

Press release: EU vessels prevented from electric shock fishing post Brexit

EU vessels will no longer be able to carry out electric pulse fishing in UK waters after Brexit, Fisheries Minister George Eustice announced today.

Pulse trawling is a controversial fishing method that uses electrical signals to drive flat fish, such as sole, from the seabed into nets. While further scientific research is being conducted into the practice, there are concerns about its impact on the marine environment.

Using an electric current to fish was banned by the EU in 1998 but since 2006 pulse beam trawling has been allowed under an EU derogation. At present, over 80 Dutch vessels hold permissions to use this method in certain parts of the southern North Sea, including in UK waters outside the 12-mile zone.

A Statutory Instrument (SI) will be laid in Parliament later today (Wednesday 13 January) to provide continuity for the fishing industry by ensuring EU law on technical conservation is operable in the UK – but the current derogation for EU vessels will be removed, meaning they will not be able to conduct pulse trawling in UK waters.

The legislation comes as the UK prepares to leave the Common Fisheries Policy and become an independent coastal state, committed to building a sustainable and profitable fishing industry and delivering a green Brexit with new protections for our precious marine environment.

Fisheries Minister George Eustice said:

There are serious concerns about pulse fishing and it is wrong that the EU has allowed it to happen.

We will stop EU vessels pulse fishing in UK, safeguarding our marine environment and keeping our seas sustainable for future generations.

The EU Exit SI will apply if the UK leaves the EU without a negotiated deal, or after any implementation period included in a deal.

While the UK is [taking back control of how its waters will be managed](#) after exiting the EU, the European Union is currently considering removing its derogation as part of its ongoing review of technical conservation measures.

In addition to technical conservation measures, the SI – the Common Fisheries Policy and Aquaculture (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 – will ensure retained EU Law regarding Regional Fisheries Management Organisations

and the North Sea multiannual plan, is operable in the UK after we leave the EU.

There are three UK vessels (two English and one Scottish) that use pulse fishing and Defra is working with Marine Scotland to review their licenses.

News story: Apache and Wildcat to touch down in Estonia as UK bolsters its commitment to NATO

The Army aircraft will provide aviation training opportunities to NATO allies on Estonia's annual Exercise Spring Storm as well as to the UK-led battlegroup on NATO enhanced Forward Presence.

The helicopter deployment will boost our contingent to around 1,000 personnel in the Baltics, making the UK the largest contributor to NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence – further reinforcing the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture.

At NATO HQ, the Defence Secretary underlined the UK's support for the USA's position on the INF Treaty following repeated violations by Russia – a stance shared by Allies.

The Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Whenever the call comes from NATO, the UK has always been ready to reach into its full spectrum of capabilities and offer its support.

That's why we're bolstering training in Estonia by deploying some of the world's most advanced helicopters to the country.

Mr Williamson discussed a range of issues with counterparts – noting the continued progress being made by allies on defence spending and encouraging others to follow the example set out by the UK.

He also took the opportunity to welcome Macedonia as the latest member of the Alliance, recognising their accession as a positive for the Western Balkans region and for Euro-Atlantic security. Belgium's contribution to the UK-led enhanced Forward Presence battlegroup in Estonia this year was similarly welcomed by the Defence Secretary.

With the meeting marking the first gathering of Defence ministers in NATO's

70th year, Mr Williamson also looked ahead to future events marking the anniversary of the world's most successful alliance – including the UK having been invited to host a meeting of leaders in December.

[News story: Goodbye GSI – DWP email addresses are changing](#)



The [GSI \(Government Secure Intranet\)](#) network is being phased out across government. As part of this change, '.gsi' will be removed from Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) email addresses by 28 March 2019.

From 28 March 2019 if you use any existing DWP email addresses, you will need to change these from:

...@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

to

...@dwp.gov.uk

The new addresses will be active by 28 March 2019 – please do not use them before this date. Until then you may still receive emails from DWP's '.gsi' email addresses.

Ensure you update any records that contain DWP email addresses from 28 March 2019. These may include directories, web applications or forms.

Any messages sent to a DWP '.gsi' address after 28 March 2019 will receive an automated email response asking you to use the new address.

