Press release: Lengthy disqualification for director with a string of charity failures

Christopher John Stoddard, 68, from Ross on Wye, Herefordshire, was the director of CS Fundraising Limited (CSF).

CSF was incorporated in June 2008 and commenced to trade in late 2012 as a professional fundraiser for charities from premises in Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire.

The company took over the assets and contracts of an associated professional fundraising company that entered into formal insolvency proceedings in June 2012.

At its peak the company was sending out approximately 150,000 mail donation letters each month, on behalf of charities, for whom it acted as a direct marketing agency.

However, under sustained pressure from various sources, Mr Stoddard took the decision to cause the company to cease trading in November 2014 and on 19 December 2014 the company was placed into creditor's voluntary liquidation (CVL).

This brought to nine, the number of companies where Mr Stoddard had a significant role, to have gone into some form of insolvency.

An Insolvency Service investigation, which followed CSF's insolvency found, and Mr Stoddard admitted:

- causing CSF to solicit money from the general public in a way that was contrary to laws governing charities
- causing and/or allowing CSF to mislead the public in that the solicitation statement of the company did not comply with the requirements of charity laws
- between July 2013 and September 2014 he caused CSF to retain public donations of at least £125,634, which the company had received in its capacity as a professional fund-raiser on behalf of a charity
- that between July 2013 and December 2014 he breached the duty of trust owed to CS Fundraising in that he failed to act in the best interest of the company. He did so by allowing a conflict of interest to arise which caused a separate company, which he controlled, to earn revenues from the renting out of the mailing list of CS Fundraising without accounting for money due to CSF for the income earned. In addition, It has not been possible to ascertain the income received by the associated company

On 13 June 2018, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy accepted a disqualification undertaking from Christopher John

Stoddard, which prevents him from directly or indirectly becoming involved, without the permission of the court, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership, for nine and a half years.

Commenting on the ban, Martin Gitner, Martin Gitner, Deputy Head, Insolvent Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, said:

> Members of the public who donate their money to worthy causes need to be confident that all funds, less agreed costs, are forwarded by the professional fundraising companies employed by the charities.
>
> In this case, Mr Stoddard failed to fully adhere to legislation directly relevant to the business of his company, he failed to ensure that all due funds due to a charity were paid over and he failed to act in the best interests of the creditors of CS Fundraising Limited.
>
> Directors who engage in such conduct will be investigated and by the Insolvency Service and enforcement action taken to remove them from the market place.

Since 15 June 2010 Mr Stoddard has been director and/or major shareholder in nine companies that have entered into formal insolvency:

- CSDM: appointed as a director 13 Jan 2005; company entered administration 15 June 2010; company placed in CVL 15 June 2011
- Millfield Concepts: appointed as a director 8 May 1997; company placed into CVL 15 March 2011
- CSDM Response LLP: appointed as a director 11 June 2007; company placed into CVL 27 April 2011
- C S Incentive: appointed as a director 26 April 2007; company placed into CVL 3 July 2012
- CSDM Fundraising: appointed as a director 7 Dec 2009; company entered into administration 26 June 2013; placed into CVL 18 June 2014
- Listening People: appointed as a director 2 Oct 2012; resigned as director 27 June 2013; company placed into CVA 2 April 2014; company placed into CVL 13 November 2014
- CS Fundraising: appointed as a director 4 June 2008; company placed into CVL 19 Dec 2014
- Inspire Fundraising: appointed as director 18 March 2011; company entered administration 20 Jan 2015; company placed into CVL 22 Sept 2015
- Cleardata Direct Media: appointed as a director 28 July 2010; company placed into CVL 23 Oct 2015

Notes to editors

Christopher John Stoddard is of Ross-on-Wye and his date of birth is January 1950.

CS Fundraising Limited (Company Reg no. 06611490) was placed into creditor's voluntary liquidation on 19 Dec 2014.

