

[GC team publishes scientific papers on honey authentication](#)

The papers, [Honey authenticity: the opacity of analytical reports – part 1 defining the problem](#); and [part 2, forensic evaluative reporting as a potential solution](#) are based on a story that appeared in the UK media in November 2020, [Supermarket brands of honey are ‘bulked out with cheap sugar syrups made from rice and corn’](#) after which the Food Standards Agency asked the Government Chemist to investigate the methods that underpinned the story.

The papers, co-authored by Professor Duncan Burns, Emeritus Professor at the Institute for Global Food Security (IGFS), Queen’s University Belfast, and [Prof. Michael Walker](#) who also led the investigation at the time, as Head of the Government Chemist programme at LGC – address the complex composition of honey, and how an interpretive system used in forensic science could help to improve evaluation of analytical findings and assessment of their strength, which, in turn, can help to make authentication of honey more robust.

Summing up the papers, Professor Walker said, “The composition of honey, a complex natural product, continues to challenge analytical methods attempting to determine its authenticity particularly in the face of sophisticated adulteration, despite ongoing research.

“The analytical work behind the original news story threw up some interesting questions. Our assessment was informed by consensus views in the scientific literature confirming that multiple approaches are needed to assess honey authenticity. This inevitably leads to complex data. The summary opinion of the reporting laboratory in each of the Certificates of Analysis that were examined was unequivocally that the samples were non-compliant. However, our critical examination of the data revealed a much more nuanced picture from which it is currently difficult to draw such a definitive opinion. Our proposed solution of ‘evaluative reporting’, would see the acceptance of a formalised ‘likelihood ratio’ (LR) thought process used in forensic science for evaluation of findings and assessment of their strength. In the absence of consensus on techniques for honey authenticity, adoption of evaluative reporting will allow objective assessment, with equity to all, and a better basis to identify and address fraud.”.

Following the Government Chemist research on honey authenticity testing, Defra will continue to work with the FSA and key interested parties to ensure that honey on sale in the UK meets our high standards. Honey is a complex natural product but consumers should rightly expect it to be authentic; collaboration with recognised experts and key partners will ensure effective tools are in place to detect fraudulent practices.

For more information about the work of the Government Chemist please contact:

Man fined for trying to use someone else's SIA licence

Press release

On Friday 11 February, Mohammed Abdurahman of Queensway pleaded guilty to fraud at Wrexham Magistrates' Court.



Security Industry Authority

The prosecution was brought by the Security Industry Authority (SIA) and he was fined £320, ordered to pay £1200 court costs and a £34 victim surcharge.

Between 30 November and 15 December 2020, Mohammed Abdurahman presented himself to Chester security business Cynergy Security Group Ltd. as Ali Mohammed. There was a discrepancy with his identity documents. Abdurahman gave the company a valid SIA licence in the name of Ali Mohammed; followed by a residence permit and a bank statement in the name of Mohammed Abdurahman.

Abdurahman failed his induction checks and Abdurahman was invited by Cynergy to supply hard copies of his identity documents, but he failed to return with them. Cynergy approached the SIA expressing their concerns particularly about an image on the licence. The SIA started an investigation into the case.

Abdurahman failed to engage with SIA Investigators, but using an email address they were able to identify Abdurahman as a student at Coleg Cambria College. The SIA persistently sought after Abdurahman and further investigation revealed that his student identity card matched the image on the SIA licence. He was contacted by an SIA Investigator and 'interviewed' using a statutory defence letter. He was subsequently summonsed to Wrexham Magistrates' Court.

The magistrate at the court said:

This is a very serious case of fraud, this could've had very serious consequences for the company and industry that is highly

regulated and respected. We take the matter seriously on theirs and the public's behalf.

Mark Chapman, one of the SIA's criminal investigation managers, said:

We appreciate the steps taken by Cynergy Security Group to notify the SIA of their concerns. Abdurahman sought to gain legitimate work in the private security industry and attempted to circumvent the safeguards in place to protect the public by fraudulently presenting himself as someone else using another's legitimate documents. The licensing regime is there to protect the public and Abdurahman had not gone through the rigorous vetting and training required to be a licensed security professional. Abdurahman has now incurred fines and a criminal record due to his fraudulent activity. His conviction means that he will not be able to work in the industry.

