

[Press release: Government celebrates cyber security successes in Manchester](#)

The First Secretary of State, Damian Green, spoke at the landmark opening of the new global headquarters of the NCC Group in Manchester, marking the first anniversary of the creation of the National Cyber Security Strategy (NCSS).

The NCSS was launched a year ago in response to the growing cyber security challenges and threats faced by the UK and to define the Government's ambitions for the future.

As a part of this world-leading strategy the government invested £1.9 billion in establishing the innovative National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), demonstrating a long-term commitment to keeping the UK safe. Since its launch the NCSC has responded to over 590 significant cyber incidents: providing support to victims, sharing information with intelligence and law enforcement, and setting up incident management structures to ensure essential services are up and running once incidents have occurred.

The First Secretary spoke at the headquarters of the NCC Group – a global expert in cyber security and risk mitigation. The newly built headquarters in Manchester equipped with state of the art technology will employ more than 500 cyber security experts providing Britain's and Europe's largest companies with cyber security consultancy and cyber incident response.

Damian Green, First Secretary of State and Minister for the Cabinet Office said:

This Government is committed to tackling the growing threat of cyber security and will continue to invest in the future of our defence programme.

The Government's Cyber Schools programme aims to provide skills to nearly 6,000 young people in order to secure the UK's position as a world leader in cyber security for generations to come.

I am delighted that a global cyber security expert has chosen to open their headquarters in Manchester – fuelling the success of the Northern Powerhouse.

Brian Tenner, Interim CEO at NCC Group said:

NCC Group continues to play a pivotal role in advising government and helping to implement national initiatives which are strengthening the UK's cyber security posture and helping to improve the country's technical capabilities in this area. The First Secretary's visit is recognition of this continuing support

and we were delighted to welcome him to our company headquarters today.

The threat of cyber crime is an ever-evolving issue that is increasing in severity every day. It is encouraging that the UK Government is treating this as a priority and putting concrete strategies in place to address this. We will continue to offer our assistance and work closely with the UK Government on these new initiatives in order to improve the UK's ability to defend against modern cyber threats.

Speech: First anniversary of the National Cyber Security Strategy

Thank you, Brian, for the warm welcome and good morning to you all.

I am delighted to be here today to celebrate with you and officially open the new global HQ of the NCC Group. I just had a tour of the new offices and met some very interesting and creative people doing things that are truly amazing, and I know many of you here today have been instrumental in supporting the growth of this fantastic company.

NCC Group is a key part of a strong and growing UK cyber security industry. And you are a great example of business innovation and investment in the North of England.

The government is committed to attracting investment in the North and is building a Northern Powerhouse to help the cities, towns and rural communities of this part of the world combine their strengths to encourage greater prosperity.

I am pleased to say that in six months' time CyberUK, the UK's flagship cyber security event, will be hosted at the Manchester Convention Centre. And, next month, this city will also host the UK-Gulf Cyber Security Academic Symposium, which will continue to promote research and development in a number of crucial sectors, and deepen our international collaboration in cyber security.

So being here today is an ideal opportunity to reflect on the first year of this government's five year UK National Cyber Security Strategy.

My role as First Secretary of State means that I am responsible for the overarching Government National Cyber Security Strategy and the National Cyber Security Programme which delivers it.

Our digital economy is thriving: tech companies have created 3.5 million new jobs in the UK and four out of five people in the UK bought something online in the past year – a higher figure than in any other country.

So citizens, business and academia all derive huge benefits from the connectivity of the digital world. But the Wannacry ransomware attack, Equifax data breach, and other recent incidents highlight the need for all organisations to take action on cyber security and protect personal data.

To meet these challenges the government launched a comprehensive National Cyber Security Strategy last November 2016, supported by £1.9 billion of transformational investment. And I am pleased to say that since the launch there has been a continuous flow of international partners to our country, keen to learn from and emulate our strategy.

The most visible achievement in the past year has been the creation of the National Cyber Security Centre, bringing key capabilities and expertise together in one place.

The NCSC marked its first birthday earlier this month and they've had a busy year. In all, they responded to more than 590 significant cyber incidents, more than 30 of which were sufficiently serious to require a cross-Government response.

