

# UK OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

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## HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II AND HER OVERSEAS TERRITORIES





## HM Queen Elizabeth II, 21.4.1926 – 8.9.2022

Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was Head of State in each of the United Kingdom's 14 Overseas Territories. These diverse Territories span the globe, from Europe to the Pacific, from the Caribbean to the South Atlantic.

Some are amongst the smallest and most remote communities on earth, yet all the inhabited Territories are British by choice and are proud members of the UK family.

Her Late Majesty took a keen interest in her Overseas Territories and held their peoples in deep affection. They were, after all, her people and she was their Head of State. During her 70-year reign, Her Late Majesty visited many of her Territories, some more than once. Six visits to Bermuda may be a record!

The Premier of the British Virgin Islands said: "The people of the Virgin Islands welcomed her visits to these shores and the opportunity to interact with

her. They recall Her Majesty's cool composure, confidence and charm as she mingled with residents at handicraft and agricultural exhibitions, the hospital, schools, the opening of the bridge named in her honour, and other places she visited. She made a lasting connection which has endured until today."

That love for, and interest in, the Territories flowed from Her Late Majesty to all members of The Royal Family, not least to her son, His Majesty King Charles III, who over the years has visited many of the Territories and taken a keen interest in their unique environments, how they are impacted by Climate Change, and the role they can play in tackling many of the environmental challenges facing the world.

Her Late Majesty's support for her Overseas Territories continued to the last, with her grant of City Status to Stanley, capital of the Falkland Islands, in this her Platinum Jubilee year.

Her Late Majesty held a special place in the hearts of all the peoples of her Overseas Territories and in their darkest hours, they looked to her as a source of inspiration, comfort, and hope. The Chief Islander of Tristan da Cunha described her gracious welcome at Buckingham Palace in 1962 for refugees from a volcanic eruption, saying: "Her kindness will never be forgotten here".

It was therefore with great sadness that the people and governments of the Overseas Territories learned of the death of their beloved sovereign.

From Brades to Jamestown, from Adamstown to The Valley, and in every corner of the Realm, there has been a palpable sense of loss as the people of the Overseas Territories mourn for a monarch who, as the Chief Minister of Gibraltar said: "Reigned wisely and with incomparable dedication."

*Images – Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in Overseas Territories*

*Front cover: Bermuda, page 2 from left to right: British Virgin Islands, St. Helena, Turks and Caicos Islands*

## Turks and Caicos Islands elected as Chair of UKOTA



At the UKOTA AGM, which was held on Thursday, 10 February 2022, UK Representatives of the British Overseas Territory governments elected Ms Tracy Knight, who

represents the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands, as Chair. The Premier of the Turks and Caicos Islands, The Honourable Charles Washington Misick, according to the Association's constitution, assumes the Presidency of the Political Council of UKOTA.

As Chair of UKOTA Ms Knight will lead the work of the Association, advancing and defending the collective interests of the Overseas Territories in the UK, over the forthcoming year.

Commenting on the Chairmanship Ms Knight said, 'It is an honour to be elected as Chair of UKOTA and I am grateful for the confidence of the other Overseas Territory Representatives and support of the Turks and Caicos Islands Government. I look forward to working with my colleagues to further promote the relationship between the Overseas Territories and the UK

and to engaging with all stakeholders to advance the work of the Association.'

As President of the Political Council, Premier Misick will have responsibility for chairing the council's annual meeting of political leaders in London later this year ahead of the annual Joint Ministerial Council between the Overseas Territories and the UK.

"As President I look forward to working with OTs to project us toward the elevation of the socio-economic standing of all our peoples, break down the barriers to sustenance and self-actualisation; and improve communication and collaborative efforts with the UK Government to ensure BOTs' individual and collective concerns are heard and solutions actualised for the betterment of the lives of our people," said the Premier.

At the AGM, Mrs Janice Panton MBE, UK Representative for Montserrat, was elected Honorary Secretary and Mrs Kedell Worboys MBE, UK Representative for St Helena, was elected Honorary Treasurer.



## Commonwealth Games

In July, athletes from nine of the UK's Overseas Territories made their way to Birmingham to compete with some of the world's leading sportsmen and women in the 2022 Commonwealth Games. For most Overseas Territories, the Commonwealth Games are the highest level of sporting competition in which they get to compete.

In Birmingham, athletes from the Overseas Territories participated in sports as diverse as athletics and lawn bowls and, as ever, the Territories punched above their weight and generated a huge amount of warmth and affection from the spectators and global media alike.

Highlights included a gold medal for Bermuda's Dame Flora Duffy in the Triathlon, and a gold for BVI's Kyron McMaster in the Men's 400m Hurdles.

During their time in Birmingham, athletes from the Overseas Territories were visited by the UK Foreign Secretary, Liz Truss MP, and by the Minister for the Overseas Territories, Amanda Milling MP.



## COP26

The fourteen United Kingdom Overseas Territories (UKOTs) are incredibly rich in biodiversity and represent the 5th largest marine estate in the world. Each UKOT is unique but has common challenges in managing its diverse and exceptional environments, including increasing impacts from climate change. Historically, there has been minimal UKOT representation at major environmental conferences, despite containing

90% of the UK's biodiversity and being on the front line of climate change impacts. Last October, UKOTA's Bermuda chair worked with HMG to have UKOT Environmental Ministers from the Caribbean and Gibraltar, plus a UKOTA representative, attend the UN Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP26) in Glasgow.

The highlight was a UKOTA-hosted event entitled "Our Vision for Healthy Oceans" (<https://youtu.be/X8keWKNrTb0>). The UKOT delegation attended sessions and receptions and met with

UK environment minister Lord Goldsmith to discuss the many climate change challenges the UKOTs face, including impacts on Small Island Developing States (which includes many of the UKOTs), the urgent need for increased climate finance, and keeping the goal of reducing emissions towards net-zero targets.

There were challenges in being involved and heard in high-level sessions, as the UKOTs are not seen as separate jurisdictions under the United Nations system. Members from the COP26 delegation are working with the current UKOTA chair from the Turks and Caicos to discuss opportunities for all UKOTs to be part of COP27 later this year. While each UKOT is unique, many commonalities and challenges are faced in managing our diverse environments.

