

PM call with President Zelenskyy: 5 May 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as part of their regular dialogue.



The Prime Minister spoke to the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, this afternoon.

He welcomed the opportunity to address the Ukrainian Parliament earlier this week, noting how important Ukraine's democratic values are as a counterweight to Russia's failing autocracy. President Zelenskyy said the Parliament's welcome had been heartfelt, demonstrating the importance of the UK's support for Ukraine.

The leaders discussed developments on the battlefield and the Ukrainian armed forces' requirements, including the provision of longer-range weaponry to prevent the bombardment of civilians.

The Prime Minister also set out the importance of a robust and independent international judicial process to ensure those responsible for atrocities in Ukraine are held to account, and offered the UK's continued support on war crimes evidence-gathering.

They agreed to speak again in the next few days.

Published 5 May 2022

First female MDP Deputy Chief Constable appointed

News story

The Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) has confirmed the appointment of Melanie Dales, as the force's new Deputy Chief Constable (DCC).



DCC Mel Dales (Crown copyright)

Melanie (Mel) will be the first female MDP DCC in the Force's 50-year history.

The appointment follows Mel taking up post as [Assistant Chief Constable, Nuclear and Marine](#) during February this year, having served as a Commander in the Metropolitan Police Service and in a range of roles in Cambridgeshire Constabulary and as part of the collaborative Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Protective Services Unit.

Mel said:

I am proud to take up post as the first female Deputy Chief Constable of the Ministry of Defence Police, based in the new Headquarters in Cambridgeshire, which is the county where I began and have spent most of my policing career.

Since joining the MDP, I have learnt so much about the unique capabilities of the Force and our role in contributing to the Defence Plan and Defence Tasks.

I've also met some really great people, and I look forward to getting out and meeting more colleagues throughout the UK during the coming months.

Following the MDP's 50th Anniversary celebrations last year and as we work through the transition to the Force's new HQ and training centre this year, I'm excited to take on the challenge of driving forward opportunities for positive change and modernisation.

MDP Chief Constable Andy Adams said:

I'm very pleased to be able to welcome Mel as our Deputy Chief Constable.

Mel is an exceptional leader and a fantastic role model, with a wealth of operational and strategic experience that I know the MDP will continue to benefit from, as we further develop our Force in support of Defence.

DCC Mel Dales with MDP Chief Constable Andy Adams (Crown copyright)

Mel took up the role from Monday 2 May.

The DCC post encompasses responsibility for overseeing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Force. This includes responsibility for governance of the Chief Officer work programme and strategic priorities, performance, assurance and compliance, programmes and projects, and professional standards.

Find out more: [MDP Annual Business Plan 2020 and Corporate Plan 2020 to 2025](#).

Published 5 May 2022

[Insolvency Service newsletter – Spring 2022](#)

Insolvency Live! 2022 – save the date

This year's Insolvency Live! will be taking place on Tuesday 5 July. We are looking to host a hybrid event with guests either joining us at [Broadway House, Westminster, London](#) or online.

Please contact stakeholder@insolvency.gov.uk to register your interest in the event. Suggestions on what you would like to hear about at the event are also

welcome.

Frances Coulson appointed to Insolvency Service Board

The Insolvency Service welcomes prominent insolvency expert [Frances Coulson](#) as a new non-executive board member.

Frances Coulson is a practicing lawyer, with more than 26 years of experience in insolvency law, and a senior partner, board member and Head of Insolvency & Restructuring for the city-based law firm Wedlake Bell.

Together with the other non-executive board members, Frances will work closely with the Insolvency Service's senior leadership team to provide strategic leadership and governance for the agency.

Chair of the Insolvency Service Board, Mark Austen, said:

I am delighted that Frances has chosen to join our Board. She brings a very experienced practitioner view and will have much to contribute to framing and ensuring a positive impact of the ambitious change agenda planned for the Service over the next few years.

The Insolvency Service commences P&O Ferries investigation

Following its initial enquiries, the Insolvency Service has commenced formal criminal and civil investigations into the circumstances surrounding the recent redundancies made by [P&O Ferries](#).

As these are ongoing investigations, no further comment or information can be provided at this time.

