

# [Statement to Parliament: Hydraulic fracturing consent](#)

My Rt Hon Friend Greg Clark (Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) has today laid before Parliament a Direction ensuring that the Oil and Gas Authority consults the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on onshore hydraulic fracturing operations.

Under Section 4A of the Petroleum Act 1998 (inserted by Section 50 of the Infrastructure Act 2015), operators who wish to conduct associated hydraulic fracturing must apply for a Hydraulic Fracturing Consent from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Hydraulic Fracturing Consent was introduced in the Infrastructure Act 2015 as an additional step to the existing regulatory and permitting regime.

However, it does not apply to wells drilled before the 2015 Act came to force and these are not captured by the requirement to seek a Hydraulic Fracturing Consent.

Today's Direction closes this loophole and ensures that the same approach for consent is taken for all relevant hydraulic fracturing operations, including where the associated well was drilled prior to the 2015 Act coming into force.

For these operations, operators will be expected to meet the same set of standards as required to obtain Hydraulic Fracturing Consent, laid out in the Infrastructure Act 2015.

The government has been clear that shale development must be safe and environmentally sound.

The UK has a robust regulatory system which provides a comprehensive regime for exploratory activities and this direction will ensure that all relevant hydraulic fracturing operations are subject to this final step of scrutiny.

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## [News story: UK TROOPS AWARDED UN MEDALS FOR SOUTH SUDAN PEACEKEEPING MISSION](#)

MEDALS have been awarded to 106 UK troops currently deployed on Op TRENTON, the UK contribution to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

There are nearly 400 troops deployed in the world's newest country, split across three locations. Soldiers from the 32 Engineer Regiment led Task Force were recognised for their service to the UN by the Special Representative of the Secretary General Mr David Shearer on parade in Malakal. He said:

I would like to recognise the commendable efforts of everyone here on parade and honour your dedicated service here in South Sudan. Your efforts and professionalism are highly regarded and you make a valuable contribution to UNMISS. Wear these medals as the proud and worthy ambassadors of your country and of the United Nations that you are.

The UK Engineering and Medical Task Force has made a vital contribution to supporting the UN mission through improving infrastructure in the form of helicopter landing sites, runways, jetty and drainage improvements and staff accommodation builds. They have also been staffing the UK built Level 2 field hospital which provides essential healthcare to over 1,800 UN civilian and military staff based in Bentiu.

Air Vice Marshall Gary Waterfall, Chief of Staff for Joint Operations, also presented medals and thanked the soldiers for their work which represents the UK's renewed contribution to UN peacekeeping operations. He said:

We are dipping our toe back into the peacekeeping waters. But this moment marks that we have made it a step further, with our first full rotation earning their medals. I am proud of this achievement, and proud of all of you on parade that have made it possible.

The Commanding Officer of the UK Task Force is Royal Engineer, Lieutenant Colonel Katie Hislop. She said:

Today is about our people and providing the recognition that all our soldiers deserve; not just those visible on the parade square right now, but those who are in the sangars and behind the scenes covering essential duties to protect and sustain us.

The Task Force has faced some unique challenges during its deployment which began at the start of the wet season. However, through innovation and teamwork, much needed improvements to UN infrastructure in both Malakal and Bentiu have been made. These will have a lasting impact on the mission and the next engineering contingent has been set up well for success next year.

The current contingent will remain in South Sudan over the Christmas period, continuing to enable the mission to protect civilians and build durable peace. They will return home to their families in January 2018.

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## Press release: UK ramps up counter-terror effort in Iraq as Daesh caliphate crumbles

On 29 November 2017 the Prime Minister became the first major foreign leader to visit Iraq since the fall of Mosul, announcing the UK's commitment to addressing the evolving threat from Daesh and countering the dispersal of foreign fighters as Daesh is squeezed out of the battlefield in Syria and Iraq.

Speaking to British troops in Iraq, the Prime Minister said that our military success against Daesh means they are increasingly losing control of their territory and resources, but in response to our military success, Daesh has become more diffuse, organic and networked.

