

News story: British troops continue support to UN South Sudan mission

Armed Forces Minister Mike Penning yesterday visited Bentiu and Malakal, where UK military personnel are deployed, and met those carrying out engineering tasks in support of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

With around 100 already in country, Royal Engineers are carrying out building tasks in preparation for the main deployment of nearly 400 troops over the coming months – making this one of the UK's largest operational deployments across the globe.

UK personnel are carrying out engineering tasks at the UN's camps in both Malakal and Bentiu to enhance UNMISS's efforts, and as more British troops arrive in South Sudan, focus will move to Bentiu where a temporary field hospital will be set up, followed by a permanent hospital.

Minister of State for the Armed Forces Mike Penning said:

The UN is working hard to protect civilians and promote stability in South Sudan, and the UK continues to support this important effort.

This will be the UK's single largest deployment to a UN mission with almost 400 of our troops carrying out vital engineering tasks on the ground and a number of key roles within the UN headquarters.

This permanent field hospital will support over 1,000 UN peacekeepers and staff, enabling them to continue working to improve conditions in South Sudan.



Armed Forces Minister Mike Penning arrives in South Sudan

Engineering tasks carried out by UK personnel could include a helicopter landing site in Malakal, facilities to improve water supply, drainage to prevent flooding. In addition to engineering and medical support, the UK also has a small number of staff officers in UNMISS's headquarters in Juba.

Lt Col Jason Ainley, Commanding Officer Royal Engineers said:

We are very proud to be part of UNMISS. We look forward to continued work with our military and civilian colleagues to support the mission, which aims to improve conditions for the people of South Sudan.

My engineers are working in a tough operating environment to ensure our mission will be a success.

As part of his visit the Armed Forces Minister also met Lt Col Ainley in Juba, as well as Defence Minister Kuol Manyang Juuk, and UN Special Representative David Shearer.

British military support in South Sudan follows a commitment made in 2015 by the then Prime Minister to double the UK's commitment to global peacekeeping initiatives, including by deploying troops to South Sudan and Somalia.

Alongside the UK-hosted Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in London in September, these contributions underline the UK's leading role in support to

peacekeeping operations.



Mike Penning visits UK personnel in South Sudan

More widely, the UK Government has committed life-saving support to tackle the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan, including matching pound for pound public donations up to £10 million to the Disaster Emergency Committee's East Africa Crisis Appeal.

The Government also recently announcement that £100m will be spent on life-saving support in South Sudan in 2017/18, including:

- Food for over 500,000 people;
- Life-saving nutritional support to more than 27,500 children;
- Safe drinking water for over 300,000 people;
- Emergency health services for over 100,000 people;
- Livelihood support for over 650,000 people;
- Vaccinations for over 200,000 livestock.

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[News story: New penalties for](#)

breaching financial sanctions now in force

From today (3 April 2017), the Treasury's Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI) will start to use powers to impose penalties for serious financial sanctions breaches. These can be up to £1 million or 50% of the breach, whichever is higher.

This new power is one of a series of measures in the Policing and Crime Act which will strengthen the government's response to financial sanctions breaches. The penalty powers apply to offences committed after 1 April 2017. In 2016, just over one hundred suspected breaches were reported to OFSI, 95 of which were actual breaches, totaling around £75 million.

Economic Secretary, Simon Kirby, said:

Financial sanctions are a valuable tool against individuals, countries and terrorist groups who threaten UK foreign policy and financial services as well as our national security.

This government won't tolerate breaches of financial sanctions. We'll continue to place more emphasis on compliance and we will take tough action against those who deliberately flout the law.

Monetary penalties are a new way of responding to offences. The UK currently imposes financial sanctions in 27 sanctions regimes. Breaching sanctions is a criminal offence and the most serious cases could shortly incur prison sentences of up to seven years.

OFSI will normally publish summary details of penalty cases, to deter non-compliance and support compliance best practice.

In December 2016 OFSI consulted on guidance to support monetary penalties and [today publishes guidance](#) alongside a [summary of consultation responses](#).

Rena Lalgie, Head of OFSI, commented:

We'll continue to provide information and guidance to business, industry, the public and charitable sectors to facilitate compliance with financial sanctions. However, we will issue penalties for serious breaches and we won't hesitate in referring the most serious cases to law enforcement agencies.

OFSI, created on 31 March 2016, is the UK's Competent Authority for implementing financial sanctions. It works with a wide range of individuals, businesses and not-for-profit organisations who could be impacted by

financial sanctions to: raise awareness of financial sanctions, improve compliance, and detect and address breaches.

[The SNP is silencing NHS staff](#)

4 August 2017

The SNP has cancelled an annual survey of NHS staff which highlighted the pressure they are under.

The NHS Scotland staff survey is normally published in December, but so far no survey has been published for 2016.

Previous staff surveys have highlighted the pressure NHS staff are under due to the SNP government's mismanagement of our health service.

The last staff survey to be published, in December 2015, [revealed that only a third of NHS staff believed there were enough of them to do their jobs properly](#).

We are seeing more and more examples of NHS staff saying they are struggling to cope – [9 out of 10 nurses say their workload has got worse in the last year](#).

Meanwhile, the chair of the British Medical Association in Scotland has warned that our NHS workforce is [‘stretched pretty much to breaking point’](#).

In an interview on the BBC Sunday Politics Scotland programme, Dr Peter Bennie said doctors are ‘fed up’ with the SNP’s spin.

Earlier this week, Labour revealed that unfilled posts in nursing and midwifery are rocketing in our NHS – that means more pressure on our existing NHS staff. [LINK](#)

The people who work in our health service are the beating heart of our NHS. The SNP government should be listening to what they have to say, not cancelling an annual survey to avoid bad headlines.

Labour’s workforce commission will deliver a solution to the SNP’s NHS staffing crisis. It will look at how we can attract more people towards training for nursing and midwifery jobs and consider how to support more student nurses financially. It will also consider how to scrap the 1% pay cap for NHS staff.

Agree with our plan? [Then help spread our message](#).

[News story: Now recruiting: Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs members](#)

The Home Office is seeking 11 new members with expertise across:

- enforcement
- forensic chemistry
- neuropharmacology
- clinical psychology or general practice
- prison management
- offender management
- public health
- third sector
- pharmacy
- law

It is also seeking members from within these areas who have knowledge of the issues relevant to LGBT and BAME communities.