*Stephanie Martin, Tristan da Cunha Government Environmental and Conservation Policy Officer and UKOTA representative at COP26*



## Ascension Island Climate Change Resilience Project

Ascension has been awarded a grant of £261,894 by the UK Government's Darwin Plus programme, with additional support from the Blue Marine Foundation, for a project entitled Climate Resilience and Conservation of Ascension's Biodiversity. The aim is to predict the local impacts of climate change and to help the local wildlife cope with these impacts. The project has multiple components aimed at conserving Ascension's plants, turtles, seabirds and marine ecosystems.

Ascension's plants are expected to be affected in a number of ways by climate change. Climate change is predicted to increase the average altitude of clouds in many parts of the world by at least two hundred metres before the end of the century, meaning fog will become much rarer on mountains. For cloud forest ecosystems such as Green Mountain, fog is the main source of moisture. As such this loss of cloud is predicted to cause cloud forests globally to shrink to a fraction of their former range, while some may be lost entirely. Green Mountain's cloud forest is home to five fern species, one type of grass and sixteen mosses which are all endemic to the island, meaning they are found nowhere else on earth. There is a real risk of extinction for these species if the mountain becomes drier. In particular, our endemic, critically endangered hedgehog grass *Sporobolus caespitosus* is already beginning to suffer from drought in its remaining habitat above Elliot's Pass.

Hedgehog grass needs open, relatively cool habitats with a thick carpet of mosses and regular mist to grow. This formerly abundant habitat has now largely been replaced by invasive forest and ginger thickets. In the surviving areas, hedgehog grass grows alongside the endemic moss fern *Stennogrammis ascensionensis* and many mosses and moss-like plants which are also unique to Ascension. As clouds recede and droughts become more frequent, we are not only seeing hedgehog grass decline, but are also observing mosses drying out and then being eroded from the hillside, taking moss ferns with them. Conserving these species will require management of the habitat as a whole. To do so, Ascension Island Government (AIG) staff will build fog harvesting nets above hedgehog grass sites to collect additional water when fog is present. These nets will feed into water tanks and an automated irrigation system, allowing water to be stored during fog then trickled and sprayed onto plants, even in droughts. By keeping mosses damp enough to cling to the hillside, AIG hope to restore this unique plant community.

Another global effect of climate change is the disruption of regular climate cycles, making extreme weather events such as droughts and floods more common. A greater frequency of severe droughts combined with higher temperatures threatens our unique Ascension spurge *Euphorbia origanoides*. We have already seen how our spurge populations suffered

from the period of low rainfall between 2016 and 2019. Threats like this are particularly worrisome for species like the spurge, whose range has already been fragmented into small, isolated populations by invasive herbivores and development. Each individual small population has a high chance of being wiped out by droughts; whereas the larger, interconnected populations the island used to hold, would have been much more resilient and better able to recover.

To help the island's unique plants survive, AIG are working with the University of East Anglia to predict how rainfall and temperature on Ascension will change in the coming decades. From these predictions, we can start to work out which parts of the island should be best suited for Ascension spurge to grow in the future. AIG plan to build habitat restoration sites for spurge in these places, deploying water tanks and an automated watering system to support spurge plants in droughts. Ideally, in the long term these sites will seed naturally self-sustaining populations where the climate will become optimal for the spurge in coming decades.

AIG staff have already begun planning and preparing the habitat restoration sites. Materials for fog harvesters are now on their way to the island, while spurge plants for reintroduction are growing in the shadehouses.



Left: Hedgehog grass on Elliot's Pass



Right: Ascension spurge seedlings growing after rain

### Ascension Island – At a Glance

Capital: Georgetown | Size: 88 sq km | Population: 970 (2022) |  
Currency: Pound Sterling | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time |

## From vulnerability to environmental resilience and sustainability



Anguilla, like other British Overseas Territories, is vulnerable to political, global environmental and economic shocks, over which it has no control or influence.

In Anguilla, over a 15-year period, we have traversed the 2008 global financial crisis followed by the high profile Hurricane Irma where over 90% of our infrastructure was destroyed or damaged and the value of 100% of our GDP was needed to repair and restore the Island. The UK's "Anguilla programme" which assisted in our post-Irma recovery with the rebuilding of our schools, hospital and ports, was invaluable.

Anguilla was then impacted by the UK's recent departure from the European Union, which meant Anguilla like other UKOTs can no longer participate in the EU's 500 million euro plus Cooperation Fund, set aside for overseas territories in 2020 to 2027 - much of which was focused on economic and environmental initiatives.

The COVID-19 pandemic hit Anguilla's fragile tourism dependent economy, just as the country was getting back on its feet post Hurricane Irma. Like many other small Island Developing States (SIDS), being largely economically dependent on the tourism and fisheries sectors, the pandemic lockdowns and travel restrictions heavily affected these already vulnerable nations.

The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic also

remains a major health, social and economic crisis, with the most critical impacts being felt in developing nations. Small Island Developing States in particular suffered an unprecedented economic impact, with GDP contraction in 2020 estimated at 7.1% in SIDS, compared to 4.4% in other developing countries - and those same small Islands are now on the frontline of climate change.

Anguilla like other SIDS is at the frontier of the most catastrophic forms of climate change, not in the least violent weather events, hurricanes and tsunamis that have inflicted major crises on our people.

Environmental resilience is integral to the socio-cultural way of life of Anguilla's people. Heavily dependent on our natural resources, our ocean, and our land, the people's close relationship with nature and the oceans makes the transition towards dependence on renewable and sustainable sources of energy a viable prospect.

Costa Rica has a sustainability initiative where 98 percent of energy comes from renewable sources, and decades of deforestation are being reversed, pioneering a clean and green pathway to development. Anguilla aspires to create a similar model, a virtuous circle in which economic growth generates revenues that can be invested in programmes which will ensure Anguilla's economic development is intrinsically linked to a sustainable blue and green economy.

Conservation and sustainability are also at the

heart of the Anguillian cultural approach to its oceans, with the community fiercely protective over existing ocean conservation areas and deeply frustrated at the illegal Asian trawlers frequently sighted in Anguillian waters. Anguilla's Blue Anguilla (BANG) Task Force, established in 2021, intends to unlock the potential of their 200 miles of water in a sustainable and protected manner.