Nottingham Examiner finalist at counter fraud awards

Sam Powdrill, an Examiner based in the Insolvency Service's Nottingham Office, was a finalist in the [best apprentice or newcomer of the year](#) category at the Public Sector Counter Fraud Awards 2022.

The awards, delivered in collaboration with the Government Counter Fraud Profession, recognises those who demonstrate commitment, innovation, great team work or going the extra mile in the national fight to protect people against fraud.

Sam works in Official Receiver Services, with responsibility for

investigating personal bankruptcy and company liquidation cases on behalf of the Official Receiver.

Having completed his Examiner qualification in May 2021, three months ahead of schedule, Sam has demonstrated outstanding commitment to learning and development while also successfully delivering his demanding and challenging workload.

Sam joined the Insolvency Service from HMRC in 2018 and since the beginning of 2019, Sam's work has led to 54 bankruptcy restrictions orders and undertakings against people who were guilty of misconduct in relation to their financial affairs.

At the same time, Sam has administered several bankruptcy estates, some of those cases requiring lengthy court proceedings. Sam took a lead role in briefing and preparing solicitors and counsel in these hearings – performing a role usually conducted by a more senior examiner.

Sam said of his achievement:

It was extremely inspiring to attend the Counter Fraud Awards and to hear of the great work being done by the community to stop fraud and reduce its impact. While I didn't win, it was still a great honour to be nominated for 'Newcomer of the Year' and be a part of this fantastic community.

Policy Round up

Review of the Insolvency Rules published

The Insolvency Service has published the Secretary of State's first review of the operation of the Insolvency (England and Wales) Rules 2016.

The Rules came into force in 2017 with the aim of streamlining the insolvency regime and reducing unnecessary regulation. They consolidated the bulk of the existing secondary legislation, updated the insolvency framework with modern and gender-neutral language, and provided a clearer and more user-friendly rulebook for insolvency processes.

At the same time, they introduced the supporting provisions for the changes to insolvency law and practice contained in the Deregulation Act 2015 and the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015.

The Rules contain a five-yearly review clause, that also requires the publication of a report on the findings.

The report found that the Rules are operating correctly and effectively. They provide appropriate detailed procedures to support the Insolvency Act 1986, as well as consolidating and modernising the preceding secondary legislation; implementing policies contained in two other acts of Parliament; and

introducing other modernisations such as electronic communication between officeholders and creditors. Those policies remain appropriate and could not be achieved with less regulation.

You can read [the full report here](#).

Temporary insolvency measures have ended

The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 introduced various temporary measures to help protect companies affected by the lockdown restrictions during the pandemic.

Most of these measures expired at the end of June and September 2021, except for restrictions on winding up companies, which were extended until 31 March 2022.

This remaining insolvency restriction was not extended further, allowing the insolvency regime to return to its pre-pandemic operation.

Business leaders are being advised to seek professional insolvency advice to protect their business.

The Government has also announced a new law to help [resolve certain remaining rent debts](#) in the commercial rental sector.

The Future of Insolvency Regulation consultation closed

The Government consultation on changes to the way the insolvency profession is regulated has now closed. The Insolvency Service is now analysing feedback and the Government will respond in due course.

Recent enforcement activity

[Boris Becker](#) has been found guilty of four offences relating to his bankruptcy, including failing to disclose, concealing and removing significant assets. He received a [prison sentence](#) of 2 years and 6 months at Southwark Crown Court on 29 April 2022.

9-year disqualification for [Glasgow coffee wholesaler boss](#) due to lack of records and cooperation.

11-year disqualification for [rental property investment con director](#) who scammed £6.7 million from investors by promising false investment returns including over 100 per cent.

Disqualifications for husband and wife [directors of sign company](#) who failed to pay £70,000 tax and preserve adequate accounting records for the company.

9-year disqualification for [Wolverhampton director](#) who deliberately exaggerated company turnover to secure £50,000 Bounce Back Loan.

Latest from the insolvency blog

The Insolvency Service blog was set up to let those either working or an interest in the Insolvency Service share thoughts and experiences. It's a place for our people across the agency to share personal experiences of the work they do – work that includes supporting those in financial distress, tackling financial wrongdoing and maximising returns to creditors.

