

News story: Defence Secretary hosts Qatari counterpart at historic Horse Guards



Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson and Minister of State for Defence Affairs of Qatar, His Excellency Dr Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Attiyah, met horses and soldiers from the Blues and Royals at Horse Guards in London. Crown copyright.

The Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson and his Qatari counterpart, His Excellency Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Attiyah, have reaffirmed the important long-term relationship between the UK and Qatar during a meeting in London.

The visit follows the Defence Secretary's trip to Qatar last December, where he signed a [£6bn deal](#) for Typhoon jets and missiles, supporting thousands of British jobs at BAE Systems.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Qatar is a vital partner in the fight against Daesh, hosting the headquarters of the coalition air campaign which is still coordinating strikes on targets in Syria every day.

Our two countries face the same threats from violent extremism and a mutual interest in supporting stability in the region, which will deliver security at home.

The visit to London focussed on defence and security cooperation between the UK and Qatar ahead of the 2022 World Cup, which is being hosted by Qatar, and lessons learned from the military support to the London 2012 Olympics. In addition to the Defence Secretary, Al-Attiyah also met with Security Minister Ben Wallace and the Deputy National Security Advisor Paddy McGuinness. His Excellency also inspected the men and horses of the Blues and Royals at the Army's historic London Headquarters at Horse Guards Parade.

[News story: Policing minister listens to first-hand experience at police wellbeing roundtable](#)

The Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Nick Hurd has heard from experts and senior officers on police wellbeing, including a chief superintendent who wrote a personal memoir on policing and mental health, at a roundtable on Tuesday 16 January.

The roundtable, chaired by the minister, focused on how the government can assist police chiefs in their statutory duty to manage the welfare of their officers. It was attended by police leaders, including Chief Constable Andy Rhodes, who is the National Police Chiefs Council Lead on Wellbeing, as well as experts from across government, Public Health England, and mental health charities.

Metropolitan Police Chief Superintendent John Sutherland, author of 'Blue: A Memoir', which details his struggles with mental health during a 26-year career in policing, also addressed the event about his personal experiences.

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Nick Hurd said:

Policing can be a very demanding job. Officers have demonstrated extraordinary courage and fortitude in the face of major challenges over the past year, including terrorist attacks and the Grenfell Tower fire. I am grateful to them for their tireless work and dedication to duty.

It is imperative that policing provides excellent support to its officers and staff – which is why I'm keen to listen to those with the most experience on how to do this best.

The government takes the issue of police welfare very seriously, and this event provides an opportunity to review progress so far and put plans in place for the future.

The roundtable builds on existing work by the sector. In July 2017, the Home Secretary awarded £7.5 million from the Police Transformation Fund over 3 years to pilot and, if it is successful, fund a dedicated national service to help provide enhanced welfare support. The new service will complement the support already delivered at force level to serving police officers and

staff.

The government has also awarded £7 million since 2014, using funds from the LIBOR fines imposed on banks, to the charity Mind, which has funded targeted support and programmes for emergency services.

The College of Policing has also carried out important work in this area. CC Rhodes and Dr Ian Hesketh of the College have led the design of The Blue Light Wellbeing Framework – the first ever sector-specific self-assessment management tool. It is available via Oscar Kilo, a website that brings together those responsible for wellbeing and shares learning and best practice.

Chief Constable Andy Rhodes, National Police Chiefs Council Lead on Wellbeing, said:

Our police officers and staff work in a physically and emotionally demanding environment, putting their bodies and their minds on the line 24/7 to keep us safe.

This roundtable sends out a clear message that we are relentless in our commitment to provide the world-class welfare support police need to deliver a high-quality service for the public.

The event brought together experts and national leads to review progress and agree priorities for the future, including significant investment from the Police Transformation Fund. This investment will enable us to accelerate our efforts and significantly step up our activity over the coming years.

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[News story: War disablement pension rates 2018](#)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Tobias Ellwood) has announced the new rates of war pensions and allowances proposed from April 2018 are set out in the [War disablement pension 2018 rates document](#). The annual uprating of war pensions and allowances for 2018 will take place from the week beginning 9 April. Rates for 2018 are increasing by 3.0% in line with the September 2017 consumer prices index.