

Hull man guilty of giving unlawful immigration advice

Press release

Unqualified immigration adviser to receive sentence later in the year



A Hull man has pleaded guilty to three counts of providing unregulated immigration advice, contrary to Section 91 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Gary Pounder, 59, of Orchard Park Estate, Hull, admitted to the offences at Hull & Holderness Magistrates Court on Wednesday 23 September.

Specifically, Mr Pounder gave immigration advice and services even though he did not possess the relevant authorisation, training or qualifications, as required by Section 84 of the 1999 Act.

After receiving local information that this had occurred, the OISC identified and interviewed three independent witnesses who Mr Pounder had met in premises in and around the Hull area between July 2017 and May 2018, where he gave the unlawful immigration advice for which he charged them.

Deputy District Judge Appleyard acknowledging the aggravating factors of vulnerable victims, who were in the country in difficult circumstances, commented that it was “pretty appalling.”

Immigration Commissioner John Tuckett said of the conviction, “Gary Pounder allowed people to put their trust and future in him. This was a serious offence given the impact on the applicants”.

He is due to be sentenced on 10 December to allow for Probation pre-sentencing reports.

1. The OISC is an independent public body, established under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, to regulate the provision of immigration advice and services in the UK.
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Welsh beef to be exported to the US for first time in over 20 years

- Merthyr Tydfil based Kepak Group Limited one of first businesses officially listed by the US Department of Agriculture's Food Safety Inspection Service as eligible to export beef to the USA
- UK beef industry estimates £66 million boost over the next five years

The first shipments of UK beef have departed for the USA today (30th September), marking an historic moment for UK farmers and food producers.

Following the USA's longstanding ban on EU beef – introduced in the wake of the BSE outbreak in 1996 – market access for UK beef was granted in March 2020. Welsh beef producers now have access to the US market for the first time in over 20 years.

Today's news means the sector can now begin to reap the economic benefits of trade with the US – with industry estimating beef exports will be worth £66 million over the next five years.

The first four UK food businesses, based in Wales and Northern Ireland, have now been officially listed by the US Department of Agriculture's Food Safety Inspection Service as eligible to export UK beef to the USA. Businesses include Merthyr Tydfil based Kepak Group Limited which can now start production and export of UK beef for US consumers. It is expected that in the coming months, more food businesses across Wales and the rest of the UK will be able to take advantage of this exciting new export opportunity.

The first shipment of beef originating from Foyle Food Group, Foyle Campsie in Northern Ireland is to be dispatched to the USA today, with further shipments from across the UK expected to commence in the coming weeks.

Environment Secretary George Eustice said:

Our beef is renowned as some of the best in the world for its high quality, food safety and welfare standards, and this landmark milestone means more people around the globe can enjoy our produce.

This is great news for our food and farming industry, who have

estimated it will bring a £66 million boost to beef producers over the next five years alone, helping the sector go from strength to strength.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said:

This is an historic moment for British farming, and one which could bring an estimated £66million opportunity for those who want to export beef to the US.

This could be just the tip of the iceberg. The free trade deal we are negotiating with the US will create a host of export opportunities for British agriculture. We are seeking an ambitious and high standards agreement that benefits farmers and delivers for consumers.

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:

The opening of the US market is excellent news for beef producers across Wales and highlights confidence in our world-renowned food and drink sector.

Unlocking this market is a major step forward for the sector and demonstrates the UK Government's commitment to boost exports of the best of Welsh produce.

As one of the world leaders for animal welfare standards, UK beef is globally recognised for its provenance, quality and traceability. Through the Food is GREAT campaign, the UK government aims to raise the international profile and reputation of food and drink from across the UK and help more food and drink companies export their produce abroad.

AHDB International Market Development Director Dr Phil Hadley said:

We are delighted to see the first shipments of beef heading to the US today for the first time in more than 20 years, representing a historic moment for UK farmers and producers. We are rightly proud of our industry, which has a reputation for producing high quality beef to some of the best welfare standards in the world.

The US represents an important potential market for our red meat exports and today's first shipment is the result of the hard work and persistence of industry and government to bring about this crucial next step. This important milestone will bring a fantastic boost to the sector and we look forward to seeing more of our red meat served up on dinner tables across the US in the months and

years to come.

Karen Pierce, British Ambassador to the USA, said:

For the first time in over two decades, Americans will have the opportunity to taste the UK's world-class, delicious beef.

American consumers already have an appetite for a range of quality British products, including fine cheeses, whisky, salmon and biscuits, and beef is sure to become popular in the States.

As we continue our current negotiations toward the UK-US free-trade agreement, I look forward to seeing how we can increase opportunities for Americans to experience the best of British products.

The US Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) Audit Report, a crucial step leading to British exporters being able to sell to the US, was published in March 2020, and confirmed that UK meat hygiene systems and controls are of a suitable, equivalent standard for products to be imported to the USA. The report noted that the whole of the UK meets the US's production requirements, therefore beef from England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland is eligible for exports.