The Wannacry virus and recent attack on the UK and Scottish Parliaments could have been considerably worse had the NCSC and the NCA's National Cyber Crime Unit not been operational and in a position to lead the response.

Responding to incidents like this requires a co-ordinated effort, and I am heartened that the NCSC received so many offers of support from industry during the incident. Clearly, the secret ingredient behind much of what we have achieved so far is our ability to draw on strong partnerships across government, industry, civil society and the academic world.

But we are not just waiting for attacks to happen – we are also doing our utmost to prevent them. We cannot tackle the threats we face solely in the UK, so building constructive relationships with our international partners is essential and we remain committed to promoting a cyberspace which is free, open, peaceful and secure.

Working in partnership with our allies on cyber defence is one of the most pressing strategic challenges of our time. Over the year, we've expanded our efforts to increase cyber resilience around the globe in over 50 countries, by raising public awareness and reinforcing Computer Security Incident Response Teams. We've also started testing an ambitious Active Cyber Defence programme of ground breaking initiatives to improve basic cyber security across the public sector. Today, we are launching the next phase of our Cyber Aware programme through the Tech-Free-15 campaign which encourages the public and small businesses to adopt secure behaviours, like taking time out to install software and app updates to better protect themselves from cyber crime.

So our goal is not just to defend and deter cyber attacks, but also to develop our cyber security ecosystem. This means bringing together our local cyber security clusters and our world leading universities including the 14 Academic Centres of Excellence in Cyber Security.

The new Cheltenham Innovation Centre opened this year and launched a Cyber Accelerator programme, which provides start-ups with access to world-class experts to help them build cutting-edge technology.

And alongside the domestic support to business, the Department for International Trade leads efforts to increase the export of our world-leading cyber security capability, and is currently developing plans to do more to support the UK's industry overseas.

And this year, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport kicked off their comprehensive Cyber Schools Programme, which aims to train nearly 6,000 young people over the coming years through extracurricular activities with the SANS Institute, BT, FutureLearn and the Cyber Security Challenge.

I would also like to pay tribute to NCC Group for your work with schools and universities to highlight cyber security as an attractive career path. Industry is coming together to sponsor our CyberFirst scheme, which saw more than 1,000 young people take part in summer courses this year. And earlier this year 8,000 girls entered the CyberFirst Girls competition, which is a fantastic success in a sector where we need more opportunities to promote and encourage diversity.

So there is a lot going on, and a lot that will be coming very soon, all part of this government's goal of making the UK a world-leader in cyber security.

So in closing, let me thank you again for the invitation to help you mark this milestone as you open your new global headquarters. You are a great example of the UK's global cyber security leadership and innovation, and I wish you the very best for the future. Thank you very much.

Press release: October 2017 labour market statistics for Scotland

Commenting on today's labour market statistics for Scotland, Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

It is encouraging to see an increase in employment, which remains close to record levels.

But the rise in unemployment is disappointing and shows we must

remain focused on boosting Scotland's economy.

Growth in Scotland lags behinds the rest of the UK and I'd urge the Scottish Government to use their considerable economic levers more effectively.

The statistics can be accessed on the ONS website.

Further information

- Employment in Scotland increased by 35,000 over the quarter, and increased by 40,000 over the year to stand at 2,655,000.
- The Scots employment rate increased over the quarter to stand at 75.3 per cent. The rate is now at a near record high and is above the UK average of 75.1 per cent.
- Unemployment in Scotland increased by 9,000 over the quarter and is down 15,000 over the year. The level now stands at 113,000.
- At 4.1 per cent, the Scots unemployment rate is below that for the UK as a whole.
- Economic activity increased by 44,000 over the quarter and now stands at 2,767,000. The economic activity rate increased over the quarter to stand at 78.5 per cent.
- In September 2017, the number of people out of work and claiming out-of-work benefit – Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and Universal Credit (UC) – was 80,500, up 500 over the month. The claimant count level is now 700 higher compared to one year ago.

[News story: Rule changes to promote competition in structural warranties market](#)

The revision to existing National House Building Council (NHBC) undertakings, which currently cover over 1.6 million homes in the UK, will protect and encourage growing competition in the structural warranties market.

