

Home Secretary orders wide-ranging review of Border Force

The Home Secretary, Priti Patel, has ordered a wide-ranging, independent review of Border Force to assess its structure, powers, funding and priorities to ensure it can keep pace with rapidly evolving threats and continue to protect the border, maintain security and prevent illegal migration.

The review will be carried out by Alexander Downer as an Independent Reviewer. Mr. Downer has a wealth of relevant experience to bring to this review, having previously served as Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs. He is currently Executive Chair at the International School for Government, King's College London.

The first of its kind since Border Force was set up, the wide-ranging review is expected to take several months to complete. It will ensure the UK government is prepared for future challenges at the border, by identifying change and improvements needed across Border Force's work on illegal migration, customs and national security to help keep the UK safe, secure and prosperous.

Home Secretary, Priti Patel said:

Border Force officers work tirelessly to protect our borders at 140 sea and air ports right across the UK.

Since Border Force was set up in 2011, its remit has grown to meet the changing border threats we face, and in recent years has supported delivery of the government's Brexit commitments and COVID-19 measures.

The public rightly expects this work to be carried out to the highest possible standard, which is why I have ordered this review of Border Force to identify ways in which it can keep improving its operations.

I have appointed Alexander Downer to do this vital work and look forward to his findings and recommendations.

Any further details on the review will be set out by the Independent Reviewer in due course.

Independent Reviewer of Border Force, Alexander Downer said:

I am delighted that the Home Secretary has asked me to lead an

independent review of Border Force, to ensure the UK's border is protected from the changing threats of today, and prepared for future challenges.

As an Independent Reviewer, I plan to lead a review that is robust, evidence-based and outcome-orientated.

I look forward to assessing Border Force's structure, powers, funding and priorities, and hearing from a wide range of voices from across the organisation and beyond.

[International agencies put supply chains on notice against collusion](#)

Press release

A new working group of international competition authorities has put companies involved in global supply chains on notice not to collude.



The working group is made up of competition authorities from the “Five Eyes” nations: the UK Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), the United States Department of Justice, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, the Canadian Competition Bureau and the New Zealand Commerce Commission. It will meet regularly to develop and share intelligence to detect and investigate suspected anti-competitive behaviour and collusion, using existing international cooperation tools.

The 5 competition authorities are today making co-ordinated statements putting firms on notice that those attempting to use supply chain disruptions as a cover for illegal anticompetitive conduct, including collusion, will face the full force of the law. In the UK that could lead to fines of up to 10% of global turnover, disqualification of directors and in some cases criminal prosecution.

The launch of the working group follows concerns about higher prices resulting from supply chain disruption across the economy. Many businesses and individuals have worked hard to minimise the impact of these disruptions. The agencies are concerned, however, that some unscrupulous businesses could take advantage of the disruptions to engage in anti-competitive collusion and practices that cheat other businesses and ultimately consumers.

Michael Grenfell, Executive Director of Enforcement at the CMA, said:

People and businesses across the world have been facing higher prices for goods and for transporting them. While price rises can be legitimate, the CMA would be concerned if collusive anti-competitive practices are contributing to these rises or preventing prices from coming down.

The CMA is ready to use its legal powers where it finds evidence that the issues in the supply chain might be caused by potential breaches of competition law.

These are global issues that are best addressed together. With support and intelligence from partner agencies across the world, we can step in and take enforcement action if we find evidence of anti-competitive behaviour taking place.

Businesses and individuals who wish to share information directly with the CMA can do so through several channels:

- Anyone who has information about a cartel is encouraged to call the CMA cartels hotline on 020 3738 6888 or send an email to cartelshotline@cma.gov.uk or use the [online reporting form](#).
- Significant benefits may also be available under the [CMA's leniency policy](#) for cartel participants that come forward with information, including, for a business which is the first to report a cartel to the CMA, immunity from fines, as well as immunity from criminal prosecution and director disqualification for its cooperating directors and employees. The CMA's leniency line is 0203 738 6833.

Notes to editors:

1. This new working group builds on the long-standing cooperation and intelligence alliance between the CMA and its global partners, who are signatories to the [Multilateral Mutual Assistance and Cooperation Framework for Competition Authorities announced on 2 September 2020](#).
2. The Five Eyes is an intelligence alliance comprising Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These nations have separate intelligence sharing arrangements between security agencies.
3. In order for the CMA to open an investigation against any business, it requires evidence that businesses may be breaching competition law. While the CMA has received multiple complaints from businesses about supply chains, it has yet to obtain or find evidence of potential

breaches of the law.

4. You can learn more about cartel behaviour [on our page 'Competing or cheating?'](#)
5. Businesses and individuals who wish to share information directly with the CMA can do so on [Report a competition or market problem](#).
6. The CMA has been working with the UK government and business groups to understand the steps that the UK can take to address disruption in supply chains.
7. For media enquiries, contact the CMA press office on 020 3738 6460 or press@cma.gov.uk.

