

[News story: New Chair appointed to Animal and Plant Health Agency Board](#)

Secretary of State for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Michael Gove, has approved the appointment of Chris Nicholson to the role of Chair of the Animal and Plant Health Agency's (APHA) Board, following a competitive selection process.

The appointment started on 1 May 2018 and will run for three years.

Biographical details

Chris has spent his career as an economist and corporate and project finance specialist, primarily at KPMG. For the past year he has been an interim director at the East West Railway Company.

During 2016, he was project director of the Cabinet Office sponsored Regulatory Futures Review which looked at best practice regulation and how to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of non-economic statutory regulators.

He started his career as a government economist before joining KPMG where he was a partner for 17 years including periods as Head of Central Government and Head of the Public Sector practice.

Chris also served as a Special Adviser in the Department of Energy and Climate Change during the coalition government.

[Press release: 'Limited Progress' on ethical standards in outsourced public services: CSPL publishes latest report on ethical outsourcing](#)

The latest in a [line of reports](#) by the [Committee on Standards in Public Life](#) says there has been little real progress on measures to reinforce ethical standards in outsourced public services and calls for a consultation on whether the Freedom of Information Act should apply to private sector providers where information relates to the performance of a public service contract.

Publishing its 2018 [progress report](#) today, Lord Bew, Chair of the Committee

on Standards in Public Life, said:

From waste disposal to health care and probation services, all kinds of public services are routinely supplied to many of us by private or voluntary sector organisations, paid for with public funds – accounting for almost one third of government spending in 2017.

The public is clear that they expect common ethical standards – whoever is delivering the service – and that when things go wrong there is transparency and accountability about what has happened.

Our [report in 2014](#) looked at departmental commissioning activity and the ethical standards of service providers and made a number of important and straightforward recommendations to enhance the government's capability to commission services from providers who focus on high ethical standards in service delivery.

Today's report shows that, disappointingly, very little progress has been made on implementing these recommendations and evidence shows that most service providers need to do more to demonstrate best practice in ethical standards.

In particular, we remain concerned over the lack of internal governance and leadership on ethical standards in those departments with significant public service contracts. Departmental and management boards spend little, if any, time considering ethical considerations and tend to delegate such issues 'down the line'. Those involved in commissioning and auditing contracts remain too focused on the quantitative rather than the qualitative aspects of their role. And departments lack clear lines of accountability when contracts fail.

While many service providers have developed a greater awareness of their ethical obligations in recent years, partly due to the high-profile failure of some organisations to adhere to these standards, some remain dismissive of the [Nolan Principles](#) or adopt a 'pick and mix' approach, which is not in the public interest. And many service providers continue to expect that setting and enforcing ethical standards remain a matter for government alone.

The Committee remains of the view that more must be done to encourage strong and robust cultures of ethical behaviour in those delivering public services. To that end, the Committee reaffirms the recommendations made in its 2014 report and has made a further set of more detailed, follow-up recommendations to address particular issues of concern.

In particular, the Committee calls for service providers to recognise that the Nolan Principles apply to them, for greater moral courage among key financial and other professionals in securing and maintaining high ethical standards, and for consultation on the extension of the application of the Freedom of Information Act to private sector providers where information relates to the performance of a contract with government for the delivery of public services.

Following the corporate failures of a number of the biggest providers of services to government since 2013, including the devastating collapse of Carillion early in 2018, it is now essential that the government confirm their expectations of ethical standards among those who deliver services with public money.”

The report can be downloaded [online](#).

Notes to Editors: Interview requests and media enquiries should go to Maggie O’Boyle on 07880 740627. You can follow the Committee on twitter [@PublicStandards](#).

