

News story: Defence Minister unveils new £83 million state-of-the-art logistics site

The Minister for Defence Procurement, Harriett Baldwin, has today formally opened a huge state-of-the-art £83 million MOD logistics centre in Shropshire, which will streamline distribution and storage, delivering savings of around £500 million by 2028.

The 80,000 square metre Defence Fulfilment Centre (DFC) is the size of ten football pitches and will revolutionise the way we support our Armed Forces across the world. It will be a central hub for the storage and distribution of Defence's £30 billion inventory, including spare parts, food, clothing, and medical supplies.

Minister for Defence Procurement, Harriett Baldwin said:

The Defence Fulfilment Centre in Donnington will transform the way we store and distribute essential supplies to the Armed Forces who keep us safe. Supported by our rising defence budget, this £83 million investment and partnership with leading logistics specialists is concrete evidence of our determination to give our personnel the very best support wherever they are in the world.

The DFC has been delivered to time and on budget and consists of two warehouses and a support building. The facility, based in Donnington and managed by Kuehne + Nagel on behalf of Team Leidos, will use new warehouse management systems to maximise value for money and manage the complex supply chains of the 21st Century seamlessly. Alongside special environmental storage, the DFC's automated storage and retrieval system will be capable of picking more than 1000 items an hour.

Chief of Material (Land) at the MOD's Defence Equipment and Support organisation, Lieutenant General Paul Jaques said:

The Defence Fulfilment Centre will transform the way we support our servicemen and servicewomen. Contribution to Operational Readiness through the provision of supplies and commodities to our Armed Forces will be on a par with industry best practice as a result of this investment in state-of-the art facilities.

The opening of this centre on time and on budget is testament to the close and positive collaboration between Defence Equipment and Support, and Team Leidos. I very much look forward to seeing this fabulous facility fully operational in 2019.

The site has been opened as part of the Logistic Commodities and Services Transformation (LCST) programme, which aims to deliver our Armed Forces what they want, when and where they want it as efficiently as possible. The programme is being delivered collaboratively by the MOD and Team Leidos and will build an efficient and agile support network with the ability to support current and future military operations.

Leidos Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Roger Krone said:

The completion of the Defence Fulfilment Centre is an important milestone in our strategic plan to deliver enhanced information technology and logistics services to the Armed Forces.

This state-of-the-art facility is a conduit to ensuring front-line troops can get what they need, when they need it, by offering a more efficient and effective processes across the supply chain.

[News story: Evidence gathering to take place on UK plan to resolve RBS' State aid commitment](#)

The European Commission has [formally confirmed](#) that it will begin to gather evidence on the UK Government's plan to resolve RBS's State aid commitment.

The plan, [first announced on 17 February](#), would see RBS fund and deliver a series of initiatives, worth around £750 million, to boost competition in today's UK business banking market by helping small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) access and benefit from greater choice in the banking services available to them.

In parallel, HM Treasury has confirmed that it will carry out a market testing exercise, running for 4 weeks from 17 April. The market testing exercise will ensure that the new package is designed so that it increases competition in the business banking market significantly and works well operationally. As part of the exercise, the Treasury will seek views from parties impacted by the new package, including challenger banks, SME business representatives, and venture capital and fintech firms. Full details of the European Commission's evidence gathering process, including timings of the consultation and further details of the proposed package, will be announced by the European Commission in the coming weeks.

Following the consultation and market testing exercises, the final proposal will be subject to the approval of the College of Commissioners.

News story: South West Water fined for Devon sewage spill

South West Water has been ordered to pay £86,000 in fines and costs for discharging sewage into Dawlish Water over a bank holiday weekend. The case was brought by the Environment Agency.

On 28 August 2015 an automatic alarm was triggered in Brook Street after a blockage in a pipe caused sewage to leak into nearby Dawlish Water, a stream that runs through the centre of the town.

The alarm sounded at 8.15am, but the water company didn't dispatch an emergency crew to deal with the problem until 11.40am. Instead of going to Brook Street, it went to Brook House in another part of Dawlish and reported nothing was wrong. It wasn't until a second team arrived, some 6 hours after the alarm sounded, that the discharge was discovered and steps were finally taken to stop the pollution.

The problem was caused by a brick which had somehow entered and blocked the sewer causing it to overflow.

This combined sewage overflow pipe was blocked and discharged into Dawlish Water

Dawlish beach was busy with holidaymakers at the time of the incident. Bathers were advised by an official from Teignbridge District Council to stay out of the sea and wash their hands. The Environment Agency declared an 'abnormal situation' and the bathing water was closed for more than 24 hours.