The world's oceans have untapped potential for sustainable development. Research commissioned by the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, showed that every \$1 invested in the sustainable ocean economy will return \$5 over a 30-year period.

Anguilla has already established a sustainability strategy that puts the Island on a path to a cleaner, greener future, but there is still much work to be done - sustainability requires all environmental issues to be thoroughly integrated into every aspect of Anguilla's policy and decision-making process. With a micro population of 15,000, in order for Anguilla's vision to be realised, Anguilla will need further support for research and technical assistance to create an enabling environment for climate policy.

With the correct support in place, from the UK and global partners, Anguilla can become a global model of inclusive and sustainable growth focused on climate resilience and adaptation, and a beacon for Global Britain.

### Anguilla – At a Glance

**Capital:** The Valley | **Size:** 91 sq km | **Population:** 15,000 (2018) |  
**Currency:** Eastern Caribbean Dollar (EC\$) | **Time Zone:** Greenwich Mean Time -4 hours |



# Bermuda

## Blue Shield Progress



Bermuda, despite its small physical size of 21 sq. miles, has custody of 173,890 sq. miles of the Atlantic Ocean. The island's coastal environments, coral reefs, and surrounding ocean are biologically rich, contain priceless marine cultural heritage, provide food and economic opportunities for Bermudians, and support diverse local and touristic recreational activities. Bermuda's actions in safeguarding our marine ecosystems are vital to support the UK in meeting its pledge to protect 30% of the world's oceans by 2030.

As of November 2021, Bermuda became the first Overseas Territory to participate in the UK Government's Blue Shield Programme. This initiative supports the implementation of a comprehensive monitoring and surveillance regime within our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), using innovative technology to tackle the challenges of illegal fishing and unlawful marine activities. Where necessary, Blue Shield will also assist in undertaking enforcement action against non-compliance, in order to strengthen the sustainable management of our oceans.

Deputy Premier and Minister of Home Affairs, the Hon. Walter Roban, JP, MP, commented, "I am very excited for Bermuda to be participating in the Blue Shield programme and thank the UK Government for their willingness to share this vital piece of technology that will help support the surveillance, protection and management of our marine environment. Bermuda will continue

to align itself with the highest standards needed for the protection of our oceans."

Lord Zac Goldsmith, Minister for the Environment, commented that "support provided by the project to combat IUU fishing, manage vessel activity and marine development projects will underpin Bermuda's existing protected areas management approach."

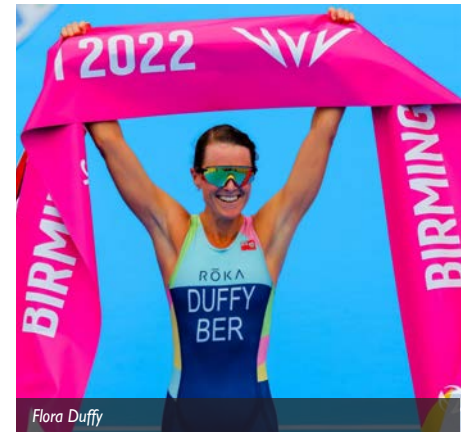
In February 2022, representatives from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the Marine Management Organisation visited Bermuda to witness the progress made on the programme and provided an update on how the system could be used to further protect Bermuda's maritime EEZ.

## Commonwealth Games 2022



17 athletes represented Bermuda in the Commonwealth Games 2022, held in Birmingham, UK. The delegation arrived at

the Opening Ceremony in their customary pink Bermuda shorts, led by joint flag bearers Dage Minors, who competed in Men's Athletics in the 800m and 1500m distances, and Emma Keane, the first female squash player to represent the island at a Commonwealth Games.



The Games began in spectacular fashion for Bermuda, with the first day seeing our triathletes compete in the individual competition. Bermuda's medal hopes rested on reigning Olympic and Commonwealth champion Dame Flora Duffy, who did not disappoint by claiming her second Commonwealth Gold and becoming the first triathlete in the history of the Games to win back-to-back titles. With this being the second medal ceremony of the Games, Bermuda had a short-lived stint near the top of the medal table.

Bermuda's second podium of the Games came from bronze medal winner Jah-Nhai Perinchief in Men's Triple Jump, jumping a distance of 16.92m on his Commonwealth Games debut. The Games then concluded with Kaden Hopkins, who impressed in the Men's Road Race and Men's Individual Time Trial Cycling events, waving the Bermuda flag to lead the group in the Closing Ceremony for Birmingham 2022.

Our Bermuda team included competitors in athletics, cycling, squash, swimming and triathlon events, and over the course of the Games, Bermudian athletes set personal bests and national records in their respective sports.

We are very proud of all our athletes who participated in the Commonwealth Games 2022!

## Bermuda – At a Glance

Capital: Hamilton | Size: 53.3 sq km | Population: 63,779 (2016 census) |  
Currency: Bermudian Dollar (BMD) | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time -4 hours |

# British Virgin Islands

## BVI lauded for most successful financial services in the Caribbean

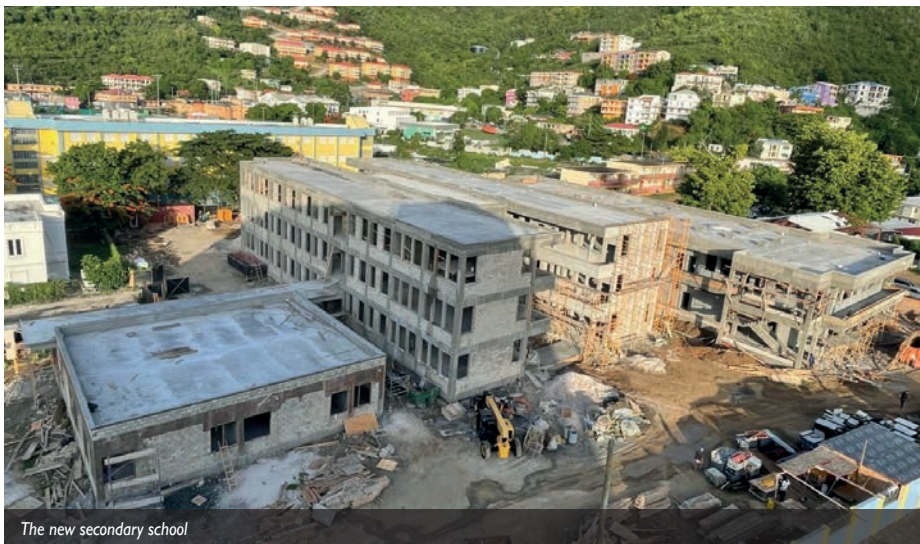
The British Virgin Islands (BVI) financial services industry has been lauded as the most successful in the Caribbean by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean consultant, Dr June Soomer.