1. The independent Committee on Standards in Public Life advises the Prime Minister on ethical standards across the whole of public life in the UK. It monitors and reports on issues relating to the standards of conduct of all public office holders.
2. To find out more about the Committee’s work go to the [Committee on Standards in Public Life’s website](#)
3. The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established in October 1994 with the following terms of reference: “To examine current concerns about standards of conduct of all holders of public office, including arrangements relating to financial and commercial activities, and make recommendations as to any changes in present arrangements which might be required to ensure the highest standards of propriety in public life.” Additional terms of reference were announced on 12 November 1997: “To review issues in relation to the funding of political parties, and to

make recommendations as to any changes in present arrangements.” On 5 February 2013 the terms of reference were clarified by the Government in two respects: ‘...in future the Committee should not inquire into matters relating to the devolved legislatures and governments except with the agreement of those bodies’ and ‘...the Committee’s remit to examine “standards of conduct of all holders of public office” [encompasses For] all those involved in the delivery of public services, not solely those appointed or elected to public office.’ Hansard (HC), 5 February 2013, Col 7WS .The Committee’s terms of reference were further clarified in a House of Lords written Parliamentary Question on 28th February 2013 to explain that the Committee’s remit means it “can examine issues relating to the ethical standards of the delivery of public services by private and voluntary sector organisations, paid for by public funds, even where those delivering the services have not been appointed or elected to public office.” Hansard (HL) Column WA347.

4. The members of the Committee for this report are: Lord (Paul) Bew, Chairman, Rt Hon Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP (Labour), Sheila Drew Smith OBE, Simon Hart MP (Conservative), Dr Jane Martin CBE, Dame Shirley Pearce OBE, Jane Ramsey, Monisha Shah, Rt Hon Lord (Andrew) Stunell OBE (Liberal Democrat) and Richard Thomas CBE. Richard Thomas CBE finished his 5-year term in office in May 2017. Sheila Drew Smith OBE, who led on this series of reports, finished her 5-year term of office in February 2018.

[Speech: Where credit’s due: helping our creators and innovators export](#)

Thank you, Mark.

And thank you all for coming here today.

I’m here because we, as a country, have a challenge. But it’s a good challenge!

Yes, we’ve had 5 consecutive years of economic growth.

Yes, unemployment is at its lowest for 40 years.

Yes, exports increased 10% last year.

We exported well over £600 billion last year – on the latest figures, these small islands are the 4th largest exporters in the entire world, and the second-largest exporter of services.

So what's the challenge?

You see, when it comes to exports we punch above our weight.

But we punch below our potential.

We are a great trading nation. Exporting is one of our strengths.

If we want to sustain jobs and prosperity across the country we must play to our strengths.

But with exporting we're not playing at full strength.

Exports make up 30% of UK GDP, compared to 46% Germany.

Less than 10% of our businesses export. Now, not all those should – it's not the government's job to tell people what's best for their own business.

But so many more of them could.

If we could get those businesses selling internationally, imagine the difference it would make!

I've seen that difference myself: before I went into politics, I spent a decade in the publishing industry as CEO of the Financial Times Group and CFO of Pearson.

Publishing is one of the most export-driven industries in the UK.

And I can tell you first-hand – I found that exporting and operating internationally didn't just raise our profits and let us access new customers.

It also made us more competitive at home, letting us spread risk and achieve economies of scale, and exposing us to new ideas and practices from other countries.

That's backed by evidence – exporters are more profitable, more productive and more enduring.

So we need to get those non-exporters exporting – and get our existing exporters to sell more things to more markets.

If we do that, it will be a genuine step change for our economy.

And that's why our new Export Strategy will be so important.

It's not enough to just do more of what we're already doing.

We need to take a strategic look at our export support, starting from first principles; and we need to take an evidence-based approach, to allow us to solve our challenge.

That's what our Export Strategy is for.

Firstly, it will give us the rigorous analysis, so we know why we aren't exporting more, where our strengths and weaknesses lie, and where government intervention can make the most difference.

And secondly – it is a strategy. That might sound trivial, but it really is important – it allows us to look across the piece, to see the challenge, and solution, as a whole. That's the only way we'll get the step-change in exporting we need.

That means being strategic about how we work as a government, too.

Businesses shouldn't have to know how government works to get help from the government.

Most of you here today are from business – you wouldn't expect your customers to be familiar with your own internal structure. If your customers contact the wrong part of the business – you just redirect them.

Government shouldn't be any different. So one key principle of the Export Strategy will be a "no wrong door" policy – we will work better together as government, so we can work better with you, not the other way round.

It'll be joined up with the Industrial Strategy, and our drive for a more prosperous Britain – all targeted at creating the right environment and the best base for exporters.

And that leads us on to the second principle, which is that our Export Strategy must be business-led.