In signing the undertaking, Mr Stoddard admitted:

- causing CS Fundraising Ltd to solicit monies from the general public in a way that was contrary to Section 59(1) of the Charities Act 1992
- causing and/or allowing CS Fundraising to mislead the public in that the solicitation statement of the company did not comply with the requirements of Section 60(1) of the Charities Act 1992
- between July 2013 and September 2014 he caused CS Fundraising to retain public donations of at least £125,634, which the company had received in its capacity as a professional fund-raiser on behalf of a charity
- that between July 2013 and December 2014 he breached the fiduciary duty owed to CS Fundraising in that he failed to act in the best interest of the company by allowing a conflict of interest to arise which caused a separate company that he controlled to earn revenues from the renting out of the mailing list of CS Fundraising without accounting for monies that were due to CS Fundraising for the income earned. In addition. It has not been possible to ascertain the income received by the associated company

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings. Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a range of other restrictions.

The Insolvency Service administers the insolvency regime, investigating all compulsory liquidations and individual insolvencies (bankruptcies) through the Official Receiver to establish why they became insolvent. It may also use powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK. In addition, the agency deals with disqualification of directors in corporate failures, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is available.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7674 6910 or 020 7596 6187

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

News story: Home Office announces revised immigration policy guidance for Grenfell relatives

Revised policy guidance for Grenfell relatives published today states that people with core participant status or those called to be a witness at the Inquiry who are already in the country, will be able to extend their stay in the UK for a further 6 months.

This is to provide certainty for relatives that they will be able to remain for the anticipated period of the Inquiry's oral evidence sessions.

Family members who are overseas with core participant status, who are required to attend or are called as a witness who apply for a visit visa, should also be assured that these applications will be considered quickly on a case by case basis, taking into account the compelling and compassionate circumstances.

Core participants are people or organisations, who have applied for that status because they have a significant interest in proceedings or could be subject to scrutiny. A core participant can be invited to participate during the Inquiry, for example by making statements or suggesting lines of questioning to be pursued.

The Immigration Minister, Caroline Nokes said:

> The Grenfell Tower fire was a tragedy that should never have happened. Our highest priority has been to ensure the survivors of the Grenfell Tower tragedy receive the support they need.
>
> We have always been clear that we will do everything we can to make sure that relatives who are required to provide evidence in person, or need to be in the UK to participate in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry are able to do so.
>
> That is why we have published this revised guidance today, to ensure those with Core Participant status are able to extend their stay.

Today's announcement builds on the Grenfell survivors' immigration policy

which was introduced in July last year to allow individuals with insecure immigration status who lost their homes in the fire to regularise their status and access support.

Later that year, it was announced that those qualifying under the policy will be able to apply for permanent residence in the UK after 5 years' lawful residence.

You can read further information relating to the fire at Grenfell Tower and the full Grenfell relatives' policy guidance on GOV.UK

Press release: The EU (Withdrawal) Bill receives Royal Assent

Today the EU (Withdrawal) Bill received Royal Assent from Her Majesty the Queen and became an Act of Parliament.

This historic Act will make sure the UK's laws – entwined with over 40 years of EU law – continue to work from the day we leave, ensuring a smooth and orderly exit.

It does this by transferring EU law into UK law where appropriate and creating temporary powers to correct the laws that will no longer operate appropriately.

Now that the Act has become law, the Government can start to use the powers in the Act to prepare our statute book for our exit from the EU. Work on this will begin in the coming weeks as Departments start to lay the relevant secondary legislation in Parliament.

This marks the next essential step in ensuring that the UK is ready for life after we have left the European Union.

Secretary of State for Exiting the EU, David Davis said:

> This is a landmark moment in our preparations for leaving the European Union.
>
> The EU (Withdrawal) Act is a vital piece of legislation that will ensure we have a functioning statute book for exit.
>
> Since the Bill was introduced in Parliament last year, MPs and

> peers have spent more than 250 hours debating its contents and more than 1,400 amendments have been tabled.
>
> We will now begin the work of preparing our statute book, using the provisions in this Act, to ensure we are ready for any scenario, giving people and businesses the certainty they need.

In total, it's expected that around 800 pieces of secondary legislation will be needed. As part of the first tranche to be laid, the Government will use powers in the Bill to repeal the European Union Act 2011 as agreed by Parliament.