So the Prime Minister has committed to three specific things to counter the evolving Daesh threat and to manage the risk of foreign fighters returning to Europe:

- First, we will deepen our counter-terrorism relationship with Iraq. The UK will invest £10m over the next three years to build Iraq's counter-terrorism capability to meet the new threat. This means more personnel working with Government of Iraq counter-terrorism agencies. And it means deploying law enforcement resources to develop effective judicial pathways. This will allow us to spot and respond to terrorist threats against Iraq and ourselves, in partnership with Iraqi security forces.
- Second, we will work with partners across the region to develop border infrastructure, watch-lists and biometric capabilities, to counter foreign fighter dispersal. This will help ensure foreign fighters are identified, stopped, and disrupted before they can harm people, and so we can manage the return of women and children.
- Third, we will do more to tackle terrorist abuse of the internet. The Prime Minister has advocated, most recently at the UN General Assembly with President Macron, Prime Minister Gentiloni and 70 other countries, for the major communications companies to live up to their responsibility, and remove content within one to two hours of release. The companies have begun to act: they have set up the industry led Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism but they need to go further and faster in identifying and removing content and ultimately preventing it from going up in the first place.

The Prime Minister has also announced today that the UK will continue to support Iraqi defence and security through the provision of officer training, including places for Iraqi students on high profile UK courses at the Military Colleges and the Defence Academy, and UK training teams continuing to develop Iraqi trainers, supporting them in the delivery of courses on topics such as Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices, combat medicine, military planning, logistics, and force protection.

The Prime Minister visited British, Coalition and Iraqi troops at Taji earlier today and congratulated them on the success of the counter Daesh campaign. Around 80 British troops are based at Taji, and the Prime Minister had the opportunity to see them alongside their Coalition counterparts, training the Iraqi security forces.

Speaking in Iraq, the Prime Minister said:

Daesh's ability to spread propaganda at speed drew terrorists to Iraq and Syria from around the world, contributing to the death of many thousands of innocent people and the destruction of Iraqi infrastructure.

Military success against Daesh means they are increasingly losing control of the territory, resources and population that allowed them to be a uniquely dangerous threat to Iraq, the region and Europe.

But we have always expected that the threat Daesh posed would evolve. In response to our military success, Daesh has become more diffuse, organic and networked. The UK is committed not only to defeating Daesh militarily but also to countering the dispersal of foreign fighters from Iraq and Syria.

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## [News story: PM statement following meeting with Prime Minister al-Abadi of Iraq](#)

Prime Minister, thank you for welcoming me to Baghdad today.

And let me pay tribute to the bravery and sacrifice of the Iraqi security forces. They are on the front-line in the fight against terrorism and extremism.

And I am proud of the role the UK has played to support Iraq in this

endeavour as part of the Global Coalition against Daesh.

That's why I was so pleased to meet British troops at Taji earlier today.

We will continue to stand by Iraq as the last remnants of Daesh's so-called Caliphate are liberated.

For as long as the Iraqis want and need it, the UK will continue to be a fully committed security partner.

We will support you to 'win the peace' – addressing the issues that led to Daesh's rise, and building a stronger, more inclusive and unified Iraqi state.

We will continue to support the training of your security forces and invest a further £10 million over the next three years in strengthening Iraqi counter-terrorism capabilities.

And we will work with partners across the region to develop the capabilities that will enable us to deal with the threat posed by foreign fighters fleeing as Daesh is squeezed out of its physical caliphate.

The UK has already provided over £200 million since 2014 to support the humanitarian response in Iraq. And I am pleased to announce today that we will provide at least £20 million in new humanitarian assistance next year. This will support Iraqis who have suffered under Daesh and help to provide access to water, food, and healthcare.

And we will provide up to £30 million to support stabilisation, reconciliation and reform in Iraq. This will help to provide a safe environment for all Iraqis, as well as promoting longer-term peace and security.

We will continue to support your government as it seeks to deliver the reforms needed to rebuild public trust in a unified, independent and sovereign Iraqi state.

As I said in our meeting just now, we encourage the Iraqi government to respond positively to the new Kurdish leadership, and we encourage the Kurdish Regional Government to respect the Iraqi Federal Supreme Court ruling on the unconstitutionality of their referendum.

And I welcome the discussion we have just had with reference to the discussions between the government and the Kurdish Regional Government.

We call on both sides to now move quickly to negotiations of outstanding differences on the basis of the constitution.

So Prime Minister; thank you for our talks today. I look forward to the relationship between our two great countries continuing to go from strength to strength.

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## [News story: Future electric vehicle batteries: long-lasting, cleaner, better](#)

New projects by UK businesses and researchers will tackle some of the biggest challenges preventing the uptake of electric vehicles in the UK.

