

News story: Chief Constable Alfred Hitchcock

Alf became the Chief Constable four years ago and during that time he established strong links and working relationships with a wide range of colleagues across the MOD.

Alf committed the whole of his working life to public service having joined Lancashire Constabulary in 1977 and during the past 40 years he had worked in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), the National Policing Improvement Agency, Bedfordshire Police and, since 2013, the MOD as Chief Constable of the MDP.

In 2005, Alf led the Safer Neighbourhoods Programme within the MPS and delivered the successful roll-out of Neighbourhood Policing across the whole of London by the end of 2006. In 2007, he was appointed as a Deputy Assistant Commissioner within the MPS with responsibility for Operational Services, with portfolios including Professional Standards, Command and Control, Diversity and Citizen Focus.

In 2009, Alf was appointed Deputy Chief Constable at the National Policing Improvement Agency at Bramshill to help set up the new National College of Police Leadership and to review its leadership courses.

Alf was the national policing lead for equality and human rights for four years until 2016. He was also the national police spokesman on Knife Crime, and in 2008 he was appointed by the then Home Secretary, Jacqui Smith, to develop and lead the National Tackling Knives Action Programme.

Moving to Bedfordshire Police in 2011 as the Chief Constable, Alf led a complete restructuring of the force, which resulted in double the national average levels of crime reduction and similar improvements in detection of crimes across the county, whilst meeting the budgetary challenges during this period. It was these skills and qualities that led to his appointment as the Chief Constable of the MDP in 2013.

Mark Lancaster, Minister for the Armed Forces who until recently had ministerial responsibility for the Ministry of Defence Police, said:

I was deeply saddened to hear about the untimely death of Alf Hitchcock. I knew Alf very well in his capacity as the Chief Constable of the Ministry of Defence Police and held him in the highest possible regard. He was a consummate professional and I echo the sentiments that have been made by others. My sympathies go to Alf's family and friends at this very difficult time."

On Alf Hitchcock's contribution to policing within the UK, Andy Adams Deputy Chief Constable for the MDP said:

there are few in policing who won't recognise the name Alf Hitchcock; his impact upon policing has been felt across many police forces as well as at a national level. The sadness felt within the MDP at his loss is palpable – he will be sorely missed as a cop, as a colleague and as a friend to many.

Julie Taylor, Director General Head Office & Commissioning Services commented:

Alf will be sorely missed. He has been an inspirational leader for the Ministry of Defence Police, modernising the force and ensuring they could rise to the new and demanding challenges they face. He was liked and respected by his officers and by everyone who knew him in the wider MOD. Above all, I will remember him as someone who was passionate about public service, relentless in pursuit of excellence and consistently positive and optimistic. Our thoughts are with his family.

David Riddle, the Chair of the Ministry of Defence Police Committee, said:

Alf Hitchcock's sudden death last week after a very short illness was a great loss for everyone who knew him, for the force and for policing as a whole. We will miss him greatly for his kindness, his approachability, his boundless energy and his sense of fun. We will miss him above all for his belief in the importance of policing, and in the police officers under his command who do amazing things day in and day out to deliver security. All the Members of the Ministry of Defence Police Committee send their condolences to Alf's wife and family, and to all in the force.

Alf was awarded the Queen's Police Medal (QPM) in 2008 for distinguished services to policing. He was subsequently made a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2017 New Year's Honours list for services to Defence and Policing. Alf is survived by his wife Helen, his two daughters and two grandchildren.

Speech: "Support for a two-state solution is the only way to ensure a

just and lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.”

Thank you Mr President,

I join others in welcoming our briefers this morning, and I thank SRS G Mladenov for his second report on the implementation of resolution 2334 and for all his tireless work.

As each briefier has made clear, the Middle East continues to face an unrelenting human tragedy of multiple conflicts and rising tensions. For many in the region, it's a tragedy that has gone on for over half a century.

We recognise that the anniversary of the war of 1967 holds great significance for all sides of the Arab-Israeli conflict. For Israelis it marks the anniversary of a war from which Israel emerged victorious, against all the odds. For Palestinians it marks an enduring tragedy of 50 years of occupation; 50 years without self-determination.