We need a strategy run for exporters. The government doesn't export. Businesses export. Our job is simply to facilitate you exporting – so our export strategy must be designed around you.

It needs to be a strategy designed with exporters. We're using the Export Strategy is to give us the hard analysis and data to do that better.

We must focus on doing what only government can do – our USPs, if you like – rather than trying to replicate what business already does.

For example, the government has a role providing advice to exporters. But that should complement and not usurp the role of private-sector business advice services.

And the government has a role providing export finance – but that should complement the role of banks and insurers providing cashflow and managing risk.

And when the government does take action, we can work with and through the private sector. That's why, as of last year, SMEs can now get Export Finance directly from their bank.

We'll be publishing in the coming months, so let me give you a flavour.

We'll be focusing on key areas:

Firstly, we will inspire and catalyse companies to export.

Surveys suggest there's between three and four hundred thousand businesses who could export but aren't.

Many businesses that do export sell to just one market.

We need to persuade those businesses to look further afield, because people do want to buy British.

As a trade minister I regularly travel abroad – there is no question of the regard in which the UK is held. People are impressed by the quality of our goods and the professionalism of our services.

According to research by Barclays, 61% of people in China, for example, would actually pay more money for a product if it had a Union Jack on it – that's some reputation for quality.

This underpins our award-winning GREAT campaign, who advertise the benefits exporting can have for businesses across a range of sectors, from education to science to sport. To paraphrase: "if we can, you can".

And we will promote peer-to-peer learning, so potential exporters can learn from existing ones – as I said, this is about business first and foremost.

Secondly, it means supporting and guiding businesses to export.

Specific advice on our website.

Our network of regional trade advisers is already helping businesses across the country to export; and our network of trade advisers in 108 countries across the world can help companies navigate local markets.

Thirdly, it means working with private providers, using the Connecting power of government to connect businesses with opportunities.

We are appointing 9 Trade Commissioners to promote trade.

But export finance is at the heart.

Almost 1/5th of businesses report concerns about finance or getting paid as being their main barrier to exporting.

And research shows that exporters that have access to trade finance have export volumes as much as 60% higher.

We start from a strong base here – and that's our best kept secret. As you'll have heard today, UK Export Finance has the capacity to provide over £50 billion worth of support, in over 60 currencies.

This year, UK Export Finance (UKEF) has been named best export credit agency by both the Global Trade Review and Trade Finance.

We whisper: but we need to shout!

To give some recent examples, UKEF is providing a 270 million Euro loan to support the construction by Colas UK of a new international airport in Kabaale, Uganda.

And UKEF is helping secure at least \$250 million of UK exports for two power projects in Iraq, running a supplier fair with lead contractors Enka UK and GE to source suppliers for their projects.

So it's clear that in UK Export Finance, the UK's exporters, or would-be exporters, have a truly world-class export credit agency at their disposal.

But we recognise that we have more to do. 75% of SMEs report that they don't know how to access trade finance – we clearly need to fix this.

So in last year's Autumn Budget the Chancellor allocated funding to enhance marketing of UKEF services, putting export finance at the heart of trade promotion.

And our new Export Strategy will do even more.

We will encourage these smaller businesses to access UKEF support directly from their banks, giving them fast access to government backing to grow their international business.

We will also capture the value of UKEF's highly successful supplier fairs, as a draw to international companies to deepen their investment and engagement with the UK supply chain.

We want to use this to make it easier for SMEs to export, by providing a 'safe' channel for them to find and bid for contracts on major international projects that are backed by UK Export Finance.

And we are conducting a full review of our product suite – to ensure we can provide the best possible support even as market conditions change.

Step-by-step, we are making sure companies can access the finance they need to sell abroad – so no viable project fails for lack of finance.

This is not a straightforward task – but it is one that, if addressed, will reap invaluable benefits.

Remember – the reason this government prioritises trade and exports isn't because we start from a low base.

It's precisely because we start from a high base – exports are 30% of our GDP.

That inevitably makes the challenge more difficult – but it also makes it a challenge worth undertaking.

That's what the Export Strategy is for.

I can promise you that export finance will be front and centre of our Export Strategy.

But that will only work if you as businesses are front and centre of the Strategy, and if you help in creating the export strategy you need.