The announcement was made during Dr Sommer's presentation on the BVI's National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) to the

financial services sector during BVI Finance's Breakfast Forum, on June 30th.

She explained the importance of the presentation and input by the financial services industry as a critical part of the consultations necessary to ensure proper representation of the BVI's main economic pillars in the drafting of the NSDP, a 15-year vision and road map

for the Territory. The Ministry of Finance Economist, who supported the presentation, said the NSDP was being led by the Government of the Virgin Islands and was integrated as part of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The NSDP and achieving the SDG goals are not only the responsibility of the government, but also the responsibility of businesses and citizens.



The new secondary school

## 5 years on since Hurricane Irma: Preparations underway for active hurricane season

As the BVI approaches the 5-year mark since the passage of catastrophic Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, Government agencies and key partners are working together to make sure the Virgin Islands are prepared following the prediction of an active hurricane season.

His Excellency the Governor, John J. Rankin CMG, who chairs the National Disaster Management Council (NDMC), congratulated the members of the council on steps taken to date and urged the team to carry on with their efforts.

Some of the key actions taken so far to ensure that the Territory will be ready this hurricane season include completing a readiness assessment for critical services within the public and private sector; completion of the Territory's Continuity of Education Plan; training for search and rescue

officers, public outreach events, and clearance of ghuts and waterways. These and other measures were reported by heads of NDMC committees in the areas of health, finance, governance, the environment, education, infrastructure, and public awareness.

The prediction of an active hurricane season comes as the territory nears completion of the largest public secondary school in the territory, which was decimated in 2017, leaving students displaced and attending classes in shifts since then. Premier Dr the Honourable Natalio Wheatley reminded the members that their efforts are vital to protect the Territory and ensure its infrastructure and people are prepared. "As we have been preaching, especially since 2017, we must be prepared. We cannot simply hope that we won't be impacted."

**British Virgin Islands  
London Office  
commemorates  
20 years  
of diplomatic  
service**



The British Virgin Islands London Office is commemorating 20 years of diplomatic service abroad with the establishment of the BVI London Office at BVI House in London.

The Office is planning a series of events throughout the year under the theme "Vigilance, Diplomacy and Integrity at 20", to mark this key milestone in the BVI's political advancement and international engagement.

In July 2002, the Government of the British Virgin Islands, under the leadership of the then Chief Minister, Hon. Ralph T. O'Neal OBE, approved the acquisition of BVI House in London. It was a first step in establishing the BVI London Office and raising the Territory's profile in the United Kingdom (UK) and Europe.

The Government recognised that its relationship with the UK Government was maturing and required sustained engagement in areas such as financial services, governance, constitutional reform, and European Union related matters. It therefore became necessary to establish a diplomatic office in London through which the BVI Government's UK and EU relationships could be managed on a permanent basis.

The BVI London Office will publish details of the 20-year anniversary programme which is expected to include events at BVI House and engagement with the BVI public in the Territory and abroad.

The Office is located at BVI House, 15 Upper Grosvenor Street, Westminster, London, W1K 7PJ.

## British Virgin Islands – At a Glance

**Capital:** Road Town (Tortola) | **Size:** 153 sq km | **Population:** 32,000 |  
**Currency:** US Dollar (US\$) | **Time Zone:** Greenwich Mean Time -4 hours |



# Cayman Islands

## Saving Lives, Protecting our Borders: Cayman Islands Coast Guard



Cayman's first class of Coast Guard recruits pictured here with Deputy Commandant Leo Anglin.



(L-R) Commandant Robert Scotland, The Hon. Premier G. Wayne Panton, His Excellency the Governor Martyn Roper and Deputy Commandant Leo Anglin.

The Cayman Islands Coast Guard (CICG) was officially established in 2021 as the maritime security and search and rescue agency of the Cayman Islands. In March 2021, sixteen young Caymanians made history becoming Cayman's first class of Coast Guard recruits and in January 2022 the CICG First Commandant Robert Scotland and Deputy Commandant Leo Anglin received their commissions and letters of appointment, formalising the leadership of the country's newest law enforcement agency.

Referencing the CICG's motto "Saving Lives, Protecting our Borders", Commandant Robert Scotland said, "With the Creation of the Cayman Islands Coast Guard the Government has addressed the international requirements placed on the Islands to detect and disrupt the illicit movement of persons and items within the region, but to also increase its capability and capacity to ensure the timely response, or coordination of assistance, to persons and vessels in distress within our assigned Search And Rescue Region (SRR)."

Ensuring that CICG officers receive the best training available in July 2022, Caymanian Coast Guard officers Christopher McTaggart and Arianna Wheeler-Seijas commenced a course at Britannia Royal Navy College as part of the Royal Navy's Accelerated Reserve Officers Training Programme. The programme is an intense nine week course designed for the Royal Naval Reserve and which exposes candidates to the highest standards of basic naval officer training.

## Building climate change resiliency for the Cayman Islands



The Cayman Islands Government, with financial support from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, through the Governor's Office, the Centre for Environment Fisheries & Aquaculture Science and the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, facilitated a climate change risk assessment for the Cayman Islands in May 2022.

His Excellency the Governor, Martyn Roper, said he is pleased to see the project's progress and expressed his full support. "This project will help to build true climate change resiliency for the Cayman Islands which is supported by informed national policies. This forms part of the UK/Cayman Climate Change/Environment Partnership Agreement which allows for collaboration in areas such as biodiversity, disaster resilience and renewable energy."

This project will include the provision of a detailed evidence report in September 2022, a stakeholder prioritisation workshop and a final summary report aimed at policy makers and the general public.

