

[Press release: Mismanaged charity shows signs of improvement following regulator's inquiry](#)

The Charity Commission has today (08 March 2019) published a [report](#) of the findings of its statutory inquiry into [One Nation](#), a charity with objects to provide relief of hardship to people around the world.

The inquiry, which was [opened on 16 November 2016](#), uncovered serious unmanaged risks, and concluded that there had been misconduct and/or mismanagement in the administration of the charity. Other failings by the trustees meant that volunteers with declared convictions and motoring offences were allowed to participate in aid convoys, despite the Commission previously alerting charities to the risks of aid convoys. The trustees also failed to account for all of the charity's income, including the contents of containers sent to Syria.

The inquiry also found that there had been unauthorised trustee benefit of around £13,000 due to the employment of a former trustee in a senior management position. There was no evidence that this conflict of interest was properly managed, and the trustees failed to obtain necessary consent from the Commission.

Furthermore, despite claiming that it operates a '100% donation policy', the trustees had failed to account correctly for restricted funds, and provided incorrect information to the Commission in the charity's accounts for the financial years ending 30 September 2014, 2015 and 2016, which did not comply with charity law.

The Commission had concerns about the charity before it was registered, and provided regulatory advice and guidance on several occasions to its trustees. The trustees failed to act on this advice and the investigation found numerous breaches of trustee duty – including a lack of review and scrutiny of individuals involved with the charity and failure to act responsibly or diligently.

The inquiry therefore issued an Order under Section 84 of the Charities Act 2011 directing the trustees to take a number of actions to improve the governance of the charity. As a result of the Commission's Order, the trustees have evidenced some improvements in the way the charity is run, including its recruitment and assessment of volunteers, due diligence on partners, and accounting for aid donated to the charity. The charity no longer organises or participates in aid convoys.

Michelle Russell, Director of Investigations, Monitoring and Enforcement at the Charity Commission said:

At the time of opening our inquiry the governance and administration of this charity was inadequate. By failing to carry out appropriate checks or act responsibly, these trustees exposed their charity to serious undue risk, undermining the purposes for which this charity was established and falling short of what the public expect of a charity.

These risks could have been easily avoided through better management and administration of the charity. Our intervention has shone a light on past failings and led to improvements in the charity's governance. We expect the trustees to continue to strengthen the charity's operations so that the charity can maximise its impact on people's lives.

We want to see charities inspire trust and make a valued difference to the communities they serve; this inquiry highlights the importance of robust management, oversight and due diligence in achieving that.

The regulator has issued further regulatory advice to address some remaining deficiencies in relation to the charity's accounts and policy documents.

The full report is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

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