That's my call to you today.

We want to build our Export Strategy with you; and together with you, we can build a nation of exporters.

Thank you.

Speech: Ensuring those who commit human rights abuses in Libya do not evade justice for their crimes

Madam President,

I thank the Prosecutor for her very clear and concise fifteenth report and her briefing to the Security Council today. The work and focus of the International Criminal Court on Libya is extremely important in tackling impunity and making accountable those responsible for serious crimes of international concern, and the Court's work has the full support of the United Kingdom.

The Prosecutor's latest report makes clear why the situation in Libya remains deeply troubling. The continued political divisions in Libya have only benefitted certain armed groups intent on criminality, groups which have created an environment of lawlessness, intimidation and fear. This situation underscores the urgent need to break the political deadlock and to bring peace to Libya and its people. It is vital that all parties engage in good faith with the United Nations-led political process.

Madam President,

We must ensure that those who have committed, and are still committing, human rights violations and abuses in Libya, including unlawful killings, do not evade justice for their crimes. The UK has strongly supported resolutions at the Human Rights Council aimed at increasing accountability, and we fully endorse the ICC's efforts in parallel. The UK also reiterates our call for all parties to cooperate with the ICC in relation to the arrest warrant for Mahmoud al-Werfalli, and for all those committing acts amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity to be investigated and held accountable, no matter which side they are on.

The current cycle of violence and impunity must be stopped.

The recent Mission by the Office of the Prosecutor to Libya is an important step, strengthening the focus of scrutiny on those who have acted with impunity. In this regard, we welcome the co-operation of UNSMIL and the Office of the Prosecutor-General in Tripoli with the visiting OTP Mission. We also welcome the Office of the Prosecutor's work with Member States, national authorities and judiciaries, interested European institutions and the Libyan Prosecutor-General's Office, following the reports of the appalling mistreatment – and even enslavement – of migrants, to investigate and prosecute these crimes. At the same time, we appreciate the resource constraints under which they are operating in relation to these investigations.

We are grateful for the Prosecutor's update on the cases against Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, Abdullah Al-Senussi and Al-Tuhamy Mohamed Khaled. We fully support the Court's call for cooperation from members of the Council, Libya and all states, on the individuals who remain at large for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Libya in 2011.

It is crucial that Member States and relevant international organisations work to assist the Libyan authorities in their efforts to build the rule of law in Libya. We, along with our international partners, will continue to work with Libya to provide it with the support it needs to meet the challenges it faces. At the same time, the United Kingdom, as a strong principled supporter of the ICC, will continue to provide our full support to the Prosecutor and her team.

I thank you Madam President.

[News story: Dstl scientists inspire more women to choose STEM careers](#)

Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) scientists are supporting the WISE (Women in Science and Engineering) conference today, Wednesday 9 May 2018, which aims to inspire more girls to choose to study or work in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

In their roles as WISE Co-chair and Executive Sponsor respectively, Phillippa Spencer and Penny Endersby will be panel members at the annual conference – Penny on a panel about creative career paths and Phillippa looking at “patently biased” – about why so few patents are raised by women.

Dstl is a corporate member of WISE as part of our commitment to a diverse STEM workforce. 30%, and rising, of Dstl's 3,000 scientists, engineers and mathematicians are women, and we seek best practice elsewhere to improve

gender equality in Dstl. We are also committed to sharing our own good practice and experiences in this area, which is why Penny and Phillippa are delighted to be attending this conference.

WISE enables and energises people in business, industry and education to increase the participation, contribution and success of women in STEM.

The UK government's new Industrial Strategy makes a commitment to invest in science, research and innovation and to do more to commercialise the UK's world leading science base to drive growth.

Penny Endersby, Division Head at Dstl, said:

I have a very soft spot for WISE having had my first experience of what a life in science and technology might be like as a WISE scholar in my sixth form. The inspiration I took from that experience set me off on a career path which has been fulfilling and exciting beyond what the 17-year-old me could ever have imagined.

I have since learned the importance of providing mentors and role models at every career stage and the power of being encouraged to try new things. I hope that the conference will cause women at all stages in their careers to back their talent and reach for the next challenge.

[Read more about the WISE conference.](#)