

Press release: New charity investigation: Anaya Aid

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has opened a statutory inquiry into Anaya Aid, registered charity number 1152971. The inquiry was opened on 5 June 2017.

Anaya Aid has objects to provide humanitarian aid internationally during emergency or disastrous situations.

In December 2015, the Commission was made aware by police that a trustee and a former trustee of Anaya Aid were stopped by UK Ports Officers and approximately £5000 in cash belonging to the charity was seized. Although these funds were later returned to the charity, the Commission advised the trustees of the inherent risks involved in cash couriership and the need to safeguard the charity's funds. In April 2017, the Commission was again informed by police that the same trustee of the charity was stopped by UK Ports Officers where cash totaling €23,000 and £1,500 belonging to the charity was seized. These funds are subject to a cash detention order and are at risk of loss in the event of a successful forfeiture application.

The 2017 cash seizure came despite the Commission having previously provided the trustees with regulatory advice and guidance against cash couriership, which was not followed.

Furthermore, the Commission has previously carried out 3 compliance visits at the charity's premises due to a range of regulatory concerns, particularly in relation to the charity's work in Syria and the partners it has used. The trustees were issued with an action plan to address these concerns but failed to comply with all of its requirements.

The trustees have put charity funds at risk of loss on a number of occasions, and have failed to comply with the Commission's regulatory advice and guidance. The Commission has therefore opened a statutory inquiry to take further regulatory action. The Commission has issued an order under section 84 of the Charities Act 2011 directing the trustees to take specific actions within set timeframes and issued a further order under section 76(3)(f) of the act restricting certain transactions that the trustees can enter into without the Commission's prior consent.

In order to thoroughly address these concerns, the investigation will look at:

- whether the trustees have put the charity's funds at risk by allowing a trustee of the charity to carry the charity's funds in cash whilst travelling via a convoy
- the inability of the trustees to adequately account for the end use of the charity's aid and funds which are applied, on the charity's behalf, through partners

- the trustees' failure to fully comply with regulatory advice and guidance issued by the Commission over the course of its engagement with the charity's trustees
- the administration, governance and management of the charity by the trustees

The Commission recently [issued an alert](#) to charities strongly advising against the use of cash couriers.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. [Reports of previous inquiries](#) by the Commission are available on GOV.UK.

The charity's details can be viewed on the Commission's [online charity search tool](#).

Ends

PR 54/17

Notes to editors

1. [The Charity Commission](#) is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).
2. Search for charities on our [online register](#).
3. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the Commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.
4. The Commission's decision to announce the opening of a statutory inquiry is based on whether it is in the public interest to do so and with consideration of our objective to increase public trust and confidence in charities.