

Press release: Candidate selected for Ofcom Chair

The Government has announced that following an open recruitment process, Lord (Terry) Burns has been chosen as their the preferred candidate for Chair of Ofcom from 1 January 2018.

The Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee will now hold a pre-appointment hearing with Lord Burns on 13 December 2017.

The Committee's conclusions will be considered carefully before deciding whether or not to proceed with the appointment.

The term of the outgoing chair, Dame Patricia Hodgson, ends on 31 December 2017.

Lord Burns is Senior Adviser to Banco Santander and a non-executive member of the Office for Budget Responsibility. He is also a member of the House of Lords Economic Affairs Select Committee and Chairman of the Lord Speaker's Committee on the Size of the House.

He was Chief Economic Advisor to the Treasury and Head of the Government Economic Service from 1980 to 1991 and Permanent Secretary to the Treasury from 1991 until 1998.

Previous appointments include Chairman of Santander UK plc, Channel 4 Television Corporation; Marks and Spencer plc, Welsh Water, the National Lottery Commission and The Royal Academy of Music.

From 2004 to 2006 he was Independent Adviser to the Secretary of State on the BBC Charter Review.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. This appointment has been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments.
2. The Chair of Ofcom is appointed by the Secretary of State. Remuneration for this role is £120,000 for up to three days a week. The term of appointments will last for four years.
3. In accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments, any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years must be declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation, or candidature

for election. Lord Burns has declared no such political activity.

[News story: Vacancies: Inspectors of Air Accidents \(Operations\)](#)

The Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) seeks applications from exceptional individuals to join our team of professional pilots who are Inspectors of Air Accidents (Operations). Working at the leading edge of aviation safety on the world stage, these unique roles offer the opportunity to make a real difference as we strive to improve aviation safety.

Often leading multi-disciplinary teams from many organisations, Inspectors of Air Accidents (Operations) help to determine the operational causes of civil aircraft accidents and serious incidents worldwide. The scope of these role are wide reaching and, in addition to the technical investigation, will encompass many areas of responsibility, from working closely with families, to liaising with UK embassies overseas. You will, therefore, need to have excellent communication skills with the ability to quickly adapt your style to suit your audience.

A full job description and role profile is on the [Civil Service Jobs website](#)

Read more about the work of an inspector of air accidents below.

The deadline for applications is 31 December.

Emma Truswell, Inspector of Air Accident (Operations)

As a new AAIB Operations Inspector, I quickly noticed the amount of variety in the job. Every week is filled with new learning experiences and interesting challenges. It provides a tremendous opportunity to develop a broad range of skills and knowledge, and to apply them to important real-life events. The most rewarding aspect for me is knowing that I am part of something meaningful and just. On one level we can be finding answers for bereaved families during the most difficult time in their lives, and on another we are helping to improve international flight safety.

A core part of the job is deploying to the scenes of accidents and serious incidents. A roster shows who is available for call-out any time of the day or night, and any day of the year. Once called, you could be sent anywhere in the world, so you need to have your kit ready. Time is of the essence to get to the site and start evidence collection.

Having been deployed a number of times already, it is clear that every occurrence is unique. You may be dealing with a light aircraft accident on remote terrain, or it could be a serious incident involving an airliner at a

major airport. The site can be distressing, and the pace dramatic. With all kinds of people and agencies present, it is a case of prioritising and using people skills to manage the site, and be efficient in your work.

You can be away for a few days during the field phase, and then it's back to the Branch to begin the post-field and analysis phase. This phase is full of twists and turns as you delve deeper in to the circumstances of an accident – trying to figure out the key factors and, crucially, what safety lessons can be learned by the wider industry. You may be dealing with anyone from eye-witnesses and flight crew, to operators and regulators – travelling all over to find answers and learn more. At the end of an investigation, the team produces a report to broadcast the safety message, with the aim of preventing re-occurrence. Sometimes it is also necessary to give evidence in court.

A positive aspect of the job is the continual scope for training and development. From remote terrain awareness and off-road driving training courses, to attending interesting conferences and manufacturer visits – this job represents an amazing opportunity to challenge yourself. Crucially for a pilot, you get the opportunity to continue flying in all its shapes and forms. For example, I fly regularly for an airline and have recently started my PPL(H). Also, the Ops Inspectors recently had the chance to do a Sikorsky S-92 simulator session, getting to practice landing on oil rigs at night and such like! The job really does offer the ideal balance for those passionate about aviation.

