

Press release: New HM Trade Commissioners announced

As the UK prepares for future trade agreements with countries around the world, International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox, today names 2 new HM Trade Commissioners to champion British trade with some of the UK's biggest economic partners.

The new appointments come as the latest ONS statistics show an increase in demand for British goods and services around the world in the year to January 2018, narrowing the trade deficit by £12.8 billion in the process.

Judith Slater has been appointed as HMTC for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, while Joanna Crellin will oversee trade between the UK and Latin America.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox, said:

With the IMF predicting that 90% of growth will come from outside the EU, we need to look at where the emerging markets are and put UK businesses in prime position to benefit. That is why, as an international economic department, we are introducing a new way of doing things with the appointment of our HM Trade Commissioners.

They will have more autonomy to do what works best in their region to improve trade with key markets of the future. Judith and Joanne bring a wealth of in-country knowledge and expertise to their new roles, alongside an extensive network of contacts in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and in Latin America – 2 key markets where British companies already have a well-established presence.

Trade between the UK and the Eastern European and Central Asian region has been blossoming in recent years, with total trade increasing by 9.2% to £30.6 billion in 2016. The demand for UK goods in the Caribbean and Latin America region is also strong with £9 billion of UK goods and services exported to the area in 2016.

These appointments follow an innovative new approach by the Department for International Trade (DIT) which earlier in the year published a list of upcoming visits by ministers, calling on businesses to have their say on 'in market' issues. Dr Fox and his team will be visiting the regions in the next few months, where they will also meet with the new HMTCS.

DIT Permanent Secretary, Antonia Romeo, said:

I am delighted to welcome Joanne and Judith to their new roles. They have both already done a fantastic job promoting the UK overseas and securing inward investment.

DIT's network of HMTCs is the latest example of how we are building a best-in-class international economic department, generating prosperity at home by growing exports, attracting investment and developing our trade policy.

Speaking after her appointment, Joanna Crellin, HMTC for Latin America said:

I am delighted to be appointed to be appointed as Her Majesty's Trade Commissioner to Latin America and the Caribbean. This exciting and vibrant region has great potential with an ever-growing appetite for British trade as markets here continue to grow.

I look forward to building on existing contacts in the region, to raising the profile of the region in the UK, and to building stronger and deeper trading relationships in the future.

Judith Slater, HMTC for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, added:

I'm very happy to be taking on this role at such a crucial time for British trade. There are many opportunities for UK businesses in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, both in the more developed economies such as Turkey and also in the developing markets, some of which are less well-known to our companies. I will be working hard to expand our collaboration with the countries in this region, and thus to unlock more of their exciting potential for UK firms.

About HMTCs

All of the new HMTCs will cooperate closely with HM Ambassadors and High Commissioners, the wider diplomatic network, and other HM government colleagues based in countries in their region, in a joined-up and coordinated government effort overseas to promote UK trade and prosperity.

In total, there will be nine geographical areas that the HM Trade Commissioners will cover:

- Africa
- Asia-Pacific
- China
- Eastern Europe and Central Asia Network
- Europe
- Latin America
- Middle East
- North America
- South Asia

Richard Burn, Anthony Phillipson and Crispin Simon were recently appointed

HMTCs for China, North America and South Asia, respectively.

Further HMTCs will be appointed shortly.

Joanna Crellin

Judith Slater was appointed British Consul-General, Istanbul and Regional Director-General for the Department for International Trade in September 2016. Prior to this, she was Deputy High Commissioner and South East Asia Regional Director of Trade and Investment in Singapore until September 2015.

Her previous posts include Deputy High Commissioner in Pretoria, South Africa from 2007-2011 and British Consul-General in Houston, Texas from 2004-2007. In the FCO in London, Judith's posts have included Private Secretary to the Minister of State responsible for relations with Asia and Head of Nuclear Policy Section in a Non-Proliferation Department. She has also had overseas postings in New Delhi and Canberra.

Judith Slater

Judith has a law degree from St John's College, Cambridge. She is married and has 2 teenage children. In her spare time, she enjoys golf, tennis, jogging and supporting Stoke City FC.