Published 17 February 2022

[Get Ready to Apply for Student Finance](#)

News story

Chris Larmer, SLC Executive Director, Operations advises students to get ready to apply for student finance



In the coming weeks, the student finance application service for the 22/23 academic year will open for new and returning full time, undergraduate students in England and Wales.

Last year, we enabled more students than ever before to invest in their futures through access to higher education and we are anticipating another busy year ahead. For new students in particular, there is a lot to think about. Many will have recently completed their UCAS applications and will undoubtedly be excited, if a bit apprehensive, about what the future holds.

We want to encourage all new students to get the best possible start to their higher education journey by ensuring their student finance is in place when term starts. To support them with this, we have launched new online resources for students in [England](#) and [Wales](#) to help them prepare for when the

application service opens.

New students can also sign up to our [Student Finance England](#) (SFE) and [Student Finance Wales](#) (SFW) mailing lists to be among the first to know when they application service opens. It's important to remember that students don't have to have a confirmed place at university or college to apply for student finance, they can apply when the service opens using their preferred choice and update their application later if circumstances change.

Returning students should remember that they have to reapply for their student finance each academic year and we will be in touch with them when it is time to do so.

We continue to strive to deliver an outstanding customer experience, offering access to intuitive, trusted and supportive service at all stages of a student's finance journey. To help prepare for the application window opening, I have provided some top tips to help make the process as smooth as possible.

- Sign up to our [Student Finance England](#)(SFE) and [Student Finance Wales](#) (SFW) mailing lists to be among the first to know when they application service opens.
- Find out what funding you could be entitled to by checking out our dedicated pages for [SFE](#) and [SFW](#)
- Check out our online Get Ready to Apply resources:

SFE: studentfinance.campaign.gov.uk

SFW: studentfinancewales.co.uk/discover-student-finance/

Published 17 February 2022

MDP appoints new Assistant Chief Constable, Nuclear and Marine

The Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) has announced the appointment of Melanie Dales, into a new Assistant Chief Constable, Nuclear and Marine role, pending the retirement of ACC Dave Long at the beginning of March, after 37 years' service with the Force.

The MDP has recently stood up a new organisational structure and this includes a reset of the Assistant Chief Constable portfolios. The ACC Nuclear and Marine post holds responsibility for the specialist MDP teams that form part of the protective security arrangements for the Continuous at Sea Nuclear Deterrent and all MDP Marine Units, representing the largest marine policing capability in the UK.

Commenting on her new appointment, Melanie said

I am delighted to be joining the MDP, and I look forward to meeting officers and staff during the coming months, to learn more about the Force and the unique role it plays in protecting the nation's defences and national infrastructure.

Chief Constable Andy Adams said

It is my pleasure to welcome Melanie to the MDP. She brings with her a wealth of organisational and operational experiences, which will benefit our Force and Defence. I am looking forward to seeing the positive impact Melanie will bring for those around her, in the forthcoming months.

ACC Melanie Dales has spent the past two years as a Commander with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), with strategic leadership for Public Protection across London, including responsibilities on domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offences, vulnerable adults, hate crime, missing persons, and mental health.

In her previous role as Chief Superintendent for Joint Protective Services for Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, and Bedfordshire Constabularies, Melanie provided strategic governance and financial oversight, managing operational delivery of all specialist services for the three forces. This included provision of Armed Police Officers, Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) capability, roads policing, Public Order provision and civil contingencies. She also held regional project leadership for the restructure of the national Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) programme.

Melanie began her police service with Cambridgeshire Constabulary, where she has spent most of her career, operating in roles that include the Seven Force Strategic Collaboration Programme Lead; Force Crime Manager for Cambridgeshire Constabulary; Divisional Commander for Peterborough; corporate development at the ranks of Chief Superintendent and Superintendent; and as a Senior Investigating Officer on major enquiries.

[Rib Tickler and personal watercraft report published](#)

News story

Collision between a rigid inflatable boat and a personal watercraft in the Menai Strait, Wales with loss of 1 life.



Our accident investigation report into the fatal collision at high speed between the rigid inflatable boat Rib Tickler and a personal watercraft on 8 August 2020, is now published.

The report contains details of what happened, subsequent actions taken and recommendations: [read more](#).

Andrew Moll, Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents, said:

As the use of leisure craft in the UK becomes ever more popular, this tragic accident serves as a powerful reminder that uncoordinated, high-speed manoeuvres near other craft are unsafe. Personal watercraft, often referred to as jet skis, provide a unique and fun way to enjoy the water, but they are high performance machines, not toys. The completion of an appropriate training course will better equip the rider with skills and knowledge necessary for the safe use of a personal watercraft.

Although there are many harbour and local authorities that manage their waters to provide safe areas for all water users, there is an inconsistency of management around the UK coast, which can lead to conflicted interests and confusion. Following this investigation, I have recommended to the Royal Yachting Association and Personal Watercraft Partnership that a cross industry forum be formally created to provide a more consistent approach to the management of personal watercraft around the UK.

Published 17 February 2022