If you are a motivated and inquisitive person, who wants to improve flight safety as part of a well-established team, then grab this opportunity with both hands. Even after the short time I have been here I feel a real sense of fulfilment at the AAIB.

Statement to Parliament: Rail update, 29 November 2017

When Britain's railways were privatised in the mid-1990s, it was against a background of what many regarded as terminal decline. The radical Beeching cuts of the 1960s had been followed by further line closures under British Rail, and passenger numbers had been steadily falling since the Second World War.

Yet privatisation sparked a remarkable turnaround in the railway's fortunes. Over a million and a half more trains are timetabled each year than 20 years ago. Passenger demand has more than doubled. And other countries are now adopting Great Britain's rail model in their own markets.

To support this growth – and reverse decades of underinvestment in the infrastructure – we have embarked on the biggest rail modernisation programme

since Victorian times. In addition to government funding, billions of pounds of investment from the private sector is also helping to renew and expand train fleets, upgrade stations and transform services across the country.

And franchises are making an increasing contribution to the public purse. So the rail renaissance we are seeing in Great Britain today is the direct result of a successful partnership between public and private sectors.

This partnership of public and private has delivered real benefits for passengers for more than 20 years. But the success of privatisation has created its own challenges. As the number of services has increased, our network has become more and more congested, making delivering the punctual, reliable services that passengers expect more challenging. On much of the network our railway is operating on the edge of what it can cope with. It carries more passengers today than since its heyday of the 1920s, on a network a fraction of the size.

And when things go wrong, the impact can be widespread and quick, causing significant frustration for the travelling public.

That is why last year I announced plans to start bringing back together the operation of track and train on our railways.

This is a process of evolution and not revolution.

And I said that the exact approach may differ from area to area. But the outcome must be the same – a railway that is predominantly run by a joint local team of people with an absolute commitment to the smooth running of the timetable – whether planning essential repairs, responding to incidents on the line, or communicating with passengers.

Today (29 November 2017) I am publishing more details about our plans, and the steps we will take to realise them. This publication, called '[Connecting people: a strategic vision for rail](#)', explains how we will create a new generation of regional rail operations with a relentless focus on the passengers, economies and communities they serve. It represents the biggest change to the delivery of rail services since privatisation.

Although we have already achieved significant structural improvements – with joined-up working between operators and Network Rail, and Network Rail's own transformation into a series of regional route businesses – the document explains our plans to go much further.

Where it will deliver real benefits for passengers, many future rail franchises will be run by a joint team, made up of staff from Network Rail and the train company, and headed by a new Alliance director. Put simply, placing one person in charge. This will make the railway more reliable for passengers by devolving power to local routes and ensuring that one team is responsible for running the trains and the infrastructure they use.

Today I am also issuing the [invitation to tender for the next South Eastern franchise](#). This will deliver longer trains, providing space for at least 40,000 additional passengers in the morning rush-hour. And a simpler high-

frequency 'turn up and go' timetable on suburban routes will boost capacity and provide a better service to passengers. Day-to-day track and train operations on the South Eastern network will be run by a joint team led by a new Alliance Director. And on the East Midland Mainline we will also introduce a joint team approach – bringing more benefits to passengers.

Hon members will know the East Coast Mainline has had its challenges in recent times. I intend to take a different approach, from 2020 the East Coast Partnership will run the intercity trains and track operations on this route. This partnership between the public and private sector will operate under one management and a single brand, overseen by a single leader. It will also take a leading role in planning the future route infrastructure.

Bringing the perspective of train operators into decisions on rail infrastructure will help ensure passenger needs are better represented in the process.

While we run a competition to appoint the East Coast Partnership, we are in discussions with the existing East Coast franchise operator to ensure the needs of passengers and taxpayers are being met in the short term while laying the foundations for the reforms I have just outlined.

I want the passenger to be central to train operators' strategies. On some parts of the network that will mean we will introduce smaller train companies.

I am today launching a [consultation on the Great Western franchise](#), to seek views on how it can best meet the needs of passengers and communities in the 2020s and beyond. We want to establish whether it should be retained in its current size or split into smaller parts, to best deliver for customers.

