

News story: UK Government bids to unlock new markets for scotch whisky

Scottish Secretary David Mundell met with representatives of the Scotch Whisky Association and Diageo at the iconic Caol Ila distillery on Islay, to discuss how the UK Government is laying the groundwork to reduce export tariffs on Scottish produce.

Whisky is worth around £5 billion to the UK economy, and accounts for three quarters of Scotland's total food and drink exports. The UK Government is ensuring that, as we leave the EU, the industry is able to tackle tariffs and boost overseas sales.

The Department for International Trade has already established 11 working groups to strengthen trade and commercial ties with key trading partners around the world, including the United States, Australia, China, India, Mexico, South Korea and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Ministerial trade dialogues have also been established with Taiwan, Vietnam, India, Kazakhstan and Brazil.

Mr Mundell said:

Scotch whisky is a world-class product, globally recognised for its quality and heritage, and the industry employs thousands of people in Scotland and around the rest of the UK.

We are determined to open up new markets around the world for the very best whisky our distillers have to offer – and to drive down any tariffs they face.

By strengthening ties with key partners, identifying new markets and tackling tariffs, the UK Government is paving the way towards an even brighter future for Scotland's whisky industry.

David Mundell tours the Caol Ila Distillery

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox said:

With the recent uplift in trade, we should raise a glass to our exporting success and further help UK businesses make the most of an ever-growing demand for top-selling British products such as scotch whisky as part of a Global Britain.

Reducing the costs for companies to sell overseas will become one way of further opening up free trade routes and boosting sales, and that's why I've tasked my international economic department to look at how we can support more businesses to build their brands abroad.

For scotch whisky, export tariffs currently range from zero to over 150 per cent. The UK Government is looking at how future trade agreements could reduce export tariffs for iconic Scottish goods such as scotch, smoked salmon and gin.

Mr Mundell also visited the building site of the Ardnahoe distillery, set to be the ninth distillery operating on Islay when it opens in 2018. Overlooking the Sound of Islay and Paps of Jura, it will bring even more jobs to Scotland's third biggest industry, which already employs more than 7000 people in Scotland's rural communities.

Touring the site of the Ardnahoe Distillery

Karen Betts, Scotch Whisky Association chief executive, said:

The scotch whisky industry is delighted that the Scottish Secretary, David Mundell, is visiting Islay. He'll see the fascinating Islay distilleries, famous for their smoky malts. He'll see too the importance of the scotch whisky industry to Islay's local communities, and how whisky production there contributes more broadly to the Scottish and UK economies.

Notes:

The Scotch Whisky Association published a report at the beginning of this year on its economic impact in the UK, estimating that:

- Scotch Whisky adds £3.2 billion of value to the UK economy and a further £1.7 billion through indirect and induced impacts
- 10,800 people are directly employed in the industry with a further 29,300 indirect and induced jobs
- Around 90-95 per cent of these impacts are in Scotland with 5-10 per cent in the rest of the UK.

Press release: Takeaway director disqualified for 6 years after employing illegal workers

India Gate was the trading name of Chi Spice Limited.

On 6 July, the Secretary of State accepted a disqualification undertaking from Mr Ahmed, effective from 27 July 2017, for six years.

The disqualification prevents Mr Ahmed from directly or indirectly becoming

involved in the promotion, formation or management of a limited company until July 2023.

Mr Ahmed's disqualification follows an investigation by the Insolvency Service, which found he had failed to comply with statutory obligations under immigration law; specifically that he failed to ensure relevant immigration checks were completed and documents retained, resulting in the employment of an illegal worker and consequently in a penalty notice of £15,000 being issued by the Home Office.

Chi Spice Limited and was placed into Liquidation on 18 August 2016, with an estimated deficiency to creditors in excess of £55,000.

Robert Clarke, Senior Investigator, said:

The Insolvency Service rigorously pursues directors who fail to pay fines imposed by the government for breaking employment and immigration laws. We have worked closely in this case with our colleagues at the Home Office to achieve this disqualification.

The director sought an unfair advantage over his competitors by employing individuals who did not have the right to work in the UK in breach of his duties as a director.

The public has a right to expect that those who break the law will face the consequences. Running a limited company, means you have statutory protections as well as obligations. If you fail to comply with your obligations then the Insolvency Service will investigate you.

A Home Office spokesperson said:

Illegal working is not victimless. It undercuts honest employers, cheats legitimate job seekers out of employment opportunities and defrauds the taxpayer.

Businesses should be aware that they have a duty to check that their staff have permission to work in the UK.

We are happy to work with employers who play by the rules but those who do not, should know that they will not go under our radar.

Notes to editors

Mr Ahmed's date of birth is 31 March 1973 and he resides in Portsmouth.

Chi Spice Limited (CRO No. 08220932) was incorporated on 19 September 2012 and latterly traded as a restaurant from 14 St Pancras, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 7SJ.

