year on average there were 180 cases a day where people were sectioned under the terms of the act.

The Mental Health Act sets out rights and obligations that govern when and how the state can detain and treat someone in relation to their mental illness. It includes specific provision for individuals in contact with the criminal justice system.

People from black and minority ethnic populations are disproportionately affected, with black people in particular being almost 4 times more likely than white people to be detained.

The review will be chaired by Professor Sir Simon Wessely, a former President of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. It will seek to address concerns about how the legislation is currently being used, and give recommendations for improving practice in the future.

The review will look at existing practice and evidence. It will consider the needs of service users and their families, in order to tackle injustices and improve how the system supports people during a mental health crisis.

In particular, the review will consider:

- why rates of detention are increasing – what can be done to reduce inappropriate detention and improve how different agencies respond to people in crisis
- reasons for the disproportionate number of people from certain ethnic backgrounds, in particular black people, being detained under the act, and what should be done about it

Following consultation with stakeholders, Sir Simon will produce an interim report identifying priorities for the review's work in early 2018, and develop a final report containing detailed recommendations on its priorities, by autumn 2018.

The review is part of a set of measures to improve mental health provision and tackle what the Prime Minister has described as the 'burning injustice'

of mental illness.

News story: Innovative female entrepreneurs: 7 selected for US mission

Next week (10 to 15 October 2017) the 7 female entrepreneurs will travel to Boston, Massachusetts on an international entrepreneurial mission, hosted by Innovate UK, [Digital Catapult](#) and the [British Consulate General Boston](#).

The mission will help the women better understand and access international markets. It coincides with [HUBweek 2017](#), the city's festival for the future where artists, innovators and creators come together to support collaboration for innovation.

Meet the founders

All of the companies selected are innovating in human and machine interaction, such as artificial intelligence, the internet of things and virtual and augmented reality.

The female founders are:

- Claire Spencer, CEO of [Data Solver](#), which provides privacy-by-design management software that will help businesses comply with the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Kriti Sharma, CEO of [Lumi](#), which is a virtual business assistant that uses AI to help users manage admin, finance, HR and IT tasks
- Louise Doherty, CEO of [PlanSnap](#), a social planning app that allows users to create and invite people to opt into your plan, regardless of whether or not they are on the app
- Nicole Blyth, Founder of [RelocateGuru](#), which is designed to help the nearly 1 billion people who relocate to a new town or country every year to find friends and get local tips, advice and recommendations
- Christine Boyle, CEO of [Senergy](#), which has developed the world's first nanocomposite solar thermal panels. These can be manufactured and installed at 50% lower cost than existing metallic solar collectors
- Samrien Hussain, Director of [Tick Tock Unlock](#), an immersive entertainment company that designs, builds and operates escape game venues. Future plans include supplying virtual reality experiences to other venues and launching a free-roaming product
- Diane Douglas, CEO of [Vigiles](#) is developing augmented and merged reality gamified mobile apps to improve health and safety awareness. Its first product is a fire safety app for young people in student accommodation

The businesses were chosen by a panel of judges. This was made up of Priya Guha, Ecosystem General Manager of [RocketSpace](#), Guy Pattison, CEO and Strategy Director at [Long Run Works](#), Sabine Hauert, President and Co-founder of [Robohub.org](#), Natasha Lytton, Head of Marketing and Communications at [Seedcamp](#), and Marija Butkovic, Founder and CEO of [Women of Wearables](#).

Louise Doherty, CEO of PlanSnap.

The programme

During the mission there will be opportunities for delegates to:

- better understand the challenges and opportunities in the US
- meet and pitch to potential customers, investors and partners
- gain insight into new markets for human-machine interaction
- hear from international thought leaders
- learn how to develop a market-entry strategy
- take part in practical workshops and get mentoring support to improve pitching
- network with other entrepreneurs in the same field

They will also get the chance to get involved in UK government's GREAT campaign, which is designed to showcase the best the nation has to offer, to encourage people to visit, do business, invest and study in the UK.

About infocus

Our infocus programme is designed to support and empower people who are currently under represented in business innovation by providing them with the resources, advice and self-belief to succeed.

This mission is the latest activity being run under the infocus women in innovation campaign. Through this campaign we aim to remove some of the barriers and get more women in the UK innovating.

[News story: New rail academy to train 500 apprentices opened by Transport Secretary](#)

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling today (October 4 2017) opened a new north-west rail academy which is due to train 500 apprentices over the next 5 years.

Thousands of extra rail apprentices will be needed in the coming years as the

network grows rapidly, and the government is investing £1 billion in the Great North Rail Project up until 2020.

The Alstom Academy for Rail in Widnes, Cheshire, is due to take on 20 new apprentices this autumn, and offer further 30 apprenticeship places to current Alstom staff. The numbers will rise to 135 by 2021.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Our rail network is growing and I have been clear we will need thousands more people working in the sector in the years ahead.

I'm delighted to open Alstom's top class new Rail Academy will help train up the next generation of talent.

We are investing £13 billion in transport across the north and there are some great, rewarding careers working on our railways.

The Alstom Academy for Rail will be giving young people and mature employees a rounded education and will work with other education providers to deliver its apprenticeship programs. Students will take engineering classes at local colleges such as Riverside College and then learn rail specific skills at the academy.

Nick Crossfield, Managing Director at Alstom UK & Ireland, said:

Today we celebrate a fantastic new industrial facility for the UK, and even more importantly, our first intake of new apprentices.

In year one the Alstom Academy for Rail will train 20 apprentices, 5 of whom have been taken on to help repaint the iconic Pendolino trains right here in Widnes.

It is a particularly proud moment for us to welcome the Secretary of State to see our progress on that project, because it demonstrates how transport contracts can deliver real jobs and training on the ground.

Not just creating a better railway, but also building a new generation of highly skilled railway engineers.

The training that students undertake will include safety and maintenance of vehicles such as Alstom's Pendolino trains which are used on the West Coast Mainline, or the Citadis trams that are used in Nottingham.

Alongside the academy, Alstom are repainting 56 Pendolino trains next to the training academy in their train modernisation facility, for use by Virgin on the West Coast Main Line.

The team is 80-strong and includes 5 new apprentices who will work on the

project.