We will also begin the process of splitting up the Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern franchise in 2021. When the 2 franchises were put together, it was intended this would help the implementation of the Thameslink upgrade programme, which is now near completion.

Despite the improvements in the railway since privatisation, we are still some way from achieving the modern, high performance, low cost and customer-focused industry we all want to see.

That is why we must continue to reform and invest in the railway, and maximise the contribution that both public and private sectors make to improving services.

Today's proposals will do precisely that. They will take time to deliver, and it won't always be easy, but we have now set a clear path for the future.

Getting to grips with industry structure will go hand-in-hand with investment in the infrastructure. We need new capacity to cope with growing demand – and new links to support economic growth and housing development.

The Great North Rail Project is transforming journeys across the North. Faster, more comfortable journeys. New direct services. Room for tens of

thousands more passengers.

And I intend to invest around £3 billion in upgrading the Transpennine route. This will deliver faster journey times, and improved capacity between the great cities of Leeds, York and Manchester.

In the south, flagship projects such as Crossrail and Thameslink are providing the capacity to underpin economic growth.

But our investment in HS2 will bring north and south closer together, and bring benefits for people across the country. A new railway, for a new era for rail. It is a bold and ambitious project. But if it weren't for ambition and faith in the power of rail to transform the country, we would have no railways at all.

Our vision rejects the mentality of decline that characterised the railway in the second half of the twentieth century. To complement record levels of private investment, we recently announced government funding of up to £34.7 billion for the railway in the years 2019 to 2024. It is part of an [expected spend of around £47.9 billion](#). This will support an overhaul of the network's ageing assets, and other vital work and improvements. Passengers value reliability more than anything – and we will deliver it.

We also want to deliver new connections. We are establishing the East West Rail company to restore the rail link between Oxford and Cambridge – lost to passengers in 1967 – and provide a major boost to the region. And we will look at other opportunities to restore capacity lost under Beeching and British Rail cuts of the 1960s and 1970s, where they unlock development and growth, and offer value for money.

Large projects and industry reform take time – but passengers want to see faster improvements in their day-to-day experience travelling on the railway. We do too, and we're doing something about it.

We are introducing smart ticketing across almost all of the network by the end of 2018. We're improving arrangements for compensation and dispute resolution when things go wrong, including supporting the establishment of a new passenger ombudsman.

We are working with industry to extend the benefits of discounted rail travel, to ensure those aged 16 to 30 can access appropriate concessions. We're investing in new digital technologies and better mobile connectivity. And we're committed to improving the accessibility of the network, and delivering a modern customer experience, open to all.

Privatisation brought a revolution to our railways. Investment, growth, and a new lease of life for a key public service. Now is the time for evolution to build on that success. Joining up track and train. Expanding the network. Modernising the customer experience. Opening the railway for new innovation.

We have a vision of a revitalised railway used to its full potential by a partnership between the public and private sectors, supporting people, communities and the economy. And we are taking decisive action to make that

vision a reality.

I am making copies of the strategic vision available in the Libraries of both Houses. And the Great Western and South Eastern documents are now on the website of the Department for Transport.

I commend this statement to the House.

Speech: The Rohingya people of Rakhine State: UK government actions update, 28 November 2017

I am grateful to the Honourable Member for the City of Durham (Roberta Blackman-Woods) for securing this debate.

Having visited Burma last week for the second time inside 7 weeks, I welcome this opportunity to update the House on the heartbreakingly appalling situation facing the Rohingya people of Rakhine State and the active work of the UK government in both Burma and Bangladesh to help address it.

Latest situation

Since military operations began in Rakhine State on 25 August, more than 620,000 Rohingya have fled over the border into Bangladesh. Many have given heart-wrenching accounts of human rights abuses, including sexual violence, they have suffered or witnessed in Rakhine. Up to a 1,000 people are still crossing the border every day. This is a movement of people on a colossal scale, with few parallels in recent times.

I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute once again to the support that the Government of Bangladesh has offered the Rohingya. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's decision to open the border and allow the refugees to enter has without doubt saved countless lives.

Last Thursday, Bangladesh and Burma signed a memorandum of understanding on the return of refugees to Rakhine State. We understand that a joint working group will be set up within 3 weeks, with the aim of the process of returns commencing within 2 months. The UK government will press for quick progress on implementation of this bilateral agreement. But we will be clear that any returns must be safe, voluntary and dignified. And there must be appropriate international oversight.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has underlined that conditions in Rakhine "are not in place to enable safe and sustainable returns". A recent Amnesty International report described the pre-existing situation in Rakhine

as one of 'apartheid'.

