

News story: UK and Jordan standing shoulder to shoulder in fight against Daesh

During a visit to London, where the King also met with the Foreign Secretary, Sir Michael discussed the UK's deep and longstanding support to Jordan, an important regional ally.

As a country on the front line in the fight against Daesh, Jordan is working closely with Britain and other Coalition members to defeat the terror group. Jordan was one of the earliest contributors to airstrikes against Daesh, operating four F-16 fighters, as well as other transporter aircraft.

Following the meeting with His Majesty King Abdullah II, Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

Jordan is a longstanding and key ally of the UK and an important partner in countering the shared threats we face.

We stand shoulder to shoulder in the fight against Daesh, our militaries exercise together and we're assisting Jordan in the development to develop of its armed forces.

Through our global role we're committed to helping Jordan in sustaining its stability which in turn makes Britain safer and more secure.

Over the last financial year, the UK, through our Conflict Security and Stabilisation Fund (CSSF), has contributed over £32 million in helping Jordan's security, and next year we will aim to contribute a further £28 million. This funding, as well as longstanding defence engagement between the two countries, means that the UK and Jordan have a substantial defence relationship, including:

- Building up Jordan's border security, through helping develop their border surveillance capability.
- 200 UK forces last year participated in Exercise Shamal Storm 16, and this year British forces will work alongside a stepped up Jordanian force.
- The UK leads and helps to fund Jordan's Quick Reaction Force (QRF). The QRF is a Rapid Response force which has the ability to respond to threats at distance.
- Through NATO, Britain is providing financial support to developing

Jordan's cyber defence, military exercises and information protection.

Theresa May must be willing to tell President Trump that he is wrong – her failure to do so is shameful

Responding

to the joint press conference held between Theresa May and President Trump, Shadow Foreign Secretary Emily Thornberry has said:

“The

Prime Minister promised to speak frankly to President Trump, and tell him where she disagreed with him, but we heard nothing of the sort.

“She

appears only to have discussed those issues on which we already know they agree: trade and security. But we heard nothing about climate change, about respect for human and reproductive rights, about war crimes in Syria, about the nuclear deal with Iran, or about the illegal settlements in the West Bank.

The Prime

Minister referred to a special relationship based on our shared history and interests, but she has to realise that it is also a relationship based on shared values, and if the President is going to discard those values, whether by embracing torture or ignoring climate change, then she must be willing to tell him frankly that he is wrong.

“Her failure

to do so today – even behind closed doors – was nothing less than shameful.”

Rationing of this kind is totally unacceptable and is against the best traditions of the NHS – Julie Cooper

Julie

Cooper MP, Labour's Shadow Health Minister, commenting on reports of increases in waiting times for hip operations, said:

"It is absolutely shocking in 21st Century Britain that patients in some parts of the country will only qualify for knee and hip replacement operations on the NHS if they can prove pain so exceptional that it prevents sleep.

"Rationing of this kind is totally unacceptable and is against the best traditions of the NHS. However, there are concerns that if the Government continues to deny sufficient funding to the NHS, rationing of treatments could become more widespread."

[New vehicle tax rules moves DVLA in to the world of webinar](#)

From 1 April 2017, the way vehicle tax is calculated is changing for new cars and some motorhomes. These changes will only apply to cars registered with DVLA on or after 1 April 2017. We've been working closely with stakeholders over the past 12 months to make sure that in the run up to this, they're aware of the changes and know what, if anything, they need to do to prepare.

Key stakeholders for the new vehicle tax rules are fleet companies. Traditionally, we tend to speak face to face with this customer base, but this can be time consuming and costly for either side when travelling to meetings. So, we asked our fleet customers what the preferred way of communicating with them would be – the consensus was that a 'webinar' would work. We'd trialled a new webinar kit recently, so we were looking for an opportunity to use it for the first time. With our fleet customers keen, this was an exciting opportunity to put our new kit into practice!

Two trials later and we were ready to go live. We sent a link to all who expressed an interest and at 10.30am on 10 January we were ready to broadcast.

In total, 195 participants joined the webinar to watch the presentation and listen to the commentary provided by Helen Jones and Rhian Townsend, two of our more experienced Service Designers.



Behind the scenes (in a room not far away!), colleagues were waiting to answer questions as they came through. We were poised with laptops at the ready to answer all that we could. An hour later, presentation over and all questions answered, the webinar was done.

Feedback we've had since suggests that it went down really well. So it's an excellent example of how sharing ideas and working together with our stakeholders helps us meet their needs. Well worth it.

It also shows that our investment in the webinar kit is well worth having and in future we'll be putting it to good use for other audiences too.

If you weren't able to make it on the day you can see the presentation and the questions that were asked during the webinar [here](#)

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[Press release: Court gives waste offender time to clean up site](#)

Colin Barnes had previously failed to clear the site ahead of the court hearing on Wednesday 25 January after his environmental permit was revoked.

Barnes, who traded as CT Barnes Autos, was taken to court by the Environment Agency after failed attempts to get him to comply with the law.

King's Lynn magistrates deferred sentencing him and have given him six months to clear the site. He is due back in the court on 26 July.

The permit held by Barnes, aged 59, of Podmore Lane, Scarning was revoked by the Environment Agency after he continually failed to run the site in line with the conditions in his permit. Following the revocation Barnes was required to remove the large amounts of waste remaining on site.

Mrs Megan Selves, prosecuting, said the deadline for removing all the waste was extended three times to dates suggested by the defendant, as waste officers tried to support him to do the right thing. But despite removing some of the waste, most of it remained two years later.

She told the court that Barnes had an environment permit to store waste vehicles and parts but it was revoked on 15 September 2014. All the waste should have been removed by 3 November 2014.

Barnes failed to respond to advice given by Environment Agency officers and despite agreeing to deadlines for when he could remove the waste, he has failed to comply and the waste remains on site,

He has repeatedly flouted the law and undermined the legitimate waste management industry.

Magistrates heard that Barnes had operated the site since 1977 as a vehicle repair and service business until 2006 when he obtained a permit and began depolluting and dismantling vehicles which had come to the end of their lives.

Since the issuing of the permit there has been a history of non-compliance so the permit was revoked.

Barnes told investigating officers that since the revocation he had been removing some of the waste but had to rely on others as he did not have a waste carriers licence at the time and they sometimes took a long time to collect it as the value of the waste had decreased.

After the hearing Environment Agency officer Rob Brodie said:

Unregulated waste activities can impact both visual and amenity and can cause harm to the environment and human health.

These offences were committed over 21 months and despite advice and guidance from us and agreements to extend deadlines for the removal of waste, very little of it was removed.

Mrs Selves said Barnes had a history of non-compliance with warnings from the Environment Agency and has previous convictions for similar environmental offences.

Barnes pleaded guilty to:

Between 4 November 2014 and 2 August 2016 on land at Willow Lodge, Podmore Lane, Scarning, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 2NS you did operate a regulated facility, namely a waste operation for the storage of waste motor vehicles and vehicle parts, without being authorised by an environmental permit granted under Regulation 13 of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

Contrary to Regulation 12(1)(a) and 38(1)(a) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010