Mr Ahmed was a director from incorporation to liquidation. The company went into creditors voluntary liquidation on 18 August 2016 with an estimated deficiency of £55,720.

The matters of unfitness, which Mr Ahmed did not dispute in the Disqualification Undertaking, were that:

- Masum Ahmed failed to ensure that Chi Spice Limited complied with its statutory obligations under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, by employing an adult Mr Ahmed knew or ought to have known was subject to an immigration control condition preventing him from accepting the employment in question.
- following a visit from Home Office Immigration Officers on 21 November 2015, during which this breach was discovered, Chi Spice Limited was issued with a penalty notice in the sum of £15,000. This amount remained outstanding at the date of liquidation.

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. Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies. The agency also

authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7596 6187

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

Press release: Civil service ‘hub’ to bring growth to Cardiff

The UK Government has today shown its commitment to delivering growth across the UK by signing a 25 year lease at the Central Square development, Cardiff.

This announcement comes weeks after a new lease was signed in Edinburgh, further demonstrating the UK Government’s commitment to building a strong Civil Service outside London.

The deal is part of the Government Hubs Programme which will transform the way the Civil Service works by accommodating several government departments in one building, across the country. The programme will deliver over a billion pounds of savings to the taxpayer, free up land for housing and reduce government buildings from 800 to around 200 by 2022.

The UK Government has agreed to lease 265,000 sq ft in the brand new, Cardiff city-centre development, which will accommodate over 4,000 public servants from several different UK Government departments. HMRC will be the majority occupier and Central Square will become one of their regional centres. The office will be ready by 2020 for civil servants to occupy.

This major deal is the largest ever pre-let in Cardiff and represents a significant regeneration opportunity for the Welsh capital. In addition, by consolidating office space in Wales it will deliver millions of pounds of savings to the taxpayer.

By bringing several different departments to work alongside each other in one building, the Government Hubs Programme will encourage greater collaboration and productivity in the Civil Service. All hubs will allow Smart Working, which will enable civil servants to work more flexibly. This will help to attract and retain the best talent needed to deliver the best possible service to the public.

The Hub will also, importantly, enable the UK Government to have a strong and coherent presence in Wales.

Minister for Government Resilience and Efficiency, Caroline Nokes, said:

This Government is committed to delivering the best quality public services in every corner of the UK, and today's announcement is an important step towards that.

This new lease is great news for Cardiff, and will deliver a range of benefits to people in Cardiff, from improved public space and transport to better access to the Principality Stadium from the station.

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns, said:

The UK Government already has a significant footprint in Wales and I believe that basing several departments in a single office in the centre of Cardiff demonstrates the impact we can make through greater collaboration. This will not only lead to better integration between departments and create an obvious cost-saving for the taxpayer, but will also send a clear message that the UK Government is visible, accessible and helping to improve people's lives in Wales.

[News story: Animal medicines improvement notice: Feedmark Ltd](#)

Details of the improvement notice issued to Feedmark Ltd, Harleston, Norfolk published in August 2017.

This Notice was issued as Feedmark Ltd were presenting the product SarVoid for the purpose of treating sarcoids in horses. This presentation was made via an email distributed advertisement. Similar medicinal claims, relating to the product SarVoid have also been brought to the attention of Feedmark Ltd this year.

SarVoid is not authorised as a veterinary medicine in the UK for use in the treatment or prevention of this condition.

The improvement required is for:

- Feedmark Ltd to remove all medicinal claims for the product SarVoid from company marketing material.

[Press release: Further results published from government's fire testing programme](#)

These large scale tests will allow experts to better understand how different types of cladding panels behave with different types of insulation in a fire. The results of the first two tests have already been published.

This third test was of a wall cladding system consisting of Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding with a fire retardant polyethylene filler (category 2 in screening tests) with PIR foam insulation.

The government's expert panel advises that [the results](#) show that the combination of materials used in the test does not meet current Building Regulations guidance.

There are up to 13 buildings over 18 metres tall in England known to have a combination of ACM with a fire retardant polyethylene filler with PIR foam insulation. Cladding samples from each of these buildings had already failed earlier combustibility tests conducted by Building Research Establishment (BRE) and their owners were sent [government advice](#) detailing the immediate interim safety measures that needed to be completed.

These latest test results provide building owners with further evidence about fire risks. Government has now provided these building owners with additional [detailed advice](#) setting out the actions they need to take to ensure the safety of residents. Government is working closely with these building owners to ensure this advice is being followed.

To further build the evidence available for experts and building owners so they can make informed safety decisions, government has commissioned a seventh large scale test – testing ACM with fire retardant polyethylene filler (category 2 in screening tests) with phenolic foam insulation. Results of all remaining tests will be published when they are available.

The government announced the [independent review](#) of building regulations and fire safety on 28 July 2017. This forward looking review will examine the regulatory system around the design, construction and on-going management of buildings in relation to fire safety as well as related compliance and enforcement issues.