The Burmese authorities have a lot to do before they can offer genuine reassurance to the Rohingya that they will be safe if they return to Rakhine.

UK action

The government has concluded that the inexcusable violence perpetrated on the Rohingya by Burmese military and ethnic Rakhine militia appears to be ethnic cleansing. The UK has been leading the international response, diplomatically, politically, and in terms of humanitarian support.

Political/multilateral

On 6 November, [we proposed and secured with unanimous support the first UN Security Council Presidential Statement on Burma](#) in a decade.

With this, the Security Council has made clear its expectations of the Burmese authorities:

- no further use of excessive military force
- immediate UN humanitarian access
- mechanisms to allow voluntary return of refugees; and
- an investigation into human rights violations including allegations of sexual violence

The UN Secretary-General will report progress to the Security Council after 30 days.

I do not want to prejudge the Secretary-General's report; but I will say that the UK stands ready to convene the Security Council again, to consider further steps, if Burma has not taken the necessary action.

Elsewhere in the UN we are co-sponsoring a UN General Assembly resolution on the human rights situation in Burma. This resolution received the support of 135 member states at the Third Committee.

The strong international support for this resolution and the Security Council's Presidential Statement sends a powerful message to the Burmese authorities about the military's conduct and the damage to its international reputation.

Bilateral engagement

I attended the [Asia-Europe Foreign Ministers Meeting](#) in Naypyidaw last week, and had meetings with Minister of Defence Sein Win, Deputy Foreign Minister Kyaw Tin and Aung Sang Suu Kyi's Chief of Staff Kyaw Tin Swe. I underlined with all the importance of Burma responding to the UN's calls.

Any long-term resolution must also address the issue of citizenship in Burma. The [report of the Kofi Annan-led Rakhine Advisory Commission](#) remains central to this, and I welcome Aung San Suu Kyi's recent establishment of an

International Advisory Board on its implementation.

Aung San Suu Kyi is publicly committed to implementing the Commission's recommendations, which include reviewing the controversial 1982 Citizenship Law, and making progress on citizenship through the existing legal framework.

Humanitarian

The main current impetus continues to be the urgent humanitarian needs of the Rohingya refugees.

The UK is one of the largest bilateral donors to the crisis in Bangladesh. We have contributed £59 million – the [most recent tranche of £12 million](#) announced by my Rt Hon Friend the member for Portsmouth North during her visit to Bangladesh over the weekend. This includes £5 million as part of an aid matching arrangement with the Disasters Emergency Committee.

UK aid is making a material difference. It is providing over 170,000 people with food, 140,000 people with safe water and sanitation, and emergency nutritional support to more than 60,000 vulnerable children under the age of 5.

We have also been working to encourage others to contribute. On 23 October, I represented the UK at the UN-organised pledging conference in Geneva, where through UK leadership and lobbying we were able to secure a further £260 million from a range of donors. However, the international humanitarian response is only funded until February. More will be needed, from us and others. The UK will sustain its international leadership role on the humanitarian response to ensure this happens.

Sexual violence

I have already mentioned the horrifying accounts provided by some Rohingya refugees about sexual and gender-based violence. Earlier this month, the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence, Pramila Patten, visited Bangladesh, accompanied by the Head of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative.

They heard consistent reports of the widespread and systematic use of [sexual violence against Rohingya women and girls](#). It appears they had been deliberately targeted on account of their ethnicity and religion. The Special Representative's view is that the sexual violence had been overwhelmingly "ordered, planned and perpetrated by the Armed Forces of Burma".

These are extremely serious conclusions. We have deployed 2 civilian experts to Bangladesh to assess the current levels of investigation and documentation of these abhorrent crimes. They will provide advice on where the UK government can further support this critical work.

The UK government is committed to ensuring there is support for the victims and witnesses of these crimes. That is why we are funding the provision of medical services, counselling and psychological support to Rohingya refugees

in Bangladesh, who are survivors or witnesses of sexual violence,

DFID has also pledged to help increase protection for Rohingya women and girls against sexual violence and exploitation, as part of a global package of measures supported by an additional commitment of £12 million.

