

[Derailment and fire involving a tanker train at Llangennech](#)



Derailed tank wagons at Llangennech, Carmarthenshire (courtesy of Network Rail)

At about 23:15 hrs on 26 August 2020, train 6A11, the 21:52 hrs freight service from Robeston to Theale, conveying 25 tank wagons, each containing up to 75.5 tonnes of diesel or gas oil, derailed on the 'Up District' line near Llangennech, in Carmarthenshire. The derailment and the subsequent damage to the wagons resulted in a significant spillage of fuel and a major fire. The driver, who was unhurt, reported the accident to the signaller. Subsequent examination of the site revealed that a total of 10 wagons (positioned 3rd to 12th in the train) had derailed.

The fire was tackled by the fire service, who ordered the evacuation of local residents due to concerns for their safety. Local people have reported seeing a plume of flames and smoke, and the strong smell of fuel. Our investigation will seek to identify the causes of the derailment, and how these led to the fire. It will also consider any underlying management factors.

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry, police or by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

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For media enquiries, please call 01932 440015.

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1. 28 August 2020

Corrected to read the tank wagons contained 'up to 75.5 tonnes of diesel

or gas oil’

2. 28 August 2020

First published.

UK statement on Belarus: OSCE Special Permanent Council 2020

Mr. Chairperson, the UK is deeply concerned by the ongoing situation in Belarus and the events that have taken place before, during and after the Presidential election on 9 August. The UK does not accept the result and we continue to call for a thorough independent investigation through the OSCE into the fraud and abuses of human rights during this period. Belarus – like every other participating State in this organisation – has agreed to abide to a series of OSCE principles and commitments, which include full respect for democracy and human rights. It is the responsibility of every State to respect, and uphold these principles and commitments.

I will begin by offering our full support to the OSCE Chairperson Edi Rama and the incoming Swedish Chairmanship – in their efforts to establish an open and constructive dialogue to support the people of Belarus in choosing their own path ahead. Our overriding concern is that violence is stopped and further violence avoided, basic human rights are upheld and that the space for political dialogue is created to resolve this crisis.

Like others who have spoken today, the UK remains deeply concerned about the violence used by the Belarusian authorities to suppress the peaceful demonstrations that followed the Presidential election. There are numerous credible reports by media and civil society organisations of the excessive use of violence by Belarusian authorities against peaceful protesters, journalists, the public, human rights defenders, political opponents and others since the elections. This includes the use of riot police and the deployment of tear gas, smoke bombs and rubber bullets against peaceful demonstrators. Over 7000 protestors were detained according to Belarusian government figures, and independent media have reported 65 remain imprisoned and 58 unaccounted for.

We fully share the alarm expressed by the OSCE’s Organization for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights on 19 August over the arbitrary arrests and allegations of torture and other forms of ill treatment at the hands of the Belarusian authorities, