

# Press release: New campaign targets cartels as tip offs rise by third

The increase follows a previous Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) campaign targeting this illegal behaviour.

The CMA is now launching a [new campaign](#) to encourage more people to come forward with information that will help it hunt out illegal cartels. The campaign is part of a ramping up of the CMA's enforcement activity and comes after the award of an extra £2.8m from the government for this work.

Cartels are businesses which cheat their customers by agreeing not to compete with each other so that they can keep their prices high. There are serious penalties for being in a cartel, but many workers in the UK know little about them, putting them and their companies at risk.

The new campaign encourages people to be "Safe, not Sorry" if they think they may have involved themselves in cartel activity and to make sure they are the first to report it to the CMA. Witnesses – those not involved themselves but who have seen something untoward – are also asked to "Do the Right Thing" by reporting it to the CMA.

The CMA saw a 30% increase in tip offs in 2017, following the launch of the CMA's first digital campaign.

As part of the new campaign, the CMA is reminding people that, if they come forward with information about their involvement, they can receive significant reductions in fines and avoid being disqualified from running a company. If they are the first to come forward, they can receive total immunity, including from criminal prosecution. Witnesses who blow the whistle can receive a reward of up to £100,000.

Stephen Blake, Senior Director for Cartels at the CMA, said:

We are committed to tackling cartels wherever we find them. More people are reporting illegal activity to us and we urge anyone with information to come forward. If you're involved, it's better to be safe, not sorry and to tell us about it first – before someone else does.

For those who were not involved but have witnessed illegal activity, we urge them to do the right thing. We know that this is a sensitive issue and some people could worry about what might happen to them if they speak to us. All information is treated confidentially and we can discuss any concerns that people may have over keeping their identity secret.

Francesca West, Chief Executive at whistleblowing charity Public Concern at

Work, which is backing the “Safe, not Sorry” campaign, said:

We know from our experience that speaking up isn’t easy, but it is often the only way to prevent further harm. It is encouraging the CMA has seen a 30% rise in people coming forward to report the illegal behaviour of cartels.

Over the past two years, the CMA has issued £151m in fines following successful investigations into anti-competitive practices and it is currently investigating 15 cases where competition law may have been broken.

The new campaign will target a range of industries that are at a greater risk of cartels forming. These sectors include: construction, manufacturing and business support services. These are sectors that have either a history of reported cartel activity or characteristics that make them vulnerable to cartels.

Recent cases where the CMA has taken enforcement action include:

- [Water tank firms fined over £2.6 million](#), after they formed a cartel to divide up customers and fix minimum prices for tanks used in large construction projects (such as, schools and hospitals).
- [Somerset estate agents fined over £370,000](#) for fixing the minimum prices of their commission rates, meaning that local home owners were denied a fair deal when selling their property.
- [Amazon marketplace seller fined over £160,000](#) and director disqualified from running a company after agreeing to fix the prices of popular posters and frames with a competitor. The competitor contacted the CMA to report the cartel activity and received immunity.

If you have witnessed a cartel or have been involved in a cartel and wish to apply for leniency, call: 0203 738 6888 (witnessed); 0203 738 6833 (leniency). For more information, visit the [Stop Cartels](#) webpage or view the CMA’s [video guidance](#).

## Notes to Editor

1. The CMA is the UK’s primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law. For CMA updates, follow us on Twitter [@CMAgovuk](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Youtube](#) and [Flickr](#).
2. Businesses found to have been involved in illegal cartels can be fined up to 10% of their annual turnover. Individuals can face up to 5 years in prison and directors can be disqualified from holding director positions for up to 15 years. These can be reduced or eliminated altogether where a business or individual reports their involvement in a cartel and co-operates fully with the CMA’s investigation.
3. The campaign encourages people to visit the CMA’s designated ‘[Stop](#)

[Cartels](#)' page which features videos, short guides and case studies to explain what cartels are and how people can report them. The campaign page can be found at: [www.gov.uk/stopcartels](http://www.gov.uk/stopcartels)

4. [Public Concern at Work](#) is a dedicated whistleblowing charity that offers independent and confidential advice to workers who are unsure whether or how to raise a public interest concern. It operates an advice line managed by qualified lawyers with a wealth of experience in whistleblowing law and practice. To contact Public Concern at Work, call 020 7404 6609.
5. Enquiries should be directed to the CMA press team at [press@cma.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:press@cma.gsi.gov.uk) or 020 3738 6191.

