

Press release: Fish kill costs Frome farmer Michael Aylesbury more than £22,000

A farmer was told to pay more than £22,000 for polluting a river in Frome, Somerset, killing nearly 2,000 fish.

Dairy farmer Michael Aylesbury, a director in Cross Keys Farm Ltd, pleaded guilty to causing an unpermitted water discharge which turned the river in Frome brown and smelly in May 2016, killing 1,700 fish, probably many more.

The pollution came from a slurry lagoon at Bollow Farm, Silver Lane, East Woodlands where it was overflowing into a ditch from an underground chamber that had not been fully sealed off. Making matters worse, a spillage from a slurry pumping operation days before also entered the same ditch, meant only to carry rainwater.

The reduced water quality and the river's polluted appearance hit local groups, like anglers, kayakers and swimmers, who had to suspend activities. Residents were also upset by the sight of distressed and dying fish.

The Environment Agency was alerted to the incident on 12 May 2016 and attempted to save the fish population by spraying hydrogen peroxide to restore dissolved oxygen levels in the water. The pollution was traced back to Bollow Farm the next day.



To save the fish, hydrogen peroxide was sprayed to restore the dissolved oxygen levels

Tasked with protecting water, land and biodiversity, the Environment Agency classified the incident as category one – the worst kind – which affected the watercourse for more than 6km and was obvious to the naked eye.

The defendant told investigating officers “he had nothing to hide and held his hands up to the pollution incident” and that he was sorry it had happened.

Bath Magistrates’ Court found Aylesbury to be negligent for not informing the Environment Agency about the initial spillage and fined him £3,000, a victim surcharge of £170 and ordered him to pay costs of £19,306.69 on 5 June 2017.

Environment officer Andy Grant said:

Our role as a regulator is to protect people and the environment and support sustainable growth. We work with business owners to create better places but when avoidable incidents like this happen, we take action.

Informing us of the initial spillage and keeping an eye on nearby watercourses are two simple actions the farmer could have taken which would have sped up our investigation and stopped the cause of the pollution sooner.

Last November we restocked 5,500 fish including chub, roach and bream at two locations in Frome and we continue working with our

partners including the Bristol Avon Rivers Trust, Frome Town Council, farmers and landowners to identify opportunities to enhance and protect the River Frome.

[News story: £260M job-sustaining contract for advanced identification system](#)

The system, called Mode-5 and developed for the MOD by UK-based company Leonardo, uses advanced cryptographic techniques and world-leading electronic technology to allow UK land, sea and air units to quickly identify friendly forces and operate safely alongside NATO allies across any battlefield.

Mode-5 IFF has been designed to give UK units a clear and secure view of potential threats and targets, providing a powerful cyber shield against jamming and interference intended to reduce vital situational awareness.

The contract will allow Leonardo to install the system in more than 350 units ranging from Royal Air Force's Sentry aircraft to the Royal Navy's Type 45 anti-air destroyers and the British Army's High Velocity Missile (HVM) multiple launcher system.

Minister for Defence Procurement Harriett Baldwin said:

This £260 million contract for battle-winning technology builds on decades of operational experience to keep UK pilots, soldiers and sailors safe on operations.

It is yet another example of the jobs and skills-sustaining impact of the Government's £178 billion equipment plan to supply the UK's armed forces with the best possible kit.

Less-advanced IFF systems have been used by nations all over the world since the 1940s. Mode-5 uses the same basic 'call-and-response' method as earlier systems, but significantly improves on them. Crucially, the system can easily interface with allied forces, reducing the risk of 'friendly fire' incidents between UK units and the units of other allies.

Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) Chief Executive Officer Tony Douglas said:

Advances in digital and cyber warfare mean that it's never been

more important for UK military forces to have the kind of confidence in their situational awareness that Mode-5 IFF instils.

The installation of this world-leading system will continue to give our fighting men and women a decisive edge on operations.