Notes to editors:

- By law, security operatives working under contract must hold and display a valid SIA licence
- [Read about SIA enforcement and penalties](#)
- The offences committed against the Fraud Act 2006 were:
 - 1 count of Section 2 Fraud by false representation
 - 1 count of Section 7 Fraud Assist in the commission of fraud

Further information:

- The Security Industry Authority is the organisation responsible for regulating the private security industry in the United Kingdom, reporting to the Home Secretary under the terms of the [Private Security Industry Act 2001](#). Our main duties are: the compulsory licensing of individuals undertaking designated activities; and managing the voluntary Approved Contractor Scheme.
- For further information about the Security Industry Authority visit www.gov.uk/sia. The SIA is also on [Facebook](#) (Security Industry Authority) and [Twitter](#) (SIAuk).

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[£1.4m for projects supporting sustainable fishing and fisheries science across the UK](#)

Five of the projects – receiving £1.121m – involve Scottish expertise:

- One winning project, whose partners include the Scottish White Fish Producers Association, will use its award of almost £282,000 to explore

the use of artificial lights to change fish behaviour. The long-term goal is to look at more selective and sustainable ways of trawling for nephrops and squid, which can currently impact on other marine wildlife.

- Over £274,000 is being invested to improve UK-wide data on catches of crab, lobster and whelks by using autonomous sampling systems on active fishing vessels, or at processing sites. Heriot Watt University is involved in this.
- Heriot Watt is also taking part in a £300,000 project to support a healthy lobster and crab industry with a programme that will see creel mounted cameras deployed in fisheries, including in Orkney. Orkney Sustainable Fisheries is another partner.
- Another of the successful applicants announced today is a project trialling the use of kites and Looming Eye buoys to deter seabirds from diving into the water near to an operational fishery and getting caught up in the nets – an issue which is estimated to kill up to 400,000 seabirds worldwide each year. It's hoped the project will help to protect the UK's vital but threatened seabird populations, such as the Great Northern Divers, Black-throated Divers and Slavonian Grebes.

The funding is the first part of the £100 million UK Seafood Fund designed to level up coastal communities across the UK. A total of £24 million has been earmarked specifically for science and innovation projects – to invest in new technology, trial new gear and support world-class research.

Today's announcement builds on the £65 million infrastructure scheme announced in December which will be made available for projects such as modernising ports and harbours, and a further £10 million to encourage new entrants into the processing, catching and aquaculture sectors, alongside training and upskilling current workers.

These schemes will ensure the industry and coastal communities are equipped to benefit from additional quota gained as a result of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) signed with the EU in 2020. Following our departure from the Common Fisheries Policy, there have been uplifts in quota for UK vessels, with the value of UK-EU fishing opportunities for the UK in 2021 totalling approximately £333 million.

UK Government Minister for Scotland Malcolm Offord said:

It's great, but unsurprising, that Scottish expertise is at the heart of many of these projects. This UK Government funding will boost innovation and sustainability in the UK fisheries sector.

“Scotland's seafood, aquaculture and science sectors are world renowned, I look forward to continuing to work closely with them to

ensure that this funding – and future allocations – helps deliver a sustainable and profitable future.”

Fisheries Minister, Victoria Prentis, said:

I am pleased to see the £100m UK Seafood Fund in action, backing the impressive wealth of talent and innovation in our fishing industry.

A sustainable fishing industry is essential if we are to ensure we have a healthy, thriving marine environment that is capable of supporting our world-class industry long into the future.

The funding has been awarded through the Fisheries Industry Science Partnerships (FISP) scheme, established to strengthen relations between industry and research organisations to promote world-class fisheries management. Today’s investment is the first in a series of funding rounds that will see the fishing and seafood industry supported to work with scientists to research more productive and sustainable fishing gear and gather new data to more sustainably manage the UK’s fish stocks. Applications for a second round of funding will open on Wednesday 2 March and run until 25 April.

This comes as the UK and Devolved governments call for views on the Joint Fisheries Statement (JFS). The JFS sets out policies for achieving or contributing to the eight objectives outlined in the Fisheries Act 2020 which will help to achieve the UK’s vision for clean, healthy, safe, productive, and biologically diverse oceans and seas. Each of the eight FISP award winners have been chosen for their potential to meet one or multiple Fisheries Act objectives.

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