---

## [Press release: Report 03/2018: Trailer runaway near Hope, Derbyshire](#)

PDF, 8.65MB, 37 pages

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email [enquiries@raib.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@raib.gov.uk). Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

### **Summary**

At around 06:30 hrs on Sunday 28 May 2017, a trailer, being propelled by a small rail tractor between Edale and Bamford, became detached and ran away for a distance of around 1 mile (1.6 km). It came to a stop at a set of points at Earles Sidings, near Hope. There were no injuries that required medical attention, and there was no significant damage to the infrastructure, the trailer or the tractor.

The tractor and trailer became separated because the towbar pin fell out. A lynch pin that secured the towbar pin had almost certainly been inserted in the wrong orientation. This would have resulted in it falling out, allowing the towbar pin to fall out and the towbar to become uncoupled.

The subsequent runaway occurred because the brakes on the trailer had been manually disabled by the staff present, to overcome them being stuck in the applied position. It is likely that this was because the hydraulic brake hose between the tractor and the trailer had either been not connected or incorrectly connected at the start of the shift.

### **Recommendations**

The RAIB has made three recommendations to Network Rail as a result of this

investigation. One relates to providing staff with guidance on what actions to take if a trailer becomes immobilised when being used. The second relates to management of staff competence at the depot involved in the incident. The third relates to learning lessons from multiple non-compliances during use of the plant.

The RAIB has also identified two learning points, relating to the precautions required when isolating trailer brakes and to the requirements to carry out a full set of brake tests prior to use.

**Simon French, Chief Inspector of Rail Accidents said:**

In 2004, four men died when they were hit by a runaway trolley on the west coast main line near Tebay. The brakes on that trolley had been deliberately disabled, and two of the people responsible were subsequently convicted of manslaughter and sent to gaol. It's therefore very worrying for RAIB when we hear of runaway trolleys and other items of plant, because we know just how silent and deadly they can be.

On the Hope Valley line on 28 May 2017, the runaway trailer did not hit anything and there were no serious consequences. However, one of the factors which caused the incident was that the trailer's brakes had been disabled. This may have been done with the best of intentions, to keep the job running, but if the potential consequences had been considered, it should never have been contemplated. Just testing the set-up properly before starting to use the tractor unit and its trailer would have shown what was wrong. The whole episode, as our report shows, was a saga arising from lack of training, care, and caution.

I hope that everyone who works with on-track plant and machinery will take note of the lessons from this report, and never again be tempted to cut corners while using equipment on the line.

**Notes to editors**

1. The sole purpose of RAIB investigations is to prevent future accidents and incidents and improve railway safety. RAIB does not establish blame, liability or carry out prosecutions.
2. RAIB operates, as far as possible, in an open and transparent manner. While our investigations are completely independent of the railway industry, we do maintain close liaison with railway companies and if we discover matters that may affect the safety of the railway, we make sure that information about them is circulated to the right people as soon as possible, and certainly long before publication of our final report.
3. For media enquiries, please call 01932 440015.

**Newsdate: 19 February 2018**

---

## [News story: Implementation of the Trade Mark Directive 2015](#)

A [consultation on changes to UK trade mark law](#) has launched. These changes result from the [Trade Mark Directive 2015](#) which helps to minimise the differences between national and EU trade mark systems.

The changes we plan to make are consistent with the Directive. They include:

- removing the requirement for a trade mark to be presented graphically. Marks then could be filed in contemporary file formats, like moving images, provided they are presented in a clear and precise manner
- restricting the scope of the 'own name' defence against infringement to individuals only
- removing expired trade marks from the definition of an 'earlier trade mark'

This will make the framework across Europe more accessible and effective for business, to support innovation and economic growth. It will also future proof the system in terms of file formats.