Let's be clear; half a century of Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza is a tragedy for all sides; a tragedy for Palestinians who yearn for independence, and a tragedy for Israelis who yearn for peace and security. And it's a tragedy that has been exploited, with terrorist groups such as Hamas and Hizballah cynically manipulating the narrative of occupation for their own ends.

Mr President, so many decades of violence, loss, anger and hate only proves that conflicts cannot be managed or contained in perpetuity. So this year we must move towards peace, with the support of the region and the international community, rather than continue towards an uncertain and dangerous future.

Support for a two-state solution is the only way to ensure a just and lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And to make that a reality, it is incumbent on both sides to refrain from any steps that damage the prospects of a two-state solution.

This means the people of Israel living free from the scourge of terrorism and anti-Semitic incitement which gravely undermine the prospects for a two-state solution. We condemn the horrific murder of Hadas Malka, a twenty-three year old Israeli Policewoman last Friday. We condemn the recent discovery of part of a tunnel passing under two UNRWA schools in Gaza. We call on Hamas to renounce violence and dismantle its tunnel network; they cannot be allowed to pose a threat to Israel's security.

And, Mr President, if the two-state solution is to become a reality, it also must mean Israel refraining from further settlement expansion. Only last week, the United Kingdom's Foreign Secretary condemned Israel's latest announcement to build over 3,000 settlement units throughout the West Bank. The number of units planned for construction this year is now at its highest

in a quarter of a century. These moves undermine the physical viability of two states for two peoples.

Despite these challenges, the United Kingdom's longstanding position on the Middle East Peace Process remains clear and unchanged: we support a negotiated settlement leading to a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state; based on 1967 borders with agreed land swaps, Jerusalem as the shared capital of both states, and a just, fair, agreed and realistic settlement for refugees.

But this vision has proved elusive for far too long. The changing regional context and converging Arab and Israeli interests presents a unique opening to develop Arab-Israeli relations and create the conditions for serious Israeli-Palestinian talks to resume. With that in mind, we welcome the Arab League Secretary-General's reaffirmation of the Arab Peace Initiative here today.

The leadership and engagement that President Trump and his administration have demonstrated in reinvigorating the Middle East Peace Process must have our support. We call on the region, Israelis, and Palestinians to seize the opportunity that this presents and turn 2017 not just into another anniversary of occupation, but a new anniversary of peace.

We cannot afford to fail. As Special Coordinator Mladenov has made clear, there is an urgent need to address the dire and deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza, with over 65,000 people currently displaced.

The ongoing energy crisis is particularly concerning. Energy supply in Gaza will soon fall to just three hours per day. This is having a serious humanitarian impact, disrupting basic services, including water treatment and essential medical operations. This latest crisis underlines the need for de-escalation, dialogue and a durable agreement between Palestinian actors that results in the Palestinian Authority's full control over the Gaza Strip.

Before I give up the floor, let me turn briefly to the situation in Lebanon. We welcome the new electoral law ratified by the Lebanese Parliament on the 16th of June. This is an important milestone towards continued governance and stability, which paves the way for new elections.

But we must not forget the importance of ensuring stability flowing across the whole of Lebanon. So we're concerned at the increased Hizballah rhetoric along Lebanon's Southern border and we call on both sides to abide by Resolutions 1701 and 1559. Renewed conflict is in neither side's interest and we call on all actors to take steps to de-escalate tensions.

Thank you.

[News story: HCA ready to provide support or advice on testing ACM cladding](#)

Following the terrible fire at Grenfell Tower the Government is asking local authorities and other registered providers of social housing to identify whether any panels used in new build or refurbishment are a particular type of cladding made of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM).

The Homes and Communities Agency stands ready to provide support or advice on this testing where required. If you require such support please contact:

responsesupport@hca.gsi.gov.uk

[Press release: Government supports high-flying British Aerospace industry](#)

The Department for International Trade has helped GE Aviation win a multi-million dollar contract by guaranteeing a loan through the government's export credit agency, UK Export Finance (UKEF).