Our latest blogs include [Life as a Senior Coordinator in the Official Receiver Services](#) written by our colleague Rukhi Arshad, who describes how her career has developed within the Insolvency Service and why it is such a great organisation to be part of.

To celebrate National Apprentice Week James Smith tells us about his experience as an [apprentice Investigation Support Officer](#) in the Investigation and Enforcement Services.

[PM meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida: 5 May 2022](#)

The Prime Minister hosted Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at Downing Street this morning to discuss global security and deepening the close bilateral ties.

Both leaders agreed that Russia's barbaric invasion marked the end of the post-Cold War period and had major implications for wider international stability.

Security in the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions was indivisible, they agreed, and the G7 leaders said democracies around the world needed to stand in unity against authoritarian regimes.

Discussing the recent ballistic missile launch by North Korea, the Prime Minister condemned the provocative actions and said the UK stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Japan and our Indo-Pacific allies.

The Prime Minister praised the new in principle Reciprocal Access Agreement, an idea that was first raised between the leaders when they were foreign ministers, and said it was yet another symbol of the deepening relationship between the UK and Japan.

On the UK's Future Combat Air System (FCAS), both leaders agreed the UK and Japan were making significant progress, and the Prime Minister welcomed Prime Minister Kishida's view that the project could become the cornerstone of the UK-Japan bilateral relationship.

Speaking about the strong trading relationship between the UK and Japan, the Prime Minister welcomed Japanese investment across the UK, and said he had named Greg Clark MP as the UK's new Trade Envoy to Japan to further strengthen economic links.

The leaders also agreed to deepen their research and innovation ties to develop cutting edge technologies of the future.

The Prime Minister added that he hoped the two countries should continue to use their technology prowess and investment to develop more renewables to support energy security across the world.

The Prime Minister said he was pleased Great Britain would soon lift the remaining restrictions on Fukushima food products and both leaders enjoyed popcorn from the region during the meeting.

Commenting on how aligned the UK and Japan were in their approach to global challenges, the Prime Minister said he looked forward to continuing to work closely with Prime Minister Kishida ahead of Japan's G7 Presidency next year, and as the UK progressed its accession to the CPTPP trade bloc.

New documentary goes behind the scenes at National Highways

The Motorway, which airs from 8pm on Monday, 9 May for the next eight weeks, is the second series of the popular programme which takes a fly on the wall approach to the workings of the company responsible for operating, maintaining and improving motorways and major A roads in England.

Crews from production company Fearless Television spent three months filming with traffic officers, control room operators and maintenance crews across Yorkshire and the North West, focusing mainly on the M62 and adjoining motorways.

It follows on from the first series in 2020 which looked at the day to day running of the M1 in the East Midlands and Yorkshire.

National Highways staff can be seen dealing with multi-vehicle collisions, breakdowns, debris and escaped animals. The programme also follows maintenance crews as they carry out resurfacing, collect litter, clear drains and cut grass.

National Highways Customer Service Director Mel Clarke said:

The new series of The Motorway shines a light on the sterling work that goes on around the clock to keep the strategic road network

running. It shows the complexities of the incidents we deal with on an everyday basis and the challenges we face in keeping our customers on the move.

We hope people enjoy watching the eight new episodes and get an appreciation of just what goes into the day to day running of our motorways.

Regional Operations Centre Operator Emily Beman co-ordinates National Highways' response to motorway incidents from the Yorkshire and North East control room. Credit: Channel 5/Fearless TV

Executive Producer for Fearless Television Amanda Murray said:

It was great to get back on the road with National Highways and spend time with the brilliant staff that work such a busy bit of the network, across northern England.

The series is driven by great characters and great stories and we weren't short of either. We hope the programmes offer a meaningful and insightful look at the vital work that goes into keeping our motorways moving.

We follow as patrol and control room staff deal with everything from high-speed collisions in treacherous weather and cars ablaze – to handling cows on the run and filling potholes in record time.

It's the indefatigable efforts of this often-unseen workforce that take us into a world of the motorways that most of us know little about – and hopefully makes for an engaging, heart-warming and entertaining series.

The Motorway can be seen on Channel 5 every Monday from 9 May at 8pm and is also available on My5.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the National Highways press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.