

Recruiters banned after exploiting agricultural workers

Lincoln-based Simon Melville (42) has been disqualified for 11 years, while his wife, Julie Melville (41) has been banned for 10 years.

Husband and wife are now banned from acting as directors or directly or indirectly becoming involved, without the permission of the court, in the promotion, formation or management of a company.

Lincolnshire Recruitment Services Ltd was incorporated in June 2012, providing workers for the agricultural industry.

The recruitment firm, however, began to struggle and entered into creditors voluntary liquidation in September 2018. But Lincolnshire Recruitment Services Ltd insolvency brought the company to the attention of the Insolvency Service, who established that Julie and Simon Melville breached regulations intended to protect workers from exploitation.

Investigators uncovered that six months prior to Lincolnshire Recruitment Services Ltd collapse, the Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) inspected the recruitment firm in February 2018 before revoking the company's GLAA license.

Inspectors from the GLAA discovered that between July 2017 and September 2018, Simon and Julie Melville failed to make holiday payments to 186 employees, charged employees for safety equipment which should have been supplied free of charge and didn't provide employees with copies of their contracts.

Husband and wife didn't provide clients with formal terms of business, they disclosed employees' personal details to third parties without consent and allowed employees to transport staff to various sites without proper driving licenses or insurance.

Through the GLAA's inspection, it was also uncovered that Julie Melville had acted as the Principal Authority, under the terms of the recruitment firm's GLAA licence. The GLAA, however, had not formally authorised Julie Melville to act as Principal Authority as she had not sent in her application and she only applied to the GLAA following the regulator's unannounced inspection.

Insolvency Service investigators also found that Simon Melville had been illegitimately running Lincolnshire Recruitment Services Ltd in breach of a previous disqualification.

Simon Melville had been disqualified for 9 years in December 2014 following the collapse of Melville Agricultural Contractors Ltd. After the company finished trading, Simon Melville withdrew £45,000 worth of cash which should have been used to pay Melville Agricultural Contractors Ltd tax liabilities.

His wife, Julie, was aware of the ban but breached her own responsibilities as sole director by allowing Simon Melville to run the recruitment firm behind the scenes.

On 9 October 2020, the Secretary of State accepted a disqualification undertaking from Simon Melville, after he did not dispute that he acted in breach of his prior ban and he caused Lincolnshire Recruitment Services Ltd to abuse the GLAA's licensing regulations.

Simon Melville's ban is effective from 30 October 2020, while Julie's 10-year disqualification began on 9 October after she did not dispute she allowed a third party to act as a director and caused Lincolnshire Recruitment Services Ltd to abuse the GLAA's licensing regulations.

Sue Macleod, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Service, said:

Simon and Julie's misconduct was extensive. Their bans are substantial and removing Simon and Julie from the corporate arena will help protect vulnerable workers from experiencing further harm.

GLAA Head of Regulation Nicola Ray said:

Flagrant breaches of our licensing standards will not be tolerated under any circumstances and this is why we revoked the licence of Lincolnshire Recruitment Services back in 2018. Our investigators found eight breaches of our licensing standards, four of which were serious enough on their own to cause the company to automatically fail the inspection.

Since then, we have worked closely with the Insolvency Service to ensure that further action is taken to fully enforce our regulations.

We are pleased with the disqualification undertakings and hope they send a clear message that we will continue to work in partnership to protect vulnerable and exploited workers.

Simon Robert Melville is from Lincoln and his date of birth is May 1978

Julie Melville is from Lincoln and her date of birth is July 1979.

LINCOLNSHIRE RECRUITMENT SERVICES LTD (Company number 08094545)

MELVILLE AGRICULTURAL CONTRACTORS LIMITED (Company number 06344072)

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 restrictions](#).

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

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Statistical press release: Energy Consumption in the UK 2020](#)

Press release

Statistical press release to announce the publication of the 2020 edition of Energy Consumption in the UK (ECUK).



The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy today (22 October 2020) releases the statistical publication Energy Consumption in the UK 2020.

The publication provides a comprehensive review of energy consumption and changes in intensity and output since the 1970s, with a particular focus on trends since 2000.

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Shetland spaceport boosts UK's plans for launch

- Lockheed Martin to develop UK launch operations from Shetland Space Centre on the island of Unst.
- Orbex and Highlands and Islands Enterprise continue to advance launch plans from Space Hub Sutherland.

Hundreds of space jobs will be created in Scotland following the approval of plans for Lockheed Martin to transfer its satellite launch operations to Shetland Space Centre by the UK government.