Prior to this announcement, FSIS inspected multiple premises across the UK between July-August 2019. This inspection visit had in turn been preceded by years of numerous market access and technical discussions between the USA and the UK.

These inspections were led by Defra group and the UK Export Certification Partnership and hosted by the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), in partnership with Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) and Hybu Cig Cymru (Meat Promotion Wales HCC) and other industry bodies, as well as UK national and Devolved Government Departments and Agencies.

**[UN Human Rights Council 45:
Interactive Dialogue with the
Independent Expert on Central African
Republic](#)**

World news story

The UK statement delivered during the Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on Central African Republic



The Human Rights Council takes place in Geneva.

Thank you, Madam President,

The UK welcomes the appointment of the new Independent Expert and thanks him for this report on the human rights situation in the Central African Republic (CAR).

The UK is deeply concerned by reports of human rights abuses against civilians including killings; conflict-related sexual violence; attacks against humanitarian personnel, hospitals and peacekeepers; denial of humanitarian assistance; and recruitment of children into armed groups.

It is unacceptable that those armed groups who are signatories to the Peace Agreement continue to be the main perpetrators of this violence. The UK stands ready to agree appropriate measures, including UN sanctions in line with Article 35 of the Peace Agreement, in response to these human rights abuses. We urge all actors to implement fully the terms of the Peace Agreement, and for all armed groups to cease immediately their attacks on civilians and on humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel. This is especially important in light of the new, complex challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and ahead of elections this year. Madam President,

We would welcome the Independent Expert's views on further steps the CAR Government and the international community can take to strengthen peaceful and inclusive dialogue with all Central Africans, to ensure that the Peace Agreement is protected in the run up to the election period.

Thank you.

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1 in 8 people in England have now been tested for coronavirus

- 1 in 8 people in England have now been tested for coronavirus at least once since the service launched
- Latest weekly figures show testing capacity for pillars 1 and 2 has increased by 25% since mid-August
- 1,588,760 tests were processed in the UK in pillars 1 and 2 during week 17 – 23 September
- Weekly statistics show the median distance travelled for in-person tests is now just 4.3 miles
- Additional lab partnership with Birmingham University Lab announced to boost capacity by the end of October

With close to 500 testing sites now operational across the UK, people with coronavirus symptoms are now travelling shorter distances to get tested, with the median distance just 4.3 miles, down from 5.2 miles the previous week.

The service has also seen significant improvements in turnaround times compared to the previous week. The median time taken to receive a result from taking a test in person is now 25 to 29 hours, with 70.6% of results received the day after they were taken, this is compared to 52.9% in the previous week.

The number of people testing positive this week has increased, with NHS Test and Trace continuing to reach the majority of positive cases and their contacts. This week the service successfully reached 71.3% of people who tested positive and 83.7% of contacts where communications details were provided.

As demand grows, capacity is also increasing. In the latest week pillar 1 and 2 testing capacity has increased by 8% to 1,797,894 tests since the previous week – a 25% increase since mid-August.

Work continues to expand testing capacity across the UK, to reach a target of 500,000 tests a day by the end of October. In addition to the growing Lighthouse Lab network, the introduction of partnership agreements with the public, private and academic sectors will see capacity grow by tens of thousands of tests in the coming months. Birmingham University has been announced today as one of the first of those lab partnerships to come online, with more partnerships to follow.

NHS Test and Trace has now reached more than half a million people, including those testing positive and their contacts, to slow the transmission of coronavirus in England.

While the COVID-19 app, which was launched last week, has been downloaded more than 14 million times, with 6 million downloading it on the first day.

Interim Executive Chair of the National Institute for Health Protection

Baroness Dido Harding said:

One in eight people in England have now received a test at least once and with nearly 500 testing sites across the UK, the median distance to a test site is now just 4.3 miles. These are achievements in which everyone involved can be immensely proud.

We are continuing to work tirelessly to increase capacity and make tests as accessible as possible. Our new lab partnership with Birmingham University is another example of how the public, private and academic sectors are working together to meet our target of 500,000 test capacity a day.

In the meantime, NHS Test and Trace has now reached more than half a million people and advised them to self-isolate – and in the past week more than 14 million people have downloaded the new COVID-19 app, all of which will help break the chains of transmission.

Professor Alan McNally, Director of the Institute of Microbiology and Infection at the University of Birmingham, said:

I am very excited that we can be part of the extension testing that will provide a needed boost to national COVID-19 testing efforts. Universities like Birmingham are perfectly placed to provide the expertise required to make this happen and I am confident we can make a significant contribution to COVID-19 testing and containing virus transmission in this country.

The guidance for testing remains in place, with only those experiencing symptoms eligible for tests. Symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a new continuous cough
- high temperature
- a loss or change in taste or smell

In response to unprecedented demand, a [list of priority groups](#) has been published outlining how the government is managing capacity to protect the most vulnerable, protect the economy and manage outbreaks, with only those experiencing symptoms eligible for tests. Prioritised groups include NHS patients and workers, care home residents and staff, teachers and areas of high prevalence. People requiring tests are advised to make an appointment, with new slots available throughout the day.