Levels of E.coli bacteria in Dawlish Water increased significantly as a result of the discharge, from 990 per 100ml upstream of the sewer pipe to 4,800,000 at the point of discharge. Further downstream in the walled section by the viaduct the level had reduced to 70,000, however children had been seen playing in the water in this area. Dilution in the sea meant there were safe levels of E.coli in the town's bathing water.

South West Water said it had tried to get a team to Dawlish as soon as possible, but their response time was increased because a crew was unavailable having attended sewer flooding of a property elsewhere overnight. A second crew was unable to attend due to technical problems with their vehicle.

Nigel Thomas-Childs, for the Environment Agency, said:

Water companies must respond promptly to emergencies to minimise any pollution or harm to the environment. This discharge occurred

over an August bank holiday when Dawlish was particularly busy. South West Water lost valuable time and took too long to find the blockage and deal with the overflow to the brook.

Appearing before Exeter Crown Court, South West Water Ltd was fined £80,000 and ordered to pay £6,202 costs after pleading guilty to discharging polluting material into Dawlish Brook, an offence under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

Press release: New charity investigation: Kids 'N' Cancer UK

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has opened a statutory inquiry into [Kids 'N' Cancer UK, registered charity number 1138702](#), and frozen its bank accounts. The inquiry was opened on 15 March 2017.

The charity has objects to provide assistance and financial support to children seeking cancer treatment, and to assist with the overseas costs of Proton Beam Therapy which is not yet available in the UK.

The Commission has established that there are clear and on-going regulatory issues relating to the administration and financial controls of the charity following the arrests of a trustee and an employee of the charity.

The inquiry will examine the:

- charity's governance, particularly since only one trustee remains active
- trustee's management of the charity's financial affairs including its financial controls, fundraising activities associated with specific beneficiaries, the application of funds, and the risk to charity property
- extent to which trustees have properly authorised benefits and remuneration to a trustee and employee at the charity

In order to protect the assets of the charity, the Commission has taken steps to freeze the charity's bank accounts under section 76(3)(d) of the Charities Act 2011.

It remains in contact with the Derbyshire Police and will cooperate with the police investigation as necessary.

The Commission had historic engagement with the charity. In 2014, it identified weaknesses in the charity's administration and issued an action plan to address concerns in areas such as accounting, financial controls and

governance.

It was satisfied at the time that the trustees took appropriate action to comply with its plan, but further concerns about the charity's management and financial controls have now arisen.

The Commission stresses that opening an inquiry is not in itself a finding of wrong doing. The purpose of an inquiry is to examine issues in detail and investigate and establish the facts so that the regulator can ascertain whether there has been misconduct and mismanagement; establish the extent of the risk to the charity's property, beneficiaries or work; decide what action needs to be taken to resolve the serious concerns, if necessary using its investigative, protective and remedial powers to do so.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. [Reports of previous inquiries](#) by the Commission are available on GOV.UK.

The charity's details can be viewed on the Commission's [online charity search tool](#).

Ends

PR 27/17

Notes to editors

1. [The Charity Commission](#) is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).
2. Search for charities on our [online register](#).
3. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the Commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.
4. The Commission's decision to announce the opening of a statutory inquiry is based on whether it is in the public interest to do so and with consideration of our objective to increase public trust and confidence in charities.

[News story: Prime Minister's visit to](#)

Saudi Arabia and Jordan: April 2017

Prime Minister Theresa May visits Jordan and Saudi Arabia from 3 to 5 April to further strengthen the UK's relationships in the Middle East.

Jordan

On her first visit to Jordan as Prime Minister, Theresa May will visit Amman today, 3 April. The Prime Minister will announce a new UK-Jordan initiative to tackle the terror threat and develop new capabilities to strike at the heart of Daesh, with new support for the Jordanian Air Force. She will confirm a plan to improve co-operation on countering violent extremism in the region.

The Prime Minister will also discuss how the UK can build on our co-operation with Jordan to manage the fallout from the Syrian conflict.

Saudi Arabia

The Prime Minister will visit Saudi Arabia Tuesday 4 April and Wednesday 5 April. She will make clear that they are a close and important ally and that we will continue to work closely in a range of areas, particularly on counter-terrorism where UK-Saudi co-operation is vital.

The Prime Minister is also expected to explore ways of boosting our already very strong trade ties. Saudi Arabia is currently the UK's largest trading partner in the Middle East, with exports of British goods standing at £4.67 billion and services at £1.9 billion in 2015.

Announcements