We seek views on how we should make these changes. We have also included a draft statutory instrument, which sets out the proposed changes in detail.

If you have any comments on any aspects of the consultation please send them to [TMDirective@ipo.gov.uk](mailto:TMDirective@ipo.gov.uk) before 16 April 2018.

---

## [Press release: Illegal angler hooks £600 penalty](#)

Anglers are being urged to obey the law after a Lincolnshire man was ordered to pay more than £600 for fishing illegally.

Shaun Hammond, 28, of Mariners Arms Flats, Keadby, was caught fishing without a licence at Hibaldstow Bridge on the River Ancholme in October last year.

He was discovered by an Environment Agency enforcement officer carrying out a routine patrol to enforce the law and protect the environment for people and wildlife.

Hammond committed an additional offence by refusing to give his name and

address to the officer.

Enforcement officers are considered in law to be the same as police constables. Obstructing one effectively doubled the amount Mr Hammond was fined.

Hammond was proved guilty in absence at Grimsby Magistrates' Court on 9 February. He was fined £440 – £220 for each offence – and ordered to pay costs of £127, as well as a victim surcharge of £44, bringing the total penalty to £611.

Caroline Tero, fisheries team leader at the Environment Agency, said:

Not only was Mr Hammond fishing illegally, he also obstructed a law enforcement officer who was doing his duty to protect the environment for people and wildlife. We and the courts take this very seriously and will always look to protect the wellbeing of our officers.

It makes no sense to have the embarrassment of a court visit, a criminal conviction and a bill for potentially thousands of pounds when an annual licence is currently just £30. We hope this will make people think twice before picking up a rod illegally and if they don't, our officers are ready and waiting.

Steve Powell, Enforcement Once team manager for the Environment Agency, said:

The case acts as a reminder of the importance of having a fishing licence – and shows how seriously the courts take these offences. We hope the outcome will deter any angler who is thinking of fishing without a licence.

The yearly fishing licence Mr Hammond required would have cost just £30. Other types of licence are available, including one-day for £6, eight-day for £12, and a free one for those aged 12 to 16.

The money from licence sales supports fish, fisheries and fishing, and protects the future of angling. A small number of people refuse to buy one, cheating the sport and their fellow anglers.

For the minority who flout the rules, the most common offence is fishing without a valid licence, which could land them with a fine of up to £2,500 and a criminal record.

Last year in England, the Environment Agency checked more than 63,000 fishing licences and prosecuted 2,330 for rod and line offences, resulting in fines in excess of £335,000.

Any angler aged 12 or over, fishing on a river, canal or still water needs a licence. They are available online via gov.uk or by calling the Environment Agency on 0344 800 5386.

Anyone with information about suspected illegal fishing activities can contact the Environment Agency Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

---

## **Press release: UK Visa Services now at your doorstep in Bangladesh**

The Dhaka ODMV is part of UK Visas and Immigration's proactive approach to constant improvement in customer service.

The ODMV uses the UK Visas and Immigration's mobile Biometric Enrolment System (BES) equipment to take biometric data (finger scans and digital photograph). This service is delivered by the UK Visas and Immigration's commercial partner, VFS Global.

### **Alison Blake, British High Commissioner, said:**

"UK Visas and Immigration seeks constantly to improve the service we offer. I am delighted to announce that the UK is the first country to launch the VFS Global mobile facility in Bangladesh.

"This service allows Bangladeshis to submit their visa application and biometric data outside our current network of Visa Application Centres.

"For customers in Dhaka, it means they no longer have to travel to the Visa Application Centre in Dhaka to submit their applications.

"Bangladesh and Britain are close friends and partners and this development is a further step in enabling stronger people-to-people relationships."

### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

On Demand Mobile Visa service is optional and applicants will have to pay an additional fee.