## Mapping Cayman's Seabed

In June 2022, the Cayman Islands Government in collaboration with geo-data specialists from the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) completed a seabed mapping survey for the Cayman Islands by using a Partenavia P68 aircraft, flying as low as 1000ft above land.

The survey produced data and uncovered information about the depth and nature of the seabed and its ecosystems which will be used to support the development of tools designed to improve the understanding of nature's role in coastal resilience against natural disasters in the Cayman Islands.

Additionally, the data will support the islands' maritime trade and economic growth by shedding light on the seabed in the surrounding waters, enabling safe navigation and helping to drive the territory's sustainable blue economy. UKHO will create new, accurate Admiralty shipping navigation charts for Cayman's waters which will be available for purchase for commercial shipping and private boating purposes from authorised outlets approved by the UKHO.

His Excellency the Governor, Martyn Roper, commented, "This data will not only improve the safety of navigation and international maritime compliance but can be used by a wide range of stakeholders to support our understanding, management and sustainable use of the marine environment, leading to informed policy decisions. Importantly, the data is also key to supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals."

## Cayman Islands – At a Glance

Capital: George Town | Size: 264 sq km | Population: 71,105 |  
Currency: Cayman Islands Dollar KYD | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time -5 hours |



# Falkland Islands

## Looking forward at forty



Across the Falkland Islands from Invasion Day to Liberation Day, Falkland Islanders have marked the key events of the War, as they have done each and every year since 1982. But this is not a routine, tired, ritual. It is real and meaningful, because Falkland Islanders are deeply aware of the price paid by so many in the liberation of the Islands, and 40 years on, the gratitude they feel has not dimmed.

As this year is the 40th anniversary of the liberation of the Falklands a significant number of events have taken place in the UK and in the Islands.

The Falkland Islands Government Office in London, working closely with the South Atlantic Medal Association, and others, organised a service at St Paul's Cathedral to mark the departure of the Task Force, an exhibition was held at the National Army Museum, and the Royal British Legion organised the national commemorative event at the National Memorial Arboretum on Liberation Day, where all holders of the South Atlantic Medal were granted the freedom of the Falkland Islands. In addition, there have been hundreds of events held right across the UK organised by local communities. Liberation Day was marked in the Islands with a service in Christ Church Cathedral, a military parade led by the Band of the Royal Marines, and an Act of Remembrance at the Liberation Monument.

In this fortieth anniversary year, we are both remembering and reflecting on the events of 1982, the memories and scars that for some are still vivid, but also making the most of the positive legacy we have been given, by "Looking forward at forty."

## City status for Stanley

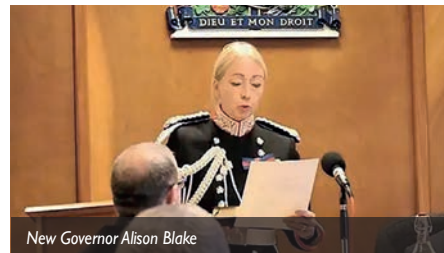


In May, following a competition involving 39 applicants, Stanley, the capital of the Falklands Islands, became the first Overseas Territory

to be granted official city status by Her Majesty The Queen as part of Her Platinum Jubilee. This was particularly special given that this year we are also marking the 40th anniversary of the Liberation of the Falkland Islands.

MLA Pete Biggs said: "We are utterly thrilled to have been chosen for this very rare award. This celebration of her extraordinary reign comes at a time when we in the Falkland Islands are equally reflecting on an extraordinary time in our own history. For our small community it was an unprecedented time, but I am delighted that, 40 years on from those dark days, we are being recognised in this way – I think it goes to show just how far we have come in that time, building a thriving, prosperous nation, which continually looks to the future while respecting our past."

## New Governor



The Swearing-in Ceremony for the new, and first female, Falkland Islands Governor, Alison Blake CMG, took place in July. At the ceremony she remarked: "It's a huge privilege and a great pleasure to be sworn in as your new Governor."

I first visited Stanley in 1993 as a junior official in the UK's Ministry of Defence. And I never dreamt then that nearly 30 years later I would be standing here as your Governor; and the first woman to hold this appointment. Thank you again for your warm welcome and I am looking forward to working together in partnership and also to seeing as much as I can of these beautiful Islands while we strive for peaceful, secure, and prosperous future for the people of the Falkland Islands."

The ceremony was followed by a parade at Victory Green with a Guard of Honour consisting of a tri-service detachment of Royal Navy, Army, and Royal Air Force, a detachment from the Falkland Islands Defence Force and a 17 gun-salute.

## UN Special Committee C-24



In June MLAs Gavin Short and Leona Roberts made a heartfelt entreaty to the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization (C-24).

MLA Short highlighted the principle of Self Determination and the conclusive Falklands referendum result in 2013, when 99.8% of Islanders chose to remain an internally self-governing UK Overseas Territory. He described how his own family have lived in the Islands for 173 years, thus refuting Argentine propaganda that the islands have an implanted population.

MLA Roberts invited the C24 committee to visit the Islands, "Argentina does not want you to see our vibrant, self-sufficient, self-governing country. We have our own Constitution, pass our own laws, manage our own democracy, are financially independent and fiercely protective of our self-governance."

The MLAs were accompanied at the United Nations by two Falkland Islands Junior Ambassadors, Craig Lewis and Nikki Wilks.

## Falkland Islands – At a Glance

Capital: Stanley | Size: 12,173 sq km | Population: 3,200 |  
Currency: Falkland Islands Pound | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time -3 hours

## University of Gibraltar

Situated at the southernmost tip of Gibraltar with glorious views of Northern Africa across the Strait of Gibraltar, the University of Gibraltar offers a unique experience for students and staff, providing students high quality, in-person teaching and UK-aligned standards in a unique, safe and multicultural environment. The current Chancellor of the University is the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Rt Hon Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP, who last winter was able to travel to the Rock and attend the winter graduations.

