

# The Scottish Government reshuffle



The Scottish Government's new Cabinet team has been announced by First Minister Alex Salmond, subject to the necessary parliamentary approval.

Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland's longest serving health secretary, will now become Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities, playing a key role in the Scottish Government's programme for economic recovery.

She will also take lead responsibility for Government Strategy and the Constitution, including preparations for the independence referendum.

Alex Neil will become Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, taking forward this key public service with the support of the existing strong team of Ministers, Sports Minister Shona Robison and Public Health Minister Michael Matheson.

Ms Sturgeon's junior ministers will be Keith Brown, Minister for Transport and Veterans, and Margaret Burgess, MSP for Cunninghame South, who will become new Minister for Housing and Welfare, reflecting the importance of housing in aiding economic recovery and also the challenges facing those in poverty.

Bruce Crawford MSP is to retire from his role as Cabinet Secretary for Parliamentary Business and Government Strategy.

Brian Adam will be stepping down as Minister for Parliamentary Business and he will be replaced by Joe FitzPatrick, MSP for Dundee City West. He will attend Cabinet and report to the

First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

Stewart Stevenson will be stepping down as Minister for Environment and Climate Change and will be replaced by Paul Wheelhouse, MSP for South Scotland, who will report to Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs Richard Lochhead.

Humza Yousaf, MSP for Glasgow, joins the Government as Minister for External Affairs and International Development reporting to Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs Fiona Hyslop.

The other Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers will remain as before. You can [read the 'old' list of Ministers here](#) and no doubt it will be updated shortly.

The First Minister said the changes have been made in line with taking forward the Programme for Government which was announced yesterday and preparing Scotland for the independence referendum in 2014.

There will be a Cabinet of eight members; the First Minister and seven Cabinet Secretaries.

This compares with 10 during the administration of Donald Dewar, and 11 during Henry McLeish's and Jack McConnell's terms as First Minister.

Reflecting the pay freeze taken by the Scottish Government for the past three years, all Cabinet Secretaries, Ministers (and Law Officers) will receive a salary at the April 1 2008 level, both for their Ministerial and MSP salary.

First Minister Alex Salmond said:

“This strong Ministerial team will take this Government forward in meeting the economic and social challenges we face while creating a better Scotland for future generations.

“As Health Secretary, Nicola Sturgeon has demonstrated what

can be achieved when Scotland has responsibility for its own affairs. She has delivered record low waiting times and protected the NHS from the creeping privatisation of the UK Government. As Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities, she will have a lead role in our programme for economic recovery. With responsibility for Government strategy and the constitution, she will also lead in making the positive case for Scotland's future.

"Alex Neil has delivered the biggest infrastructure investment programme in Scotland's history against a backdrop of budget cuts from Westminster. In taking forward Nicola Sturgeon's substantial achievements as Health Secretary, he will ensure that Scotland's health service continues to have the strongest possible leadership.

"In 2014, the people of Scotland will have the chance to seize the biggest opportunity in 300 years and ensure that Scotland's future is in Scotland's hands.

"Over the next two years, this Government will set out the positive case for independence and present the real choice facing Scotland's electorate between decisions about Scotland being taken by the people of Scotland or continued control from Westminster."

Thanking Mr Crawford for his work in Government, Alex Salmond said:

"Bruce Crawford is held in enormous respect not just by members of this Government but across all parties in the Parliament. Piloting a challenging legislative programme from Scotland's first minority government through the Scottish Parliament was undoubtedly one of the hardest jobs in Government but one he always performed effectively and with good humour.

"Mr Crawford's work on the Scotland Act and in preparing the Government for the forthcoming independence referendum has

been exemplary.

“His advice has been of considerable benefit not just to this Government but to MSPs of all parties and, while he will be missed from the Cabinet table, I know he will continue to make a valuable contribution to the Scottish Parliament and to the people of Stirling.”

Paying tribute to Stewart Stevenson for his service, the First Minister said:

“I am particularly grateful for the work Mr Stevenson did around championing Scotland’s world leading climate change legislation and sharing Scotland’s ambition with other governments and countries worldwide to tackle this huge issue.

“Mr Stevenson brought a unique intelligence and approach to his portfolio which was both refreshing and effective. His work to advance the cause of Scottish independence as we head towards 2014 was tireless.”

Marking Mr Adam’s service, the First Minister said:

“Brian Adam’s talents as Chief Whip were absolutely essential to maintaining the Government in office and to ensuring we progressed our legislative programme. I warmly thank him for all he has done in serving the people of Scotland and advancing the cause of Scottish independence.”

Welcoming the four new Ministers to Government, Mr Salmond said:

“Margaret Burgess, Humza Yousaf, Joe Fitzpatrick and Paul Wheelhouse bring their own unique talents to this already strong Government and I look forward to working with them