Shetland Space Centre anticipates that by 2024, the spaceport site could support a total of 605 jobs in Scotland including 140 locally and 210 across the wider Shetland region. A further 150 jobs will also be created through wider manufacturing and support services.

Following a thorough process of due diligence, the UK Space Agency has confirmed that Lockheed Martin's plans to move its UK Pathfinder Launch to the Shetland site at Lamba Ness on Unst would continue to deliver long-term value and help establish a sustainable, commercial launch market as part of the UK's spaceflight programme – LaunchUK.

Lockheed Martin is in discussions with a preferred partner to provide launch services for its UK Pathfinder Launch, which would take place from Shetland Space Centre.

UK Government Amanda Solloway, Science Minister, said:

We want the UK to be the best place in Europe to launch satellites, attracting innovative businesses from all over the world and creating hundreds of high-skilled jobs.

The potential to have multiple spaceports in Scotland demonstrates the scale of our ambition, and I want to support industry by pressing ahead with our plans during this challenging time.

This government is committed to backing our growing space sector, developing a comprehensive space strategy and supporting transformative technologies that will benefit people and businesses across the country.

UK Government Minister for Scotland Iain Stewart said:

The UK Government is committed to cementing the UK's position as a global leader in the space sector. The creation of the Shetland Space Centre is incredibly exciting news and a real boost for the

local economy.

Our investment in Scottish spaceports is creating hundreds of secure and skilled jobs for people in Scotland.

The Shetland Space Centre a huge step forward for our ambitious UK Spaceflight programme.

The Shetland launch site at Lamba Ness on the island of Unst. ©Shetland Space Centre Ltd

Just as an airport can handle a range of different airlines and aircraft, Space Hub Sutherland has been designed as a multi-user site able to cater for the needs of multiple launch providers. This ensures it will be able to continue to compete for a wide range of exciting vertical launch opportunities.

The UK Space Agency will also continue to fully support Space Hub Sutherland through grant funding to Highlands and Islands Enterprise to develop the spaceport infrastructure and to UK-based launch partner, Orbex, to prepare its innovative Prime rocket to launch from the site in 2022.

An economic assessment of the Spaceport Sutherland site reported in 2019 that the site is due to create over 60 high-skilled jobs in Sutherland and Caithness, and 250 jobs in the wider area.

Ivan McKee, Scottish Government Minister for Trade, Investment and Innovation said:

This is an extremely exciting time for the emerging space sector globally, and Scotland is situated at the very forefront of this.

The transfer of Lockheed Martin's UK pathfinder satellite launch to Shetland Space Centre will enhance Scotland's existing vertical launch capability and enable us to target a wider market base through a complementary offer across multiple spaceports.

This will provide an economic boost not only to the Shetland Isles but also maximise the commercial opportunity across the wider region, with Highlands and Islands Enterprise leading the delivery of Space Hub Sutherland alongside Scottish-based launch partner, Orbex.

Developing domestic spaceflight capabilities will play a key role in levelling up the UK economy, driving investment, fostering growth and creating new jobs.

Scotland is already home to some of the world's most innovative satellite

manufacturers, and its ability to host complementary launch sites puts the UK firmly on the map as Europe's leading small satellite launch destination.

The economic benefits of launch will be shared across the Highlands and Islands region and both Space Hub Sutherland and Shetland Space Centre have already attracted significant commercial interest in their plans. In 2019, Orbex opened a rocket design and manufacturing facility in Forres, near Inverness, which is anticipated to bring 130 highly-skilled jobs to the region.

Nik Smith, UK Country Executive at Lockheed Martin said:

The UK has a vibrant space sector, which can stimulate the national as well as regional economies. As a long-standing strategic partner to the UK, Lockheed Martin is committed to building on its proud heritage to support the UK government's role of growing capabilities in space, exciting imagination and advancing the frontiers of science.

From the outset our focus has been on realising the greatest economic benefit for the UK through the Spaceflight programme. The transfer of our UK spaceflight operations to Shetland will not only broaden launch options available in the UK, but also ensure the economic benefits of these endeavours are felt more widely.

Space has a significant role to play in generating economic growth, creating high-skilled jobs and tackling global challenges, from climate change to the spread of infectious diseases. The ability to launch small satellites for Earth observation and communications will boost UK efforts to tackle these challenges by providing valuable tools and data that can help analyse and predict impacts and support effective decisions and mitigation strategies.

The UK's spaceflight programme – LaunchUK – is working with a range of additional partners to establish commercial vertical and horizontal small satellite launch from UK spaceports including Spaceport Cornwall and Virgin Orbit.