A total of 27 projects involving 66 organisations will share around £40 million to support the design, development and manufacture of batteries for the electrification of vehicles.

The grant funding comes from Innovate UK under the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

### **Improved battery management**

A major barrier in electric vehicle adoption is their lifespan and range.

Current electric vehicle batteries aren't as good as their combustion engine counterparts and degrade quickly. Drivers are also unsure of their vehicle's ability to cover certain distances due to charge levels and limited charge infrastructure.

Clean-tech start-up [Brill Power](#) will lead a consortium to address this.

[Faraday Battery Challenge. ISCF winners. Brill Powers](#)

Christoph Birkel, CEO, Brill Power, said:

We have to improve batteries, we have to make sure we can get more energy into every battery, we have to make sure we can get them as efficient as possible, get every joule of energy out of those batteries to make them live as long as the cars live.

Working with [E-Car](#), it will explore how its battery management control system can be used to enhance the battery manufacture and performance of electric vehicles.

Christoph continued:

At Brill Power we've developed battery control and management technology that can make lithium-ion batteries live for up to 60% longer.

We do that by individually managing every cell in a battery pack without having to replace the entire battery. We can just replace the individual modules.

## Reuse, remanufacture, recycle

As the number of electric vehicles grows, we also need to consider how we deal with batteries once they come to the end of their life and can no longer be used in the initial automotive application.

[HSSMI](#), an independent institute specialising in the application of digital techniques within manufacturing, is the lead of one project addressing this issue, which involves multiple businesses and [UCL](#) (University College London).

[Faraday Battery Challenge. ISCF winners. HSSMI](#)

Paul Shearing, Reader in Chemical Engineering & Materials, UCL, said:

When a battery is beginning to reach its end of life in an automotive application – perhaps when it falls down to about 80% of its original rated capacity – it still has a huge amount of value for a second life type of application.

Caroline Guest, Manager of Electric Powertrains and Circular Value Chains, HSSMI, added:

You can combine it with things like solar power and wind. It's also being looked at for rail and marine applications as back up batteries as well.

The project will look at taking end-of-life, automotive lithium-ion batteries, and either reusing, remanufacturing or recycling them. It will build a complete supply chain network and legal and regulatory knowledge in the UK.

In doing so, the project will help to optimise battery design and increase use in second-life applications, improve recyclability and whole-life environmental impact, while building UK capabilities.

## Other projects

The projects being lead by Brill Power and HSSMI are just 2 that will receive government investment.

Others to get funding under this competition aim to:

- create a safe, economically sustainable battery recycling supply chain

in the UK, which allows industrial batteries from vehicles to be recycled into base components and materials and then reused. [Johnson Matthey](#) is the lead

- build the UK as a hub for battery cell manufacture. The lead is [AGM Batteries](#)
- develop battery modules and packs for a range of vehicles, including supercars, buses and diggers. [Delta Motorsport](#) is the lead
- develop a new battery storage system for heavy-duty vehicles. The lead is [Perkins Engines](#)

A Brill Power battery pack.

## Co-ordinated programme of investments

Business and Energy Secretary, Greg Clark, announced the investment in innovation projects at [Battery and Energy Storage 2017](#).

Also in the announcement was the UK's first automotive battery manufacturing development facility, which will be built from an £80 million investment through the [Advanced Propulsion Centre](#).

Leading the development are the [Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership](#) with [Warwick Manufacturing Group](#) (WVG). The facility will allow the UK to develop new processes to manufacture pioneering battery technology at high-volume, giving us a competitive advantage.

It follows on from last month's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund announcement of the multi-million-pound Faraday research institution. This institution will accelerate fundamental research and development of battery technologies. It is being funded through the [Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council](#) (EPSRC).

## The Faraday Battery Challenge

Government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund is bringing together UK research organisations with businesses to tackle the biggest industrial and societal challenges we are facing.

The Faraday Battery Challenge is one strand within the fund. This is a £246 million investment by government over 4 years. It aims to develop safe, cost effective, durable, lighter weight, high-performing and recyclable batteries in the UK to power the next generation of electric vehicles.

Ultimately, these innovations should help grow UK businesses and make the nation a world leader in battery technology.

## Apply for funding

For businesses and researchers with ideas to support the electric vehicle batteries of the future, the next funding opportunity will open in January 2018.