Since its first intake in 2015, enrolled students and accredited courses have grown at an impressive rate. As of the last academic year, 462 students from over 35 nationalities were

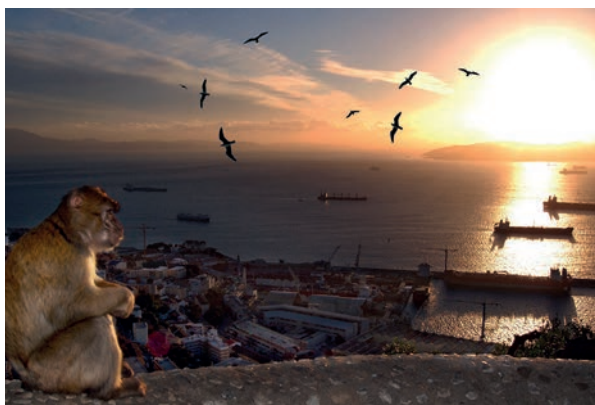


enrolled across more than 50 undergraduate, postgraduate and professional development courses. The University of Gibraltar works with British Universities such as King's College London, Queen Margaret University Edinburgh, Kingston University and the University of Central Lancashire to develop courses and share best academic practices.

The university receives applications and enquiries from UK-based students for undergraduate courses on a regular basis. However, the number of enrolled UK-based students remains low in comparison to other nationalities' applicants, and the University hopes to improve on this number in the near future through broader engagement with the Department of Education.

## Defence in Gibraltar

Gibraltar's role in making Britain more relevant in a competitive world continues to grow. The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy (March 2021) stipulated that the Armed Forces had to be prepared for persistent engagement worldwide through forward deployment, adding that Britain would "invest in the strategic hubs that give our forces reach, access, influence and insight."



Although the support to Royal Naval and US Navy nuclear submarines had remained constant, the overall MoD footprint in Gibraltar had diminished in scale and intensity. However, the Integrated Review reversed the essentially downward trajectory for Defence on the Rock.

The decision was made to base HMS Trent, one of the Royal Navy's newest offshore patrol vessels, in Gibraltar. This means that she will be able to support NATO operations in the Mediterranean, as well as work with African partners, without having to return to the UK. The naval component has also been augmented with the delivery to Gibraltar Squadron of two new purpose-built patrol vessels, HMS Dagger and HMS Dauntless, enhancing security in the waters around the Rock.

Serious investment into Windmill Hill's "eyes and ears" means that the Rock's insight function has been noticeably enhanced. The installation of ultra-modern radar equipment at the top of the Rock is the latest addition to the Rock's important electronic footprint.

The Ministry of Defence is now examining how to develop the logistics infrastructure at the port and for fuel storage to create what is needed here to support the UK carrier strike groups and any other national or alliance assets.

## Royal Visit



Prince Edward and his wife Sophie, the Earl and Countess of Wessex, visited Gibraltar as part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Gibraltarians came out in their thousands to welcome the Royal

couple who had last visited Gibraltar ten years ago as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

During their three-day visit, the Royal couple participated in a wide range of engagement, from visiting enthusiastic students at a local school, to trying out activities in Gibraltar's new sport facilities. A highlight of their stay was the Royal couple's stroll down Main Street where they generously interacted and conversed with the by swathes of proud Gibraltarians who had come out to greet them.

Prince Edward thanked Gibraltar for its "generous hospitality" and "immense welcome" following the three-day visit. He added that "the spirit of the Gibraltarian community" has amazed him on each visit. Gibraltar looks forward to welcoming the Earl and Countess of Wessex to the Rock once again in the future.

## Gibraltar – At a Glance

Capital: Gibraltar | Size: 6.5 sq km | Population: 33,686 |  
Currency: Gibraltar Pound | Time Zone: Central European Time |



# Montserrat



Martin Parlett (Head of PMO), Richard Starkey (CEO Meridian), Dr. the Hon. Samuel Joseph

© GoM

## Port Development

On the 21st June 2022 the Government of Montserrat in partnership with the Caribbean Development Bank held a ground-breaking ceremony to signal the start of the construction phase of the Montserrat Port Development Project. This was almost 25th years to the day on which the Soufriere Hills Volcano erupted, killing 19 people. In his address the Hon. Premier Joseph E. Farrell said that the ground-breaking for the port development signals a change for the island and is "the first step towards enabling meaningful land-side development, the creation of a new centre of commerce and, social exchange in Little Bay."

The contract for the design and build of the port was won by a BVI-based company, Meridian Construction Limited, and the construction is expected to begin around November 2022

and last eighteen months. The Minister for Communication, Works, Labour and Energy, Dr the Hon. Samuel Joseph said, "Reliable access has been a challenge for Montserrat following volcanic eruptions in the 90's and this feat marks a major turning point for the people of Montserrat especially as it relates to access, development of tourism potential and trade."

Earlier this year, the UK increased its funding to ensure the development of a viable port that meets the needs of the people of Montserrat. The UK's initial capital grant of £14.4m for this project was approved in 2017 with Montserrat contributing with support from EU funding, £7.1m. The Governor, Her Excellency Sarah Tucker, told the audience at the ceremony that, "The UK Government understands how pivotal the port project is for Montserrat's revitalisation, its economic development and sustainability", and that she "was pleased to receive confirmation that the UK government was able to make

## National Climate Change Policy and Plan



The Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Housing and the Environment in Montserrat, Hon. Crenston Buffonge, has confirmed that the National Climate Change Policy is now near completion.

Implementation of the policy will be guided by the Climate Change Action Plan where key priority areas for adaptation and mitigation have been identified, to ensure the security

and sustainability in this sector. These priority areas include food security, irrigation solutions to combat severe drought, sea wall defences and beach erosion, alongside health and productivity of natural ecosystems.

Two priority areas for mitigation include energy efficiency and renewable energy which will be achieved through adopting low carbon development pathways and realising the island's full potential for renewable energy generation. Once completed, the Action Plan will serve as the foundation to determine budgetary requirements associated with climate change response.

a tangible demonstration of its support for our wonderful island by increasing the funding for this project."

Minister Joseph said that, "This is a major step towards realising the Government's longstanding goal of providing the people of Montserrat with a more efficient resilient port facility as we advance efforts towards Montserrat's sustainable development."