The new contract will cover the installation of Mode-5 on pieces of equipment that are in service already with the UK. New platforms coming into service in the future, including the Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, F-35 Lightning II combat aircraft and the new Apache AH64E Helicopters are being fitted with Mode-5 under separate contracts over the course of their construction.

News story: Accelerator face-to-face meetings: 20 July 2017 in Cambridge

These 30-minute face-to-face meetings give you the opportunity to discuss your innovative research idea with Accelerator staff in private.

The Accelerator funds innovative proof-of-concept research that could lead to a cost-effective capability advantage for UK armed forces and national security. This is through the enduring competition or specific themed competitions.

Before you come to your meeting please prepare by thinking about:

- what is your research idea?
- what do you think is the military benefit?
- will it save time/costs, improve capability/performance/reliability?
- why should MOD invest in this work?
- what will your approach be?
- how will you structure your research?
- what will you deliver?
- what evidence will you produce?
- what will the impact of your research be?
- how will you demonstrate progress towards the claimed benefit?

The main purpose of this meeting is for you to ask questions, and most importantly, receive advice from the team, so please leave time for this during your 30 minutes.

Spaces will be on a first-come, first-served basis and an organisation should only register once. The Accelerator is part of the [Defence Science and Technology Laboratory \(Dstl\)](#) and only funds novel, high-risk, high-potential-benefit research.

If your proposal is a product that is already used in the defence and security market, you should speak to the [Defence Suppliers Service](#), or see other ways of [how to sell to Dstl](#).

The Accelerator team hold regular regional meetings. Join our [Accelerator LinkedIn group](#) for notification of future meetings.

[Statement to Parliament: Home Secretary statement on recent terrorist attacks](#)

With permission Mr Speaker, I would like to make a statement about the terrorist attacks we have seen since Parliament last sat.

There has been no summer like it.

When we rose seven weeks ago, we left this House in the wake of the worst terrorist attack our country had seen in over a decade. With Khalid Masood trying to strike at the heart of our democracy.

He was foiled that day by one of our brave police officers. But tragically it has proved to be the first of many attempts to bring terror and hate to our streets.

Two months later, a cowardly and devastating attack in Manchester left 22 people dead and 59 injured after a suicide bomber targeted children at a concert in the Manchester Arena.

On the 3rd of June, a van was deliberately driven into pedestrians on London Bridge before three men got out of the vehicle and began stabbing people in nearby Borough market. Eight people were killed and 48 injured.

And then on Monday, almost exactly one year after Jo Cox was brutally murdered in Birstall, we woke to the news of the return of far right terror, when a man viciously drove into a group of Muslim worshippers in North London. One man who had fallen ill before the attack died and nine others were treated in hospital.

Westminster. The Manchester Arena. London Bridge. And now Finsbury Park.

36 innocent people dead and over 150 hospitalised. A tragic loss of innocent life.

Last week I met a mother and father who had lost their daughter in the vicious attacks on London Bridge. She had been stabbed while out celebrating her new job with a friend in Borough Market.

Just under two weeks before, she planned to be at the arena in Manchester where Salman Abedi committed his heinous crimes, but she decided not to use her ticket.

She had come to London to enjoy a wonderful trip away, a once in a lifetime experience. But instead it was the last trip she ever made.

I know everyone in this House will want to join me in expressing our sorrow for the pain her family will be feeling. And all those families who have lost loved ones.

As well as passing on our thoughts and prayers for those victims who are still trying to recover from the trauma and tragedy of these events.

I also know that the House will want to join me in acknowledging the incredible efforts of our emergency services during this difficult period.

The events of recent months serve to remind us of the bravery, professionalism and, above all, incredible sacrifice made by those who work to keep us safe.

As Home Secretary there is nothing more saddening than standing before Parliament to deliver a statement like this.

These acts of terrorism represent the very worst of humanity. They seek to spread fear, intolerance, hate.

