

Press release: West Midlands employment agency director banned

Sukhjit Sohal Singh, who was director of temporary staff employment agency Phoenix Midlands Ltd, has been disqualified for seven years for failing to adhere to licencing standards.

He signed a Disqualification Undertaking which bans him from acting as a company director or from managing, or in any way controlling, a limited company from 5 September 2017 until 4 September 2024.

Singh was a director of Phoenix Midlands Limited, a temporary employment agency that went into Creditors' Voluntary Liquidation on 13 November 2015 owing £841,566 to creditors.

Between 13 June 2013 and at least 5 February 2015, Singh failed to ensure that Phoenix Midlands Limited complied with Licensing Standards set out by the Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA), the regulatory body. In particular, he was deemed "not fit and proper" to hold a GLA licence, as he not been candid and truthful in all dealings with them. In addition, he had not demonstrated a readiness and willingness to comply with the requirements and standards of the regulatory system and with other legal, regulatory and professional requirements and standards. The GLA licence was therefore revoked.

Aldona O'Hara, Chief Investigator of Insolvent Investigations Midlands & West at the Insolvency Service, said:

When directors of a company do not comply with legislation that is designed to protect employees, and avoidable losses result, the Insolvency Service will fully investigate the circumstances and take action where appropriate.

These disqualifications send a clear message that exploitation of vulnerable workers will not be tolerated.

Notes to editors

Sukhjit Sohal Singh's date of birth is November 1975 and he currently resides at Rowley Regis, West Midlands.

Phoenix Midlands Limited (CR0 No. 08567826) was incorporated on 13 June 2013 and traded from Suite 508C, Hawthorns Business Centre, Halfords Lane, Smethwick, West Midlands, B66 1BB

Sukhjit Sohal Singh was appointed director from 13 June 2013 to 13 November

2015 (the date of Creditors' Voluntary Liquidation).

The seven year Disqualification Undertaking was accepted by the Secretary of State on 15 August 2017 and commenced on 5 September 2017.

The matter of unfitness, which Singh was found to have been in breach of were:

- Between 13 June 2013 and at least 05 February 2015, he failed to ensure that Phoenix Midlands Limited adhered to Licensing Standards as provided for by the Gang-Masters (Licensing Authority) regulations 2005.
- Singh was the sole appointed director of PML from 13 June 2013 (the date of incorporation) to 13 November 2015 (when Phoenix entered Creditors' Voluntary Liquidation). The company commenced trading as of 11 December 2013 supplying temporary workers.
- On 26 June 2013, Phoenix applied for a gangmasters licence and on 11 October 2013 a license was granted with two additional licence conditions.
- On 05 February 2014, a compliance inspection was conducted by officers of the GLA. A report dated 14 March 2014, stated that Singh was deemed as being not "fit and proper" to hold a GLA licence as Phoenix was in critical breach of several licensing standards. The breaches referred to the following:
 1. Singh had not been candid and truthful in all dealings with the regulatory body (GLA) and he had not demonstrated a readiness and willingness to comply with the requirements and standards of the regulatory system and with other legal, regulatory and professional requirements and standards;
 2. he had been influenced by a third party who the GLA considered not to be "fit and proper";
 3. he did not have sufficient understanding of the GLA Licensing standards and/or has sufficient management processes;
 4. The company was not registered with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in respect of income tax and National Insurance;
 5. PAYE/NIC had not been calculated and deducted from the workers wages which was a direct contravention of the licensing standards requirement of HMRC.

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, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

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