

## **News story: Vehicle data platform merger faces in-depth investigation**

Solera's acquisition of Autodata faces an in-depth merger probe, unless it offers acceptable ways of addressing competition concerns.

The companies both supply vehicle maintenance and repair information platforms across the UK and the Competition and Markets Authority's (CMA) initial investigation found that they are the 2 main suppliers of these platforms in the UK and compete closely with each other.

These platforms give access to digital data and are mainly used by workshops and other repairers for the purposes of diagnosing, servicing and repairing vehicles. The CMA found that the merged company would face very limited competition in the UK and that there are significant barriers to entry and expansion for other suppliers.

The CMA therefore believes that the merger could significantly reduce competition in the supply of these platforms on a national basis.

Solera Holdings Inc. (Solera) therefore has until 24 May to offer proposals to resolve the competition concerns. If it does not offer undertakings, or if the CMA is unable to accept undertakings offered, the merger will be referred for an in-depth phase 2 investigation.

All information relating to the investigation is available on the [case page](#).

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## **News story: Bona Vacantia Division moves to Croydon**

From 22 May 2017, the correspondence address for the Bona Vacantia Division will change.

Anyone who wishes to send a letter to the Bona Vacantia Division after 22 May should address the correspondence to BVD, PO Box 2119, Croydon, CR90 9QU.

Anyone who corresponds with the Division using DX should use the new reference DX 325801 Croydon 51 from the same date.

There is no change to email addresses or telephone numbers.

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# [Press release: New charity investigation: The Jack Raine Community Foundation](#)

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has opened a statutory inquiry into [The Jack Raine Community Foundation, registered charity number 1106701](#). The inquiry was opened on 29 March 2017.

The charity has objects to promote community participation and recreation, in particular coaching in contact and non-contact martial arts, and education.

Concerns regarding the charity's financial controls were raised with the Commission after it was alerted by North Yorkshire Police that a financial investigation was being conducted into the charity. As a result, the Commission made an unannounced visit to the charity's premises in November 2016 to inspect the charity's books and records. The Commission found insufficient financial records and no evidence of trustee meeting minutes to reflect any decisions taken by the trustee board.

The Commission has established further serious regulatory concerns which has escalated its engagement to an inquiry.

The inquiry will examine:

- whether the financial management of the charity is adequate, including whether appropriate financial controls are in place, and if funds were expended in furtherance of the charity's objects
- the general administration, governance and management of the charity
- whether the trustees have complied with and fulfilled their duties and responsibilities as trustees under charity law

In order to protect the assets of the charity, the Commission has taken steps to freeze the charity's bank accounts under section 76(3)(d) of the Charities Act 2011.

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

## 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.
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## [News story: GC team delivers successful annual postgraduate training course](#)

### Introduction

The Government Chemist Team organised and delivered, on behalf of the Association of Public Analysts Educational Trust, the annual week-long course 'Analysis and Examination of Foods' at the University of Reading. The course is fully residential and ran between Monday 3rd and Friday 7th April 2017.

This course covers the analysis and examination of food by chemistry, molecular biology, microscopy, microbiology and mycology. It aims, in a two year cycle, to support the syllabus for the Mastership in Chemical Analysis (MChemA) which is the statutory qualification required to practice as a Public Analyst. Hence, as well as food, it addresses drinking water, feedingstuffs, fertilisers, and the underpinning legislation controlling this wide subject matter.

It is the only dedicated formal teaching available to MChemA candidates and is pitched at postgraduate level. It needs to fulfil the following aims:

- provide the novice an opportunity to get to grips with the subject matter of the syllabus

- enable the experienced analyst to discuss finer points of practice with experts
- provide a valuable opportunity for scientists to update their current experience and perhaps consider further study.

The course has been held for many years at the University of Reading. Daytime and evening lectures, interactive sessions and overnight accommodation were in the Cedars Conference Centre. Practical sessions on microscopy, microbiology and mycology were held in laboratories in the Food Biosciences Department.

## **Who attended the course**

Thirteen delegates, all experienced scientists attended the course. While most were from UK Public Analyst Laboratories, there were also two scientists from Gibraltar and one from the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China. All delegate feedback was overwhelmingly positive:

Very good lecturers, entertaining, relevant and informative

Always an eye-opener and thoroughly enjoyable

Improved my confidence with a microscope

Brilliant way of learning, very informative, enjoyable and well planned

Interesting for understanding the wider implications of our work

## **Summary of the course material**

The 'Analysis and Examination of Foods' course offers a highly effective learning experience with a good mix of lectures, laboratory practical sessions and interactive exercises delivered by a wide range of experts, not usually available together elsewhere. The topics are up to date, covering safety (chemical and microbiological), authenticity, analysis and the law of food, water, feeding-stuffs and fertilisers.

The course has RSC 'approved training' status and is aligned with the MChemA syllabus. The sessions are delivered in the classroom and include practical training in microscopy and microbiology. There are also interactive exercises

including 'expert witness' role play mentored by experienced court going scientists.