Alongside this programme of secondary legislation, Departments are delivering on a further package of Bills which will deliver the more significant policy changes needed as a result of our exit from the EU.

Notice: CH62 3QB, SRL Performance Limited: environmental permit issued

The Environment Agency publish surrenders that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the surrender letter, decision document and site condition report evaluation template for:

- Operator name: SRL Performance Limited
- Installation name: Bromborough Metal Oxide Powder Plant
- Permit number: EPR/RP3130RD/S002

Statement to Parliament: Opening statement for CETA ratification debate

I beg to move that this House has considered the draft European Union (Definition of Treaties) (Canada Trade Agreement) Order 2018.

Mr Speaker, I am delighted that we have the opportunity once again to debate the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between the EU and Canada, known as CETA, and that it is taking place on the floor of this House. This

follows on from the thorough and constructive debate last year, and the overwhelming support shown by the full House in a subsequent deferred division of this House.

I note that a majority of those on the Labour opposition benches who voted in that division, chose rightly, to vote in favour of the agreement. I hope they will continue to do so. A vote for greater trade liberalisation, increased prosperity and closer relations with our Canadian friends and allies.

This debate comes at a crucial point in world trade with the potentially destructive rise in protectionist tendencies. Free trade is the means by which we have taken millions of people out of abject poverty. We must not put that progress into reverse.

We should also realise that trade is not an end in itself but a means to widen shared prosperity. That prosperity underpins social cohesion and in turn political stability. That political stability in turn provides the building blocks of our collective security.

We have an opportunity today to reaffirm Britain's commitment to the principles of free trade and the application of an international rules based system.

This government is clear that CETA is a good deal for Europe and a good deal for the UK. Our total trade with Canada already stood at £16.5 billion last year, up 6.4% on the previous year, with a services surplus of £1.9 billion.

And CETA is an agreement that will improve on this already strong economic partnership. It is an agreement that will potentially boost our GDP by hundreds of millions of pounds a year. It will bring down trade costs, boost trade and investment, promote jobs and growth, and increase our ability to access Canadian goods, services, and procurement markets, benefiting a wide range of UK businesses and consumers.

CETA is a comprehensive and ambitious agreement, the most comprehensive agreement that has so far come into force between the EU and an advanced partner economy.

Canada is an important strategic partner too. As one of the Five-Eyes grouping, a member of NATO, the Commonwealth, the G7 and G20, we have bonds that go far beyond just our trading relationship.

As this House will know, CETA was provisionally applied in September last year, removing 98% of the tariffs previously faced by UK businesses at the Canadian border. And already UK firms are benefiting.

We have seen drinks exporters such as Dorset's Black Cow Vodka and Kent based sparkling wine producer Hush Heath Estate improving their market access and profitability with the reductions in tariff and non-tariff barriers.

Also we are seeing new UK exporters to Canada. These include Seedlip Drinks, the world's first distilled non-alcoholic spirit. Under CETA they do not pay the 11% pre-CETA tariffs on their products.

And Moordale Foods who entered the Canadian market in March 2017 with assistance from DIT. Moordale were helped by CETA duty elimination. Pre-CETA their range would have been subject to duties of up to 12.5%. Their prices in Canada are now closer than ever to their (currency adjusted) domestic UK price. Moordale are in key places in Canadian gourmet food outlets, including the flagship Saks Fifth Avenue foodhall in Toronto.

In parallel, investment into the UK from Canada continues to grow. In 2016 Canada had £18.6 billion invested in the UK and we had £21.1 billion invested in Canada.

Ratifying CETA is also an important step towards our future trading relationship with Canada as we prepare to take advantage of the opportunities offered by our exit from the EU.

During the Prime Minister's visit to Canada in September last year, both she and Prime Minister Trudeau reiterated their intention to seek to swiftly and seamlessly transition CETA into a UK-Canada deal once the UK has left the EU. To ensure as seamless transition as possible they formally announced a Working Group to take this forward.

