

Recommendations from the Global Travel Taskforce

On 7 October, at the request of the Prime Minister, the government announced the launch of our Global Travel Taskforce. Co-chaired by the Secretary of State for Transport and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, the aim of the taskforce was to consider steps that government could take to encourage the safe recovery of domestic and overseas travel and tourism while reducing the risk of imported cases.

The taskforce was to report back to the Prime Minister in November; a commitment we met last week after a period of constructive consultation with the travel sector.

The message we received during those consultations was clear. The global COVID-19 pandemic remains an existential threat to the aviation and maritime sectors, as for all travel and tourism businesses, and we need to act now to help these industries get back on a trajectory towards strong economic growth.

That is precisely what the [Global Travel Taskforce report](#) aims to achieve, making 14 recommendations following 3 broad principles:

First, to ensure that journeys are safe.

Second, to increase demand for travel without compromising safety.

Third, to position the UK so we can take a leading role in driving the global standards required to support recovery.

The most fundamental priority in all this work is safeguarding public health. That is why we are introducing, as the first initiative resulting from the Global Travel Taskforce's work, a new regime 'Test to Release' for international arrivals from countries that are not on the Travel Corridor list.

Following extensive work by officials from the Department for Transport and Department of Health and Social Care, this will be rolled out in England from 15 December in time for Christmas. Travellers will have the option of booking and paying for a test from a list of private sector providers. They can take the test 5 full days after they left a destination not on the travel corridors list, which for most international arrivals will be after 5 full days of self-isolation. If the test result is negative, they will be free to go about their daily lives. A test on day 5 of self isolation provides a strong level of protection for the UK population from transmission of COVID-19 acquired abroad. It also provides much more freedom for people seeking to travel.

Individuals who opt in will be required to self-isolate until they receive a negative test result. Compliance checks are carried out by Public Health

England's Isolation Assurance Service (IAS) who contact randomly sampled international arrivals to ensure that they are self-isolating. Details of those found not to be isolating will be passed to the Home Office, who in turn pass relevant details on to the police for targeted follow-up enforcement activity. Anyone who does not comply with this requirement could be fined £1,000 for the first offence and up to £10,000 for repeat breaches. Only a negative test result from a provider on the GOV.UK list will enable a traveller to cease self-isolating early.

If a traveller tests positive for COVID-19, they will move into the UK's existing system for positive cases, meaning that they will self-isolate for a further 10 days from the day of the test and their contacts will be traced and notified as normal. Minimum standards have been set by clinicians to ensure that the tests give accurate results, but we are not specifying exactly what type of test must be used. This is to allow for innovation in the testing market. Tests will either be taken at a private testing site, or using a privately provided home testing kit, meaning the scheme will be accessible to the widest section of the community and across England.

As we emerge from this latest period of restrictions, the new testing scheme will allow people to see family, go away on business, or book holidays with the option of taking a test to shorten any self-isolation period in the UK and reduce disruption to their lives.

In addition to 'Test to Release for International Travel', we will of course remain open to new testing technologies and other approaches that help people travel overseas in safety. For example, mass testing may help more people to travel with fewer restrictions in the future. As our knowledge and capacity for testing develops, so will our policy.

However, we have always known that testing alone is not a silver bullet, nor a comprehensive solution to the challenges we face. The taskforce has made further recommendations, including:

- to advocate the development of a global framework for the validation of tests and vaccination records
- to assess the feasibility of short stay exemptions for businesses and tour groups
- to publish the criteria for when cruises can restart and implement a phased return for cruising when the public health advice makes clear it is safe to do so
- to boost consumer confidence about inbound and outbound travel through targeted communications and marketing campaigns
- to provide assurance to passengers, we will work with our world-leading aviation regulator, the Civil Aviation Authority, to ensure that the aviation industry is doing everything it can to make air travel as low risk as possible, as well as continuing to work with the maritime sector to ensure that it operates safely and that industry guidance remains in line with best practice

As soon as the time is right, we want to encourage people to travel with confidence. That means British people being able to go abroad safely, and

welcoming back overseas visitors to our country to do business, and enjoy our hospitality, entertainment and world-famous tourist sites.

The recommendations outlined above provide a springboard to ensure the safe and viable recovery of the sector.

However, while the taskforce's work has concluded, ours does not end here. The collapse of the market this year has not just affected airlines but airports, ground handlers and other airport services too. The government has already made available an unprecedented package of economic measures to companies across the aviation industry. This includes schemes to raise capital and flexibilities with tax bills, as well as financial support for employees.