Accountability

We are determined that those who have committed human rights violations including crimes of sexual violence against the Rohingya are held to account.

We co-sponsored the UN resolution in March 2017 which established the UN Fact-Finding Mission and we stand ready to act, together with the wider intentional community, when the Mission reports to the Human Rights Council in March. Establishing an impartial account of the facts is imperative if we are going to bring those responsible to justice.

Conclusion

To sum up, the UK government will maintain a full range of humanitarian, political and diplomatic efforts, leading the international community's response to this ongoing catastrophe, and pressing Burma to meet urgently the expectations set out in the UN Security Council's Presidential statement.

The FCO is and will remain steadfastly determined to ensure the safety of the Rohingya people, to secure access for humanitarian aid, and to hold to account those who are responsible for the harrowing crimes we have witnessed in Rakhine State.

Press release: Creative industries' record contribution to UK economy

- Strong growth also in nation's tourism, culture, sport and digital industries
- DCMS sectors contribution to the economy up by 3.6 per per cent year-on-year to almost £250bn, accounting for 14.2 per cent of the UK's Gross Value Added (GVA)

The UK's booming creative industries made a record contribution to the economy in 2016, [new statistics show](#).

Industries including advertising and marketing, arts and film, TV and radio, and museums and galleries are all part of this thriving economic sector, which is now worth almost £92bn, according to the figures published today by the Department for Digital, Media, Culture and Sport.

The creative industries' contribution to the UK is up from £85bn in 2015 and it is growing at twice the rate of the economy. The sector now makes up more than five per cent of the UK economy's GVA. Much of the increase has been driven by a boom in the computer services sub-sector. While this includes video games, it also covers wider digital industries.

DCMS sectors' contribution to the UK economy overall continues to rise, with GVA at £248.5 billion in 2016, up 3.6 per cent year-on-year and up 29 per cent since 2010. DCMS sectors now account for 14.2 per cent of the UK's GVA.

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Karen Bradley said:

Britain's creative industries play an essential role shaping how we are seen around the world but as these new statistics show they are also a vital part of the economy.

The sector is now one of our fastest growing industries and continues to outperform the wider UK economy. This is a testament to the talent and drive of its workforce and we are working closely with them to make sure this fantastic success continues.

I am delighted to see the sectors my Department supports contributing so positively to people's lives and helping strengthen the economy, as we work to build a Britain fit for the future.

The Government continues to back the creative industries sector. For example, dedicated tax relief to support high-end television productions, such as Game of Thrones and The Crown have seen a production boom worth £1.5 billion since the scheme was introduced in 2013. There was also £1 billion of inward investment in the film industry last year as a result of tax relief.

The government's UK Games Fund, which helps video game companies grow with grants to support new projects and talent, has just been extended until 2020. The government has also recently announced the opening of a £80 million Creative Industries Clusters Programme competition which will boost innovation in the sector by part-funding research partnerships between universities and industry.

Britain's thriving tourism sector has continued to grow and now makes up almost four per cent of the UK economy – worth a record £66 billion in 2016.

Sport's value to the UK economy has also increased by 4.9 per cent year-on-year and by 28.6 per cent since 2010. Sport's value, which includes sport equipment production and the operation of sports facilities, rose to £9 billion, although this does not include the sports broadcasting rights or sports advertising markets.

The UK's world leading digital sector has seen its contribution to the UK economy increase by 5.8 per cent between 2015 and 2016, and by 23.3 per cent since 2010.

The Government recognises the value of the UK's digital sector. Two weeks ago the Prime Minister and Chancellor hosted a tech roundtable and reception at Downing Street and earlier this year the Government published its Digital Strategy to help make the UK the best place in the world to start and grow a digital business.

Last week's Budget included more than £500m of investment in technologies including artificial intelligence (AI), 5G and full fibre broadband. This was followed by Government's Industrial Strategy earlier this week, which committed to transformative investment in pioneering immersive technologies such as virtual and augmented reality with £33m from the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. This investment is also designed to capture new global audiences and grow our leading market position in creative content.

Notes to editors

- Gross value added measures the value of goods and services produced without associated costs.
- This release provides estimates of the contribution of DCMS sectors to the UK economy, measured by gross value added (GVA).
- The 2016 figures are provisional and are subject to change when ONS National Accounts are published next year.
- [Link to statistics here.](#)

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