Countering this threat has always been a crucial part of the work of this government. That's why we have introduced measures to disrupt the travel of foreign fighters. That's why we have passed the Investigatory Powers Act which gives the police and intelligence service more powers and tools that they need to keep the public safe. And that's why just seven weeks ago we legislated to strengthen our response to terrorist financing with the Criminal Finances Act.

We have also protected overall police funding in real terms since 2015, increased counter-terrorism budgets and funded an uplift in armed police officers. We are now in the process of recruiting over 1,900 additional security and intelligence staff.

The Channel programme, which offers voluntary tailored programmes of support to people assessed as being at risk of radicalisation, has supported over 1,000 at risk individuals since 2012.

And following referrals from the Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit, social media providers have removed 270,000 pieces of illegal terrorist material since February 2010. But we are entering a new phase of global terrorism and many of the challenges we are facing are unprecedented.

We now believe we are experiencing a new trend in the threat we face. Between June 2013 and the Westminster Bridge attack in March this year, the security services foiled 13 plots linked to or inspired by Islamist extremists. But since just then, we have seen 5 plots prevented as well as 3 such Islamist

extremist plots succeeding and the appalling attack of course on Finsbury Park earlier this week. We must do more.

We must do more to defeat ideologies of hatred by turning people's minds away from violence and towards pluralistic British values.

We must make sure that these ideologies are not able to flourish in the first place.

We must do more to force tech companies to take down terror-related content from their platforms.

And we must also do more to identify, challenge and stamp out the extremism that lurks in our communities.

That is why we will be setting up a Commission for Countering Extremism. For just as the Labour government in the 1970s set us on a course to tackling racial inequality in this country by setting up the Commission for Racial Equality, we need – and must – do more to tackle these extremists who seek to radicalise and weaponise young people in Britain today.

Doing more also means asking difficult questions about what has gone wrong. In light of the terrorist attacks in London and Manchester, Britain's counter-terrorism strategy will be reviewed to make sure that the police and the security services have what they need to keep us safe.

In addition to this, there will be a review of the handling of recent terror attacks to look at whether lessons can be learned about our approach. I am pleased to announce that David Anderson, former Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation will be overseeing it.

Mr Speaker, what we have witnessed in Manchester and in London are the depraved actions of murderers, intent to tear our country apart. But each act of hate has been met by overwhelming defiance.

In Borough Market recently, I saw stallholders dishing out olives into plastic pots, shoppers searching for delicious treats and tourists flicking through guidebooks in the shadow of the Shard. Rather than being divided by recent violence, people seemed ever closer together.

We should follow the example of the traders and the shoppers of Borough Market.

What terrorists want is for us to fear and turn in on one another.

But we will never give terrorists what they want.

We will stand together and we will make the point that terrorists will never win. That our values, our country, our unity will prevail.

I commend this statement to the House.

[News story: Immigration minister visits Heathrow Airport](#)

The minister, who was appointed to his new post following the recent general election, was met and briefed by Border Force Director General Sir Charles Montgomery on the crucial part officers play in protecting the UK border.

He also witnessed the Heathrow Joint Border Force policing team conducting tarmac work, which included an aircraft being searched, and was given an overview of arrivals controls including e-gates.

He also observed roving officers with responsibility for safeguarding and modern slavery, as well as officers trained in forgery and impostor detections.

The visit concluded with a demonstration of detection activity in the customs channels, including x-ray scanning equipment for drug swallows and witnessing detector dogs at work.

[Immigration Minister Brandon Lewis](#)

Immigration Minister Brandon Lewis said:

Seeing frontline Border Force officers in action at Heathrow showed me what an important job they do in keeping our country safe and secure from illicit people and goods.

I am also very grateful to Sir Charles and other officers for sharing their invaluable expertise with me. This was an extremely interesting visit which gave me an insight into the tremendous variety of work which goes on at Heathrow.

I am excited to be taking on the immigration and borders brief for the Home Office and look forward to working with staff to achieve our goals together.

The minister also met Heathrow Chief Executive John Holland-Kaye during the visit.