We have worked closely with the sector during the course of the pandemic and listened to its concerns. Airports have highlighted specific challenges arising from a lack of passengers, and the relatively high fixed costs they face. Therefore, we will shortly be making available a support scheme providing financial assistance to commercial airports and ground handlers in England to help with business rates.

These businesses will be able to apply from the new year for the equivalent of their business rates costs in this financial year, up to a maximum of £8 million per eligible site, subject to certain conditions which the Department of Transport will take into account when considering applications.

The government is committed to giving people the freedom to travel with confidence and supporting the wider travel industry. I will publish this statement on GOV.UK and will place a copy in the libraries of both Houses.

WTO Thailand Trade Policy Review: UK statement

On behalf of Her Majesty's Government, I am pleased to add my welcome to the delegation of Thailand, led by the Honourable Mr Rachavitch Piyapramote. The UK is encouraged by the improvements made during the previous review period, such as the consideration of ways to strengthen protection of intellectual property rights. We likewise appreciate Thailand's responses to our written questions.

We would like to thank Her Excellency Sunanta Kangvalkulkij (the Permanent Representative of Thailand to the WTO and WIPO) for her leadership, and Her Excellency Silvia Alfaro Espinosa (Peru) for her insightful and illuminating remarks as discussant.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created difficult circumstances for us all. We note

that Thailand has taken recent steps to stimulate its economy and has implemented a number of measures to facilitate the movement of goods during the pandemic. We welcome this commitment to keeping global value chains open.

2020 marks the 165th year of diplomatic relations between the UK and Thailand. Our two countries have had a long and historic relationship, with shared values and, particularly, an interest in mutual prosperity and maintaining the rules based international system. Thailand is one of the UK's most valued trading partners. Our total bilateral trade in goods and services was £6.2bn in the four quarters to the end of Q1 2020, an increase of £20m from the previous year.

The UK is pleased to be conducting a bilateral Joint Trade Review with Thailand, due to conclude this year. Through this, both sides are identifying opportunities to enhance bilateral trade relations and set the groundwork for future cooperation, supporting the UK's ambition to use our voice as a new independent trading nation to champion free trade, strengthen the rules-based international system, fight protectionism and reduce trade barriers, including by working specifically with our closest trading partners.

We enjoy extensive trade and diplomatic collaboration, particularly within the WTO where we are both founding members. An example of a service sector where we have close collaboration is education. The British Council has worked in Thailand for over 60 years and has six offices in the country providing English courses, teacher training and collaboration in the arts and creative industries. The UK now has an Education cooperation MOU with Thailand which was signed in 2016 and around 6,500 students take part in educational programmes in the UK each year. We are also keen to collaborate with Thailand on tech, through the UK's new Digital Trade Network in the Asia Pacific region, an investment of £8m with one of our key resources based in Thailand.

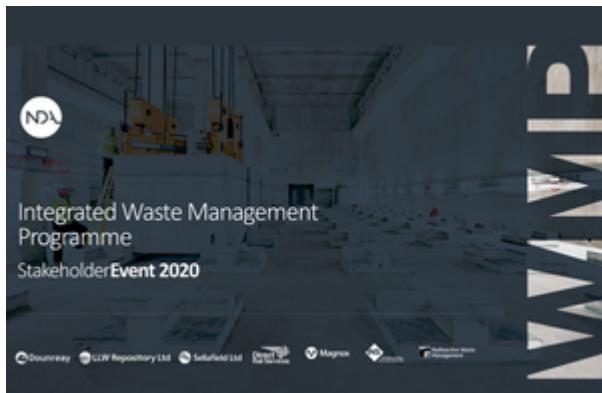
The United Kingdom looks forward to continuing to collaborate with Thailand as our bilateral Joint Trade Review process nears conclusion. In closing, allow me to extend our warmest wishes for a successful WTO trade policy review and to thank you for your engagement with this process and the World Trade Organization.

NDA develops ground-breaking programme for waste management

News story

Last week, the NDA group held its first Integrated Waste Management virtual event announcing its plans for an Integrated Waste Management (IWM)

Programme.



Integrated Waste Management Programme

The NDA's Radioactive Waste Strategy, published in September 2019, included a commitment to create an IWM Programme, which would enable the whole of the nuclear industry to manage its radioactive waste in a more sustainable, efficient and integrated way, driving greater value for the UK taxpayer.