If you have any questions about this change, or need more information email us at oad.removalofgsiproject@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

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1. 21 March 2019 Changed the date that DWP email addresses will change from 31 March 2019 to 28 March 2019.
 2. 13 February 2019 First published.
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News story: 32 million people better off as key legislation passes final hurdle

32 million people will pay less income tax than in 2015-16, after the government's Finance Bill 2018-19 received Royal Assent yesterday (12 February 2019), paving the way for measures from last year's Budget to be introduced in the spring.

Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Mel Stride, said:

The country can be proud of its hard work.

The government's balanced approach since 2010 has produced a stronger, fairer economy in which people and businesses can thrive. With wages growing at their fastest pace in over a decade, the income tax changes in the Finance Act will ensure that people can keep more of their hard-earned cash.

This Finance Act 2019 comes in against a backdrop of the highest wage growth in a decade, a deficit cut by four fifths since 2010, and nine consecutive years of growth.

A basic rate taxpayer will pay over £1,200 less income tax than they did in 2010, thanks to the government's changes, giving people more help with the cost of living.

As well as cutting taxes for millions of people a year earlier than planned, fuel duty has been frozen for a ninth year in a row, and beer, cider and spirits duty have also all been frozen.

The act means first-time buyers will be eligible for relief from stamp duty on shared-ownership homes, to help them realise their dream of owning their own homes.

And businesses will benefit from a new capital allowance for qualifying non-residential structures and buildings and an increase to the Annual Investment Allowance to £1 million for two years – helping to maintain our economic success by increasing investment and productivity.

Finally, the government's commitment to a fair and sustainable tax system is further realised in this Finance Bill, through making individuals or entities that reduce their tax bill by holding intangible property in low-tax jurisdictions liable to pay the tax they owe in the UK, making non-residents liable for capital gains tax on the sale of all immovable UK property, and

introducing rules to prevent firms fragmenting profits between unrelated entities to avoid tax.

[News story: Air ambulance charities invited to bid for share of £10m funding](#)

The £10 million in capital funding will help air ambulance charities to invest in new equipment and upgrade facilities to support them in providing vital services to patients across England.

Air ambulance services are not NHS funded. They are provided by 18 charitable organisations across England, with most of their resources supported by their own fundraising activities.

The 18 air ambulance charities in England will be able to [bid for the additional funding](#) specifically to support capital projects. This could include:

- buying state-of-the-art medical equipment for critical care teams
- modernising helicopters and helipads
- increasing the number of missions flown or extending the hours services are available
- expanding operational facilities to allow them to hire more highly skilled staff

Each charity will be able to bid for up to £2 million of grant funding. Air ambulance charities will also be able to partner with NHS Trusts to make joint bids, for example to modernise helipads that are owned by the hospital trust.

Air ambulance crews are often called out to those with serious conditions, carrying rapid response medical specialists who can provide expert critical care at the scene of an incident. This can involve treatment usually given in a hospital setting, such as blood transfusions and open-chest surgery.

The crews support the wider NHS emergency response on the ground, ensuring patients get specialised care in both urban settings and hard-to-reach rural areas.

The call for bids, developed in collaboration with the Air Ambulance Association, asks air ambulance charities to present proposals to fund projects.

The Department of Health and Social Care will prioritise applications that

deliver clear benefits to patients, while ensuring value for money for the taxpayer.

Applications close on 8 March 2019 and funding will be allocated in April this year.

Health Minister Stephen Hammond said:

Air ambulance charities are a vital life-line for people in critical conditions who rely on urgent treatment before they can reach a hospital.

Generous donations from the public help keep air ambulances in the air and this £10 million will help to ensure that they're equipped to provide lifesaving care to patients in need.

The NHS Long Term Plan will improve emergency care for all patients, including those treated by air ambulance charities. Today's funding recognises their unwavering contribution to our health service and, combined with essential public donations, will ensure these charities can have world-class facilities to match their reputation for world-class care.

Paula Martin, Chairman of the Association of Air Ambulances, said:

It's a very exciting time for the air ambulance community and the opportunity to bid for a grant to help enable significant capital projects is very welcome. Whilst public purse funding being made available for the first time is very exciting, the operating cost for every air ambulance charity and the lifesaving work that it does continues to be entirely dependent on public donations and traditional fundraising.

Air ambulance charities in England are poised to submit a diverse range of applications to help fund capital projects which will deliver good value for money and most importantly benefit the patients and communities they serve.