Joanna Crellin took office as British Consul-General in São Paulo in February 2015 in her first post overseas. She is also the Director-General for the Department for International Trade for Latin America.

She has worked for the UK government since 2001, having occupied a number of roles within the former Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) and HM Treasury – covering issues as diverse as nuclear decommissioning, social enterprise and corporate finance.

Joanna has a degree in Social Anthropology, French and Spanish from Cambridge University and a MSc in Politics and Economic Development in Latin America from the London School of Economics. She is married and has 2 small children.

Further information

Contact the DIT Media and Digital Team on 020 7215 2000.

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[Press release: Carillion: Official](#)

Receiver's update

A spokesperson for the Official Receiver said:

More than half (54%) the pre-liquidation workforce – close to 10,000 employees – have now been found secure ongoing employment so far through the liquidation. A further 873 jobs have been saved with employees transferring to new suppliers who have picked up contracts that Carillion had been delivering.

Regrettably we have been unable to find ongoing employment for a further 97 employees who have been given notice of redundancy. Jobcentre Plus' RapidResponse Service will provide them with every support to find new work.

Discussions with potential purchasers continue. I am continuing to engage with staff, elected employee representatives and unions to keep them informed as these arrangements are confirmed.

further information:

- in total, to date 9,946 jobs have been saved and 1,802 jobs have been made redundant through the liquidation
- this information does not include jobs attached to contracts where an intention to purchase has been entered into but has not yet formally occurred
- more than 5,400 employees are currently retained to enable Carillion to deliver the remaining services it is providing for public and private sector customers until decisions are taken to transfer or cease these contracts
- further information about rights in redundancy is available on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

To be notified of future updates from the Official Receiver please [register to receive an email alert](#).

[News story: MOD confirms death of](#)

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 testimonials 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.

News story: FCO Minister Burt appalled by deaths on Israel/Gaza border

Alistair Burt, Minister for the Middle East, said:

I am appalled by the deaths and injuries on the Israel/Gaza border on Friday (30 March). There is an urgent need to establish the facts, including why such a volume of live fire was used and what role Hamas played in the violence. But the most important thing is to ensure that there is no repeat of what happened, with all sides committing to peaceful protest, restraint and international law.

This issue cannot just be managed over time. We need a political process to deliver a two-state solution; urgent action to improve the economic and humanitarian situation in Gaza, including easing of restrictions by Israel and Egypt; and Palestinian reconciliation based on full adherence to the Quartet principles by Hamas.

Further information

- Follow Foreign Office Minister Alistair Burt on Twitter [@AlistairBurtUK](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
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Press release: Children's Funeral Fund for England

Under the scheme, parents will no longer have to meet the costs of burials or cremations. Fees will be waived by all local authorities and met instead by government funding.

Every year an estimated 4,350 children die under the age of 18 and grieving parents can face thousands in council fees for burial or cremation costs. There is also considerable variation in charges, with some councils waiving fees altogether.

The intervention brings England in line with Wales and follows a cross-party campaign by bereaved parents to remove fees for funerals for those under the age of 18.

Theresa May today praised the “dignity and strength” of Swansea East MP Carolyn Harris who been at the forefront of the cross-party Parliamentary campaign following the death of her eight-year-old son Martin.

The Prime Minister said:

No parent should ever have to endure the unbearable loss of a child – a loss that no amount of time will ever truly heal.

But in the raw pain of immediate loss, it cannot be right that grieving parents should have to worry about how to meet the funeral costs for a child they hoped to see grow into adulthood.

I have been incredibly moved by the dignity and strength of campaigners like Carolyn Harris, who lost her own son Martin when he was just eight years old. Carolyn has passionately argued for a Children's Funeral Fund to spare grieving families the burden of meeting funeral costs.

In the darkest moment of any parent's life there is little light – but there can be support.

That is why I have asked for the Children's Funeral Fund to be set up in England. For Carolyn, in memory of her son Martin, and in support of all those parents overwhelmed by such harrowing loss.

The intervention follows government support for Kevin Hollinrake's Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill for parents who lose a child under the age of 18.