The course started with Dr David Owens on practical mycology – fungal classification and identification. Professor Anne-Marie Minihane presented a fascinating insight into nutrition: research, labelling and impact on our personal lives.

Public Analysts need to interpret and communicate their results, often to a court of law. Dr Duncan Campbell MChemA carefully taught delegates best practice in doing so, with regard to forensic probity, brevity and transparency.

Dionisis Theodosios of Eurofins taught a session on the regulation of pesticides residues in food, and analysis with much emphasis on modern techniques and interpretation of results. Jon Griffin MChemA and Kevin Wardle MChemA led the delegates through the law, analytical procedures and exercises in appraising commercial products and results of analysis.

Hazel Gowland, an experienced patient advocate and published researcher, led delegates through the impact of food allergies on patients' lives and allergen risk management. Dr Walker outlined the immunological basis of allergy and the latest analytical methods for food allergen detection.

In the wake of the horse meat scandal and the Elliott Review, food authenticity, food fraud and food crime continue to have a high salience. Thus four sessions were devoted to these topics. Giles Chapman Strategic Intelligence Manager, National Food Crime Unit, NFCU, Food Standards Agency gave an insightful overview of the operation of the NFCU. Nigel Payne MChemA, Chair of the Authenticity Methods Working Group, covered the authenticity, contaminant and residues aspects of meat and fish. Dr Sophie Rollinson surveyed the history, current approaches and future challenges of the Defra Food Authenticity Programme and Dr Gavin Nixon delivered a thorough and systematic review of advanced DNA and Spectral Imaging techniques for food authenticity.

Gavin Nixon, GC team, delivering a session

A major part of this year's course was microscopic identification of food components and contaminant material. A comprehensive theory session and practical training ensured delegates were comfortable using the microscope, made use of appropriate mounting media and recognised key structural features. The systematic examination of blind mixtures gave the more experienced a foretaste of the MChemA exam 'Part C' scenario questions. The practical sessions were led by Jane White MChemA with teaching from Sue Sherry in Plant Anatomy. This was enhanced by a lecture on consumer complaints from Alastair Low MChemA who presented numerous examples in an interactive session and also assisted as an instructor in the practical sessions.

Dr Alex Kersting and Rachael New MChemA talked delegates through the process of taking the MChemA exam and how to study for this exacting qualification

and the Chief Examiner Jon Griffin MChemA was on hand to outline what the examiners are looking for in a good candidate.

Taking advantage of the expertise of the delegates themselves, a mini-symposium was held allowing delegates to learn from each other. Dr Angella Wing-Hoi Yuen described the work of the Hong Kong Government laboratory, Alison Aitken discussed Shiga toxin producing E.coli, Punil Sanatcumar outlined the analysis of PCBs and dioxins, Nikki Molloy gave insights into the preparation of material for proficiency testing schemes and Ratna Dewiyanti spoke entertainingly on the science behind home cooking. Natalie Hernandez and Xenia Duarte discussed medical microbiology and haematology in a busy hospital lab in Gibraltar, Chris Payne and Peter Bowdery described integrated public analyst and police forensic science services and David Finlay and Diane Bryning outlined protection of animal feed supply chain and sustainable entrepreneurial recycling respectively. This mini-symposium worked well to share knowledge and experiences and build professional relationships.

## **Acknowledgments**

The APA Educational Trust is grateful to the Food Standards Agency and the Analytical Chemistry Trust Fund for financial support and to the Government Chemist team for organising and running the event. Grateful thanks are extended to the speakers and practical session demonstrators for the care and effort they put in to preparing and delivering their material, and to the technical and administrative staff of the University of Reading for their kind assistance in making the course run smoothly.

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## **[News story: Government Chemist hosts international food allergy meeting](#)**

The Government Chemist hosted a meeting of the University of Manchester Food Allergy Network, MFAN, at LGC on 11 April 2017. The meeting attracted 27 delegates from very relevant organisations in the allergen research and management areas. Chaired by Professor Clare Mills, MFAN coordinates research on the risk management of food allergens with input from the analytical and food industry, academics, regulators and retailers. Attendees from the UK, Europe and Australia were joined electronically by researchers from the University of Nebraska and the US Food and Drug Administration.

The group discussed international research carried out to assess the performance of immunoassay and mass spectrometry techniques in detecting and measuring food allergens. Allergenic compounds can provoke life threatening reactions even when present in food at very low levels. Therefore it is very important to establish whether allergens can be detected accurately and

reliably. This work is vital to protect the health of consumers with allergies, improve food labelling and reduce food recalls that impact on the balance sheets and reputations of food companies.

MFAN meeting attendees at work

The group agreed on findings that will be published in scientific peer-reviewed literature later in 2017 and decided on the priorities of a programme of future innovative work.

Dr Michael Walker, Nominated Officer, Government Chemist team, commented on the value of this meeting:

Allergen risk management is both scientifically challenging and important from many different perspectives. By facilitating this international event organised by Prof Clare Mills the Government Chemist is supporting progress in allergen measurement research and therefore better placed to respond to current and future allergen related referee cases.

For any enquiries, contact the Government Chemist team.