Officials from our 2 countries have already begun to meet to discuss transitioning CETA. It is important, as a first step, that we prevent a 'cliff edge' for British and Canadians businesses.

But of course, whilst we remain in the EU we continue to support the EU's ambitious trade agenda. Free trade is not a zero-sum game, but rather a win-win. Ratifying CETA will send a strong message about our determination to champion the cause of free trade, seek global trade liberalisation wherever we can, and to support the rules-based international trading system to deliver mutually beneficial outcomes.

This is a key part of the government's vision of delivering a prosperous and truly Global Britain as we leave the EU.

It is important to the UK that CETA is ratified successfully by all EU member states.

Because ratification by all EU member states is required for the treaty to enter fully into force. This will give greater certainty for Canadian and EU businesses that the agreement will continue on into the future.

Those areas that were not provisionally applied include a large part of the chapter on investment, including the new Investment Court System, on which there has been extensive discussion in Parliament and in wider civil society.

The UK supports the principle of investment protection and looks forward to engaging further with the Commission on the technical detail of the Investment Court System. We support the objectives of obtaining fair outcomes of claims, high ethical standards for arbitrators and increased transparency of tribunal hearings.

And I also want to be clear – investment protection provisions protect

investors from discriminatory or unfair treatment by a state. This includes protection of UK institutional investors, for example pension funds, where we have a duty to ensure that individual investments are protected. We have over 90 such agreements in place with other countries and there has never been a successful investor-state dispute settlement claim brought against the UK, nor has the threat of potential claims affected the government's legislative programme.

It is also important to note that the customary international right to regulate has been re-emphasised in this agreement.

Moreover, the agreement provides that member states should not reduce their labour and environmental standards to encourage trade and investment – ensuring our high standards are not affected by this agreement.

And let me also say this, nothing in CETA prevents the UK from regulating in the pursuit of legitimate public policy objectives.

This includes the NHS. The government has been absolutely clear that protecting the NHS is of the utmost importance for the UK. The delivery of public health services is safeguarded in the trade in services aspects of all EU free trade agreements (FTAs), including CETA.

Neither will anything in CETA prevent future governments from taking back into public ownership any services currently run by the private sector – the legal text makes this clear if honourable members opposite would like to read it.

In fact, robust protections in CETA are covered across a number of related articles and reservations in the text. A key article is Chapter 9, Article 9.2 (Cross Border Trade in Services) which excludes services supplied in the exercise of governmental authority from measures affecting trade in services.

In addition, in Annex II (Reservations Applicable in the European Union), the UK has gone beyond the EU-wide reservations and included additional national reservations for doctors, privately funded ambulances and residential health facilities and the majority of privately funded social services.

The UK government will continue to ensure that decisions about public services are made by the UK, and not our trade partners. This is a fundamental principle of our current and future trade policy.

Let me also say something on scrutiny. We have committed, through our White Paper published last year, that we will ensure appropriate Parliamentary scrutiny of trade agreements as we move ahead with our independent trade policy. The government can guarantee that Parliament will have a crucial role to play in the scrutiny and ratification of the UK's future trade agreements and we will bring forward proposals in due course.

And now I would like to provide further reassurance to this House of the government's ongoing commitment to openness and transparency. Indeed, we have scheduled a debate on the floor of the House of Commons on the EU-Japan EPA, which my Rt Hon Friend, the Minister for Trade Policy will be leading

straight after this debate. This is already over and above the engagement required for EU-only trade agreements.

Mr Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to make the case for CETA to Parliament, and to give the opportunity for full scrutiny of this important agreement, as the government has done for previous EU Free Trade Agreements.

During the implementation period, the United Kingdom will retain access to EU free trade agreements. But we will also be able to negotiate, sign and ratify new UK-only free trade agreements for the first time in more than 40 years. In doing so, we will safeguard the benefits achieved in CETA for UK businesses and consumers and lay a foundation for an even stronger relationship in the future.

Canada is a progressive, dependable and honest trading partner, committed – as we are – to the WTO and the international rules based system. This is an important time to show our commitment to a free trading Commonwealth, G7 and NATO ally.

Mr Speaker, I commend the order to the House.