



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Union welcomes Minister to Defence Munitions Longtown.**

Cumbria's biggest general union will be taking the opportunity of a Ministerial visit to reinforce the importance of the Longtown site in fulfilling Defence Munitions commitment to the front line.

The Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology (including Defence Exports) - Philip Dunne MP will be visiting the site today.

The GMB Union says that after eight years of the Hadrian project, they are obviously pleased that the decision has now been made and that the Minister has recognised the importance of the Longtown site in fulfilling Defence Munitions commitment to the front line. However the Union says that it is deeply saddened by the 53 job losses to be made next year.

During the course of the next few months, The GMB along with other trade unions will begin to hold a series of meetings with management aimed at reducing the amount of job losses.

GMB Regional Organiser Dan Gow said:

"We will also be working closely with the MOD out placement scheme and local agencies to find alternative work and to re-skill staff who will be identified as surplus. From the GMB's perspective we will ensure that we can develop the best possible outcome for our members.

"We are still convinced that our model of 60 fully compliant buildings would have given the organisation more resilience and dramatically reduced the associated risk with the Hadrian Project solution and will take this opportunity to further state our case".

The GMB reiterated that as part of the joint Trades Unions' proposals it has been suggested that surplus land on the Longtown site be utilised for Commercial activity thereby reducing operating costs for the depot. The Unions are aware of significant interest from Private Sector companies and that it appears that the Minister has instructed the Defence Infrastructure Organisation to pursue all options.

Mr Gow said:

"We will continue to demonstrate to the MOD the strategic importance of the Longtown site and hopefully encourage other sections of the MOD to use the site for logistics, storage and training. We will also be pressing the Minister to invest further funds to upgrade the non-explosives sheds allowing increased use. If that funding is not available then we will be looking for funds realised from any Commercial work to be re-invested on this site".

**-ENDS-**

