

Regulator finds misconduct and mismanagement as statutory inquiry into Human Appeal concludes

Press release

The Charity Commission's statutory inquiry into Human Appeal has found failures in the charity's governance.



[Human Appeal](#) was set up for the prevention or relief of poverty or financial hardship anywhere in the world. The charity's stated work includes providing emergency and relief programmes overseas.

The statutory inquiry was opened after the Commission became aware of a number of regulatory concerns including that a warehouse belonging to the charity in Syria had been temporarily seized by a proscribed terrorist organisation, and that three of the charity's trucks had been stopped in Syria and held for several hours by an armed group – neither of these incidents had been reported in a timely manner to the Commission or to other relevant authorities. The charity's then auditors had also raised concerns over compliance with local tax laws in Turkey where the charity operated.

This inquiry identified a number of failures by the then trustees and executive including not complying with the charity's own policies regarding reporting the incidents in Syria, failing to undertake adequate due diligence on some significant donations and partners, and failing to ensure compliance with local tax laws in Greece. The inquiry also established that the trustees failed in their legal duty to file statutory returns with the Commission by the required deadline.

The inquiry concluded that there had been misconduct and/or mismanagement in the administration of the charity by its then trustees and identified that a significant factor in the misconduct and/or mismanagement was insufficient oversight of the charity's executive by the then trustees.

Steve Roake, Head of Compliance Visits and Inspections at the Charity

Commission, said:

Good governance is not a bureaucratic detail – it underpins the delivery of a charity’s purposes to the high standards expected by the public.

Our inquiry found that the then trustees of Human Appeal did not have the oversight needed regarding the activities of their charity.

While trustees of larger charities will delegate certain tasks to staff members, we and the law are clear that trustees retain ultimate responsibility for running their charity. and our guidance is clear that trustees must ensure that robust reporting procedures are in place. Responsibility for ensuring they have sufficient information and are adequately informed to make decisions rests with the charity trustees.

The report acknowledges that during the inquiry, the current trustees have made significant improvements to the governance of the charity. This includes changes in key personnel in both the trustee board and the executive, and other improvements in governance.

Read the [full report of the inquiry into Human Appeal](#).

Ends

Notes to Editors:

1. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.

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