## Protecting our Environment

### Turtle Action Plan

The Minister for Agriculture, Lands, Housing, and the Environment welcomed a team from the University of Exeter and Marine Conservation Society (MCS) to assist in developing a turtle conservation action plan. The island hosts populations of the endangered Green and critically endangered Hawksbill turtles. The MCS's team members, Dr. Peter Richardson, Head of Ocean Recovery, and Amdeep Sanghera, UK Overseas Territories Conservation Officer, have been working with local project partners to gather community views on how turtles can be conserved, primarily through the screening of a film "Turtles of Montserrat – Listening to Local Voices." To date, project research has shown nesting adult turtles migrate hundreds, even thousands of miles to their feeding grounds after having laid their eggs in the sandy beaches of Montserrat where they were born.

MCS, together with their long-term project partners the University of Exeter, successfully secured a Darwin Fellowship for Veta Wade of Aqua Montserrat, a local NGO. Veta, who as a child evacuated to the UK following the volcanic eruption, returned to Montserrat in 2014 and set up the non-profit organisation Fish 'N Fins Inc. Together, Veta and her team have taught 3,000 people to swim and run ocean conservation and blue economy activities. Veta will be starting a one-year MSc in Marine Vertebrate Ecology and Conservation in September.



© University of Exeter

## Montserrat – At a Glance

Seat of Government: Brades | Size: 102 sq km | Population: 4,922 |  
Currency: Eastern Caribbean Dollar (EC\$) | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time -4 hours |



# Pitcairn

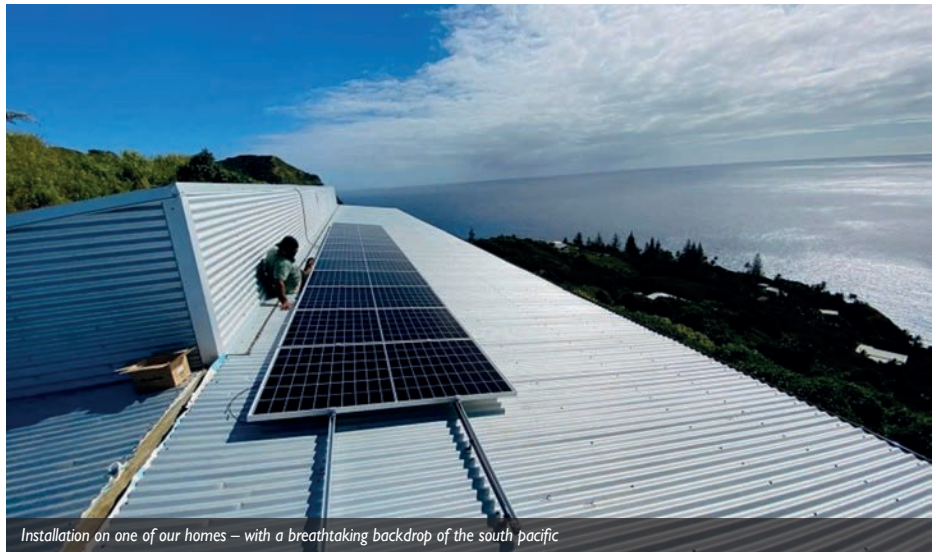
## Solar energy for all Pitcairn residents

In the last two years Pitcairn Island has dramatically shifted away from fossil fuels to utilising solar systems for the entire community. Over the past year, and with the assistance of a kind private benefactor, every home on Pitcairn is in the process of receiving a solar power system. With no airport and a single small harbour, all solar panel equipment and goods arrive through the narrow entrance to Bounty Bay. The majority have been installed, and many homes now have no requirement to access power from the government generator. We have already seen a significant drop in diesel usage for the government powered generators, and this trend will continue.

## Protecting a unique environment

Though we are small in numbers and geographically our island is tiny, we continue to forge forward to protect our environment, with a large Pitcairn Islands Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) covering 836,108 km<sup>2</sup> and encompassing the waters around two coral atolls of Ducie and Oeno, a raised atoll named Henderson, and Pitcairn Island itself. The Marine Protected Area is one of the five largest "No take" Marine Protected Areas designated in the world.

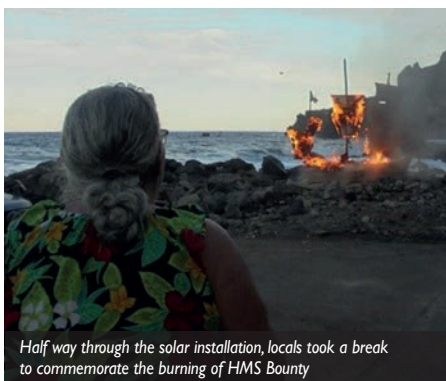
The reduced dependency on fossil fuel electrical generation enabled by the new solar panel installation project means that we can protect our skies and air quality from pollution which further enhances the Dark Sky Sanctuary designation of Pitcairn Island and the waters around it.



Installation on one of our homes – with a breathtaking backdrop of the south pacific



Bounty Bay harbour



Half way through the solar installation, locals took a break to commemorate the burning of HMS Bounty

## Pitcairn – At a Glance

Seat of Government: Adamstown | Size: 47 sq km | Population: 44 |  
Currency: New Zealand Dollar (NZD) | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time -8 hours |



# St Helena

## Historic reburial at St Helena's globally important transatlantic slave site



© Emma Weaver

St Helena Island is home to “the most significant physical remaining trace of the transatlantic slave trade on Earth.”

This is because the island's Rupert's Valley is the only place in the world known to contain solely the remains of people taken straight from slaver ships only days or weeks out of Africa.

Between 1840 and 1872, when Britain was abolishing the slave trade, St Helena was the ideal place to “try” captured slave ships and offload the people who had been captive onboard.

More than 25,000 “Liberated Africans” were offloaded at the mid-Atlantic island. Most of these people were later shipped back to Africa or on to other countries; a small number settled on the island and became the ancestors of today's islanders; and about one third perished on-island or were deceased upon arrival.

Today, more than 8,000 people – mainly children and young adults – remain buried along the hillsides.

In 2008, 325 of these people were excavated by a team of archaeologists during preparations for infrastructure development.

Over the following 14 years, hundreds of people worked together to plan and prepare for respectful and fitting reburial and memorialisation of those 325.