Minister for Equalities sets out government action to tackle Covid disparities

- Minister for Equalities sets out government findings on impact of

COVID-19 on ethnic minority people

- Two new expert advisors on COVID-19 and ethnicity appointed
- New measures include up to £25m for Community Champions to reach groups most at risk
- Announcement follows considerable investment in research and targeted messaging

Today (Thursday 22nd October) the Minister for Equalities, Kemi Badenoch MP, will provide the first quarterly report to the Prime Minister and Health Secretary on progress to understand and tackle COVID-19 disparities experienced by individuals from an ethnic minority background.

Since Public Health England released their review of disparities in risks and outcomes in June, the government has been focused on taking action to improve the evidence base on the disparities and protecting those at greatest risk across the UK.

This has included £4.3m of spending on six innovative research projects to better understand the links between COVID-19 and ethnicity, and an additional £4m on targeting messaging at ethnic minority communities. Additionally, the government has ensured that updated guidance is available for employers on protecting their workforce. And more than 95% of frontline NHS staff from ethnic minority backgrounds have had a risk assessment and subsequently have agreed any necessary action as a result.

The evidence and data that has been gathered has given the government and researchers a better understanding of the leading risk factors for ethnic minority people in relation to the virus, these include occupational exposure and existing medical conditions. However, in her report the Minister will set out how the government are committed to take this work further to ensure the data can be translated into more action to protect those that are at greatest risk.

In an Oral Statement today the Minister will also set out a number of new measures which the government is taking to protect those at risk, gather more data on the impact of the virus and to ensure that everyone can access the latest public health messaging.

Amongst the new measures set out are:

- A new 'Community Champions' scheme, worth up to £25m, funded by MHCLG, that will provide funding to enhance existing communication strategies in the most at risk places, and fund work with grassroots advocates from impacted communities. The scheme will also provide funding for voluntary and community groups who specialise in working with communities most at

risk from COVID-19.

- A new mandate for ethnicity to be recorded as part of the death certification process.
- An enhancement of the national Shielded Patients List to account for the increase in understanding of the risk factors related to the virus and the drivers of disparities.

Minister for Equalities, Kemi Badenoch, said:

“Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, we have prioritised protecting the most vulnerable in our society.

“Access to the latest public health information and protections should be available to everyone. To ensure that is the case we have invested in a strong package of measures to target messaging, develop the data we have available and make sure everyone is as safe as possible at home or in the workplace.

“Today’s report marks an important first step in our journey to understand and tackle the disproportionate impact of Covid. I remain committed to doing everything possible to beat back this virus.”

“Councils are working tirelessly to support their communities throughout the pandemic.

“Which is why we are investing up to £25 million for them to support ‘Community Champions’ in their area and help protect those most at risk by building trust, reducing transmission and ultimately helping to save lives.”

Today’s update also includes a detailed breakdown of government work in response to the stakeholder engagement carried out by Professor Fenton earlier this year, highlighting action that has been taken to support the NHS and the adult social care and education sectors.

To help progress this work over the coming months, the Minister has appointed two expert advisors on COVID-19 and ethnicity. Dr Raghav Ali and Professor Keith Neal will work alongside the Cabinet Office’s Race Disparity Unit to provide advice and support to the government’s work. The Minister will also continue to engage with the new SAGE ethnicity sub-group.

Professor Sir Rory Collins, Head of Nuffield Department of Population Health and BHF Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology, University of Oxford, and the Chief Executive of the UK Biobank, said:

“By bringing together relevant data from many different sources, this report will strengthen our understanding of the risk factors that are causing adverse outcomes for ethnic minority people when exposed to COVID-19.

“In doing so, I am confident that the report is an excellent step forward as we look to identify ways to reduce those risks effectively.”

Dr Rohini Mathur, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, said:

“It is vital that we understand the key drivers of the health disparities caused by COVID-19 and set out evidence-based, efficient action to tackle them.

“This report is a strong step on the path to doing this, highlighting important findings, dispelling damaging misinformation and presenting clear steps to address the impact of the virus on ethnic minority communities.”

Professor Sir Mark Caulfield, Professor of Clinical Pharmacology, Queen Mary University of London and Chief Scientist for Genomics England, said:

‘This important report into Health Inequalities and COVID-19 draws together important strands of evidence to highlight the disproportionate impact on ethnic minorities by identifying the key factors that contribute to their increased risk of infection and adverse outcomes. These include household size, deprivation, co-morbidities and particularly occupation which highlights the vital contribution our diverse communities have made as key workers on the frontline during the pandemic.’

[Minister for Equalities sets out government action to tackle Covid disparities](#)

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