The new NHS COVID-19 app has also been launched, with people across England and Wales encouraged to download it to help control transmission alongside national and local contact tracing. The app uses low-energy Bluetooth to log the amount of time you spend near other app users, and the distance between you, so it can alert you if someone you have been close to later tests positive for COVID-19 – even if you don't know each other. The app has been

designed with user privacy in mind, so it tracks the virus not people, and uses the latest in data security technology to protect privacy.

The weekly statistics from the 17th week of NHS Test and Trace show in the most recent week of operations (17 to 23 September):

- pillar 1 and 2 testing capacity has increased by 8% to 1,797,894 tests since the previous week and is a 25% increase since mid-August
- 83.7% of contacts where communication details were given have been reached and told to self-isolate
- 71.3% of people who tested positive and were transferred to the contact-tracing system were reached and asked to provide information about their contacts
- 1,588,760 tests were processed in the UK in pillars 1 & 2 during week 17 – 23 September, that's 56,810 more tests than the previous week

Statistics from the 17th week of operation of NHS Test and Trace show that since the service launched:

- 588,036 people have been reached by the service. This includes both those testing positive and their contacts
- 86.2% of all contacts where communication details were given have been reached and told to self-isolate

[£200 million Port Infrastructure Fund opens for bids](#)

- Government launches the Port Infrastructure Fund to build new facilities at the border.
- The scheme will provide up to £200 million funding in one-off grants to ports.
- Businesses and industry urged to accelerate preparations for the end of year.

Today (Friday 2 October 2020) the government is ramping up its preparations for the end of the transition period with the launch of a £200 million fund for ports to build new facilities.

New infrastructure at ports will be needed whether or not the UK secures a negotiated agreement with the EU as we are leaving the Customs Union and Single Market and new procedures will be coming into place.

The fund is targeted at those ports that have the space to build new border infrastructure on their current sites so that they are ready to handle new customs requirements under the new Border Operating Model. The funding can be used for a range of vital port infrastructure – from warehouses and control posts to traffic management systems.

The deadline for applications is midday on 30 October, with successful bids announced shortly after.

Where infrastructure is not best situated at ports, the government has allocated an additional £270 million to build inland customs facilities.

Recognising the impact of coronavirus on businesses' ability to prepare, the UK has taken the decision to introduce new border controls in three stages up until 1 July 2021. This flexible and pragmatic approach will give industry extra time to make necessary arrangements. The stages are:

- From January 2021: Traders importing standard goods, covering everything from clothes to electronics, will need to prepare for basic customs requirements, such as keeping sufficient records of imported goods, and will have up to six months to complete customs declarations. While tariffs will need to be paid on all imports, payments can be deferred until the customs declaration has been made. There will be checks on controlled goods like alcohol and tobacco. Businesses will also need to consider how they account for VAT on imported goods. There will also be physical checks at the point of destination or other approved premises on all high risk live animals and plants.
- From April 2021: All products of animal origin (POAO) – for example meat, pet food, honey, milk or egg products – and all regulated plants and plant products will also require pre-notification and the relevant health documentation.
- From July 2021: Traders moving all goods will have to make declarations at the point of importation and pay relevant tariffs. Full Safety and Security declarations will be required, while for SPS commodities there will be an increase in physical checks and the taking of samples: checks for animals, plants and their products will now take place at GB Border Control Posts.

The opening of the fund has been welcomed by industry, and will see ports accelerate their preparations for the end of the year, as well as give industry confidence that all required infrastructure will be delivered on time.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove, said:

With just 3 months to go until the end of the UK transition period,

businesses need to prepare now for the new procedures that will come into place whether or not we reach a trade agreement with the EU, so that we can seize the significant opportunities that lie ahead.

We have listened to businesses and the border industry and will continue to work with them to deliver not just a fully operational border at the end of the transition period, but also the world's most effective and secure border within the next five years. The launch of this £200 million fund will help us do just that.

Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps, said:

Our ports are a point of pride for the UK, contributing to our success as a global trading nation and helping bring vital goods into the country each and every day.

This investment will not only ensure our borders are fully operational at the end of the transition period, but will also support the UK's fantastic businesses as they trade across Europe.

Tim Morris of the UK Major Ports Group, the trade association for the UK's largest port operators, commented:

There is significant port capacity around the coast of the UK for handling freight flows to and from the EU. Today's announcement is a welcome step in ensuring that this capacity can be maximised and UK supply chains can be more resilient.

Time is short and it is vital that UK businesses prepare for new border arrangements. We will work urgently with the Government on the all-important detail and related regulations.

Richard Ballantyne Chief Executive of the British Ports Association, which represents ports that facilitate 86% of our trade including all the UK's main roll-on roll-off gateways, said:

We welcome this fund and the focus on preparing port infrastructure for what will need accommodate a significant change in our trading relationship with the EU. It's clear that without support there would not be the capacity to deal the new customs and borders requirements. We therefore welcome this scheme which importantly will be open to all port operators across Great Britain.