In August 2022, the local community turned out in full force to rebury and pay respects to those people who had been exhumed in 2008.

The reburial was carried out with moving sensitivity; each person now rests in their own casket, handmade by local secondary school students under instruction of their tutor. Any artefacts unearthed with an individual were reburied with them; and those persons who were found buried alongside one another, although now in individual caskets, have been placed next to one another at the burial site once again.



TRANS-ATLANTIC SLAVE MEMORIAL  
ST HELENA

The reburial was carried out in accordance with the funeral customs of St Helena, although remained non-denominational. On Sunday 21st August, the community gathered to transport the remains to the burial site and watch the site be covered over and held a ceremony paying respects to those who were reburied, as well as those still buried along the valley. The ceremony focused on poetry, history and song. The melting-pot community's deep-felt connection to this aspect of its heritage was clear not only in the amount of people present at the events, but in the speeches given: Especially by those who have traced their family trees back to slaves freed on the island.

St Helena's Liberated African Advisory Committee (LAAC) was formed in 2017 to lead reburial and memorialisation. After the committee led the reburial, LAAC Secretary Shelley Magellan-Wade said: “The respectful reburial of the human remains of the African victims of slavery has been a key priority for the St Helena Government for some years. Now, we have finally laid the victims of a tragic time in history to rest in peace.”

Reburial is now complete, but the committee is still tasked with securing funding for an interpretation centre giving lasting meaning and memorialisation to this globally important heritage site. Find out more on Facebook: @sthelenatransatlanticslavememorial.

### St Helena – At a Glance

Capital: Jamestown | Size: 410 sq km | Population: 4,439 |  
Currency: St Helenian Pound | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time |

# Tristan da Cunha

## Westminster salute to “Atlantic Guardians”

Commons Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle hosted a celebration of Tristan da Cunha's vast new Marine Protection Zone. At 687,247 km<sup>2</sup>, it is the largest in the Atlantic and the fourth-biggest on earth, and enabled the UK to meet its initial target of protecting 4,000,000 km<sup>2</sup> of ocean.

The historic move, by a fishing community of just 250 people, was hailed as “one of the most inspiring stories of conservation in my lifetime” by environment minister Zac Goldsmith.

Tristan da Cunha is a mountainous archipelago that is home to tens of millions of seabirds, and several land birds found nowhere else. The island group includes the World Heritage Site of Gough and Inaccessible Islands: Gough is arguably one of the most important seabird islands in the world. The new protection cuts the risk of bird deaths from fishing activity.



The *Atlantic Guardians* project, backed by a special trust fund, supports the Tristan da Cunha Zone with maritime research and community activities. The project organised the May celebration, which was well-

attended by parliamentarians as well as NGO representatives and members of the Tristan diaspora. The project has its own website, at [www.atlanticguardians.org](http://www.atlanticguardians.org)



## Charity gifts laptops to remotest school

Supporters of the world's remotest community formed the Tristan da Cunha Association in 1987. In 2022 it became a UK-registered charity, and its first act has been to donate 28 laptop computers to St Mary's School on the island – enough for every pupil to have one. Volunteer trustees personally negotiated the bulk purchase and arranged the shipping. To find out more about the Association, visit [www.tristandc.com/assoc](http://www.tristandc.com/assoc)

## Chief Islander joins Jubilee celebrations

On a rare visit to the UK, Tristan da Cunha's Chief Islander was part of Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Councillor James Glass had travelled over 9,000 miles to London for meetings with UK ministers and environment partners, and was delighted to attend the Pageant outside Buckingham Palace at the culmination of four joyful days.

On the island itself, a massive beacon was lit above the settlement and the jubilee was marked with special events in the school, the churches and the Prince Philip Hall community centre.



## Tristan da Cunha – At a Glance

Capital: Edinburgh of the Seven Seas | Size: 98 sq km | Population: 242 |  
Currency: Pound Sterling | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time |



# Turks and Caicos Islands

## Blue Belt Programme joined



The islands are the first territory in the Caribbean region to join HMG's flagship marine conservation programme, Blue Belt.

The announcement was made by Lord Goldsmith, Minister for Pacific and the Environment at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office at a World Oceans Day event celebrating the work of all of the territories within the Blue Belt Programme in the United Kingdom.

The programme will directly benefit the archipelago; ensuring that marine protection brings lasting benefits to the marine environment and local communities for future generations. From this partnership, the local government will be purchasing a new catamaran vessel that will be used in demarcating park boundaries and swim zones. In addition, the vessel will also be used for conducting industry-leading research to help improve knowledge and management of the waters around the islands.

The Blue Belt Programme will support work to protect coral reefs, as well as the wider marine environment, which faces the impacts of both global and local threats – from climate change to illegal fishing. The islands pride themselves on having one third of the country set aside in protected areas and the world's third largest coral reef.

Prior to attending this conference, the islands hosted a regional Climate Change Summit focusing on its impacts. The Summit culminated with the signing of the Climate Change Charter, between the TCI Government and stakeholders of the private sector.



## Local Regiment making strides

Three officers of the Regiment Marines were trained at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in the first quarter of the year. The officers were the second cohort to complete this rigorous two-month long training in a variety of subjects including military skills, leadership & management, fieldcraft, navigation and other areas. Witnessing their passing out alongside their families were Governor Nigel Dakin and London Representative, Tracy Knight.

## British Soldiers provide training



Deputy Governor Anya Williams along with Permanent Secretary for National Security, Tito Lightbourne welcomed British Military soldiers to the islands as they provided training to the newly established local regiment. The contingent of sixteen members conducted training with the new recruits covering topics such as Values and Standards, Diversity and Inclusion, Battlefield Casualty Medical, Crowd Management, Marking Helicopter Landing Sites, Patrolling, Weapon Handling, Field Hospital Set Up, Hazard Management.

## A new Chevening Scholar



Mrs. Gessie Herlien has been awarded the UK's prestigious Chevening Scholarship Award. Mrs. Herlien will be studying an LLM in Fintech at the University of East London in the UK starting in September 2022.

## Turks and Caicos – At a Glance

Capital: Cockburn Town, Grand Turk | Size: 616.3 sq km | Population: 42,953 (2019) |  
Currency: United States Dollar (US\$) | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time -4 hours |

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