Corbyn Parr, the NDA's Director of Integrated Waste Management, said: "We're right at the start of our IWM journey, but we're looking to reduce the costs of decommissioning, avoiding unnecessary use of resources such as waste packaging conditioning and storage to make our sites safer, sooner.

"Working together, we will create a common approach to radioactive waste management, share good practice and learning from experience – from within the UK and internationally."

The IWM Programme supports closer and more collaborative working across the NDA group's waste activities, allowing waste producers to manage their radioactive waste more flexibly and effectively, using proportionate waste management solutions.

During the event, representative from right across the NDA group shared their views on how the IWM Programme holds the potential to deliver real impact.

This was the first opportunity to discuss the new approach of managing radioactive waste with various independent stakeholders, including regulators, local authorities and the supply chain.

Read more about the [IWM Programme](#)

Published 24 November 2020

Game Changers projects hit record high

The 9 projects were chosen for funding from more than 40 entries, all showing an incredible high quality of ideas and innovation.

All 3 challenges called for innovative solutions to land remediation requirements.

Around 130 attendees from more than 70 organisations joined Game Changers webinars organised to detail 2 challenges – one focused on the characterisation of landfill and disposal areas, the other on making better use of existing in-ground monitoring infrastructure to develop better understanding of groundwater hydrology and subsurface contamination, especially around our Magnox Swarf Storage (MSSS).

The third challenge – the KTN-iX competition, launched by the Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN), focused on leak mitigation and groundworks near sensitive structures. One of the central aspects of this challenge also focussed on the decommissioning of MSSS.

All the applications received were reviewed by a specialist panel of Sellafield Ltd experts and Game Changers team leaders.

Feasibility funding has been awarded to a total of 10 organisations working on 9 projects spread across the 3 challenges as follows:

Characterisation of landfill and disposal areas

University of Birmingham, Ground-Gas Solutions Ltd, ANAMAD Ltd and Hydrock working in partnership with Createc.

Groundwater monitoring

Hybrid Instruments Ltd, University of Liverpool and Gutteridge, Haskins and Davey Ltd.

Leak mitigation and groundworks near sensitive structures

Aubin Ltd and Resolute Engineering Services.

Each organisation will now use the funding to work with Sellafield Ltd to learn more about their challenge and shape their ideas, working towards a full business case.

John Heneghan, Contaminated Land Specialist at Sellafield Ltd, said:

We've been genuinely impressed both by the quality and the range of the technology presented in the applications. It made our job of

selection very difficult but I'm confident we will see promising potential realised.

Game Changers is an innovation programme that identifies and develops cutting-edge technologies that could provide significant advances in nuclear science and engineering.

The programme is delivered by the National Nuclear Laboratory (NNL) and FIS360, specialists in supporting innovative technologies from concept through to commercial production.

Game Changers publish details of challenges on behalf of partner organisations; Sellafield Ltd, NNL and Dounreay.

The challenges are open to anyone from any sector who can offer a viable solution, from small and medium-sized enterprises to universities and large corporate organisations.

Solutions could be found in technologies already used in other sectors such as oil and gas or bio-engineering which could be developed for the nuclear arena. Ideas are submitted through a very simple application process.

To find out more visit the Game Changers [website](#)

Suffragan Bishop of Dorchester: 24 November 2020

Press release

The Queen has approved the nomination of the Venerable Gavin Andrew Collins MA to the Suffragan See of Dorchester.



The Queen has approved the nomination of the Venerable Gavin Andrew Collins

MA, Archdeacon of the Meon, in the diocese of Portsmouth to the Suffragan See of Dorchester, in the diocese of Oxford, in succession to the Right Reverend Colin William Fletcher OBE who resigned on 16 November 2020.

Background

Gavin was educated in Law at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and worked as a solicitor in the City of London, before training for ministry at Trinity College Bristol. He served his title at St Barnabas, Cambridge, in the diocese of Ely and was ordained Priest in 1998.

In 2002, Gavin was appointed Vicar at Christ Church, Chorleywood, in the diocese of St Albans and, from 2006, he additionally served as Rural Dean of Rickmansworth.

In 2011, Gavin took up his current role as Archdeacon of The Meon in the diocese of Portsmouth.

Gavin is married to Christina, who is a Health Visitor, and they have three young adult children.

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