On 29 June 2017, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) announced – as part of its review of legally binding commitments (known as ‘undertakings’) given by the NHBC in 1995 – that it would consult on whether or not to amend the NHBC’s undertakings to bring them up to date with today’s market conditions.

This proposal reflected the CMA’s provisional finding that, although competition in the market has grown and house builders are now purchasing some or all of their structural warranties from a range of suppliers, the NHBC has retained a very high market share compared to its competitors.

Having carefully considered responses to its consultation, the CMA has determined in the [final decision](#) on its review to seek new undertakings that are more focused and closely targeted on encouraging effective competition than those given in 1995.

The CMA is now consulting on the new undertakings that have been offered by the NHBC. These proposals would oblige the NHBC to clearly display on its website that builders who are members of the NHBC can source structural warranties from both the NHBC and other providers, or from another provider alone. Given regulatory developments, these proposals would also remove any requirement on the NHBC to oversee warranties provided by its competitors.

The proposed new undertakings would replace the previous undertakings and remain in force for 15 years. They are set out in Annex 1 of the CMA’s final decision.

Anyone wishing to comment on the proposed undertakings should do so by 1 November by emailing structural.warranties@cma.gsi.gov.uk or writing to:

Structural Warranties Review
Competition and Markets Authority
Victoria House
Southampton Row
WC1B 4AD

[Press release: Unemployment remains at lowest rate since 1975](#)

The figures, released by the Office for National Statistics, also show that there are now 32.10 million people in work, 317,000 more than last year.

These figures have been driven by increases in full-time and permanent work, and in the last year there are 20,000 fewer people relying on zero hour contracts.

The female employment rate is also at a near record 70.7%, with over 15 million women in work. However, mothers aged between 16 and 49 are still less likely to be in employment than women without dependent children of the same age.

One area of focus for the government is therefore getting more women into work, and in the process boosting their pay income.

Minister for Employment, Damian Hinds said:

Our economy is helping to create full time, permanent jobs which are giving people across the UK the chance of securing a reliable income.

We've boosted the income for people on the lowest pay by increasing the National Living Wage and delivered the fastest pay rise for the lowest earners in 20 years.

That's great progress and we're determined to help more people flourish in the world of work.

For example we've launched our new returnship programme to help more women get into good jobs after taking time out, and to keep their career progressing.

Nancy Wood, 34, is an Associate at BuroHappold who has returned to work after 10 months out. She helps to lead the BuroHappold Engineering Sustainability and Building Physics team in London. She is looking to further her career in sustainability consultancy and has attended a returners course organised by WISE, an organisation set up to achieve a better gender balance in science, technology and engineering.

Nancy said:

I went on the returnship programme to help reignite my career. I'm ambitious, and after 10 months out I have valued learning how to successfully balance work and home life.

The course was extremely helpful and provided some really useful techniques. I already feel more confident in my ability and empowered to do my job well, and have set a clear career path to help me achieve my ambitions.

Analysis by the Institute for Fiscal Studies found that time out of the labour market has a substantial impact on women's salaries. On returning to work, women earn around 2% less on average for every year spent out of paid work.

According to research by PwC, addressing the career break penalty could

provide a £1.7 billion boost to our annual economic output.

In the [2017 Spring Budget](#) £5 million was allocated to increase the number of schemes in the public and private sector for people returning to work after a career break caring for children or family members.

Today's employment figures also show:

- there are a near record 783,000 vacancies in the economy at any one time
- the number of people in employment has increased by over 3 million since 2010
- the UK has the 3rd highest employment rate in the G7
- the number of workers aged 50 and over has reached a record 9.97 million
- youth unemployment has fallen by over 40% since 2010
- the proportion of young people who are unemployed and not in full time education remains below 5%

As part of the government's response to the recent [Race Disparity Audit](#), the Department for Work and Pensions will target 20 hotspots where ethnic minority people are more likely to be unemployed. Measures in these areas could include mentoring schemes to help those in ethnic minorities into work, and traineeships for 16 to 24 year olds, offering English, maths and vocational training alongside work placements.

Separate figures out today show [1.4 million claims have been made to Universal Credit](#). There are 610,000 people on Universal Credit, with 37% in employment.

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