Worth \$18.7 million, the contract sees GE upgrade engines for cargo and charter airline Atlas Air. With the work carried out in GE's Prestwick workshop in Scotland they will supply and install energy efficient Performance Improvement Program (PIP) kits to 3 engines in the Atlas Air fleet.

This initial contract has led to a second multi-million dollar agreement for UKEF to finance upgrades of 3 more engines in the coming months.

The announcement comes as International Trade Minister, Mark Garnier, attends the Paris Air Show where the Department for International Trade is exhibiting.

International Trade Minister, Mark Garnier, said:

Our civil aerospace industry is world leading and the Department for International Trade is committed to doing all it can to boost exports and support UK businesses in this sector – including through UKEF where this deal will help do just that, as well as protecting jobs in Scotland.

I'm pleased to be flying the flag for the UK at the world's oldest and largest Air Show. It's a real opportunity to meet with potential investors and promote the strengths of the UK aerospace industry.

While at the Paris Air Show, Mark Garnier met with a range of businesses and discussed positioning the UK aerospace sector for the next generation of technology driven growth.

The UK leads the way in whole aircraft capability, particularly in:

- wing design and manufacture
- propulsion
- land gear
- major systems
- airline interiors

It is also well placed to provide access to:

- skilled talent
- excellent academia
- research and development
- world-class manufacturing processes
- competitive suppliers

UKEF, Atlas Air and GE may extend the programme, which could see further support worth millions of dollars for the future supply and installation of PIP kits to 33 more of Atlas Air's engines over the next 4 years.

Last year (2016) the UK aerospace industry generated revenues of £32 billion with £28 billion of production exported.

Highlighting the strengths of this important sector, the Department for International Trade's investment showcase is in the design of an aircraft cabin. There are 8 windows highlighting some of the international aerospace businesses located in the UK including:

- Boeing
- Thales
- Airbus
- Bombardier
- Rolls-Royce
- GE Aviation

[**News story: Plato mission brings**](#)

opportunities for UK space sector

Plato (Planetary Transits and Oscillations of stars) was adopted at the European Space Agency's Science Programme Committee meeting today (20 June 2017), following its selection in February 2014. That means work to build the science instrument payload can begin and in the coming months industry will be invited to bid to ESA for the contract to supply the spacecraft.

The UK Space Agency is investing £25 million in the development of the novel scientific instruments on board.

Dr Katherine Wright, Head of Space Science at the UK Space Agency, said:

Investment in Plato builds on UK science and engineering strengths in this area and secures us a leading role on this pre-eminent space science mission for the next decade. Plato has the exciting potential to discover Earth-like planets around other stars, which may eventually lead to the detection of extra-terrestrial life.

Planned to launch in 2026, Plato will monitor thousands of relatively bright stars over a large area of the sky, searching for tiny, regular dips in brightness as their planets cross in front of them, temporarily blocking out a small fraction of the starlight.

Astronomers have so far found over 1,000 planets beyond our Solar System (exoplanets), but none as yet has been shown to be truly Earth-like in terms of its size and distance from a Sun similar to our own.

Plato's innovative design is set to change all that. Its suite of multiple small telescopes and cameras, reminiscent of the compound eye of an insect, will allow it to 'stare' at a large number of the nearest and brightest stars, with the aim of discovering Earth-sized planets orbiting Sun-like stars in the 'habitable zone' – the distance from the star where liquid water could exist at the surface.

This will allow them to be studied with unprecedented accuracy and assessed for their potential to host life. An important part of this investigation will be to perform an intricate study of the structure and properties of the host stars themselves, providing key complementary information needed for the proper characterisation of rocky Earth-like exoplanet worlds.

UK scientists and engineers in collaboration with the UK Space Agency are leading participants involved in all aspects of the mission. Prof Don Pollacco, of Warwick University, leads the Plato Science Management Consortium. Scientists and engineers at UCL's Mullard Space Science Laboratory are responsible for the design and manufacture of the electronics for the camera system that sits behind the telescopes, and for characterising the camera detectors to optimise their performance.

The detectors are charge-coupled devices (CCDs), produced by the e2v company in Chelmsford under contract to ESA. A team of UK scientists, coordinated by Cambridge's Institute of Astronomy, is also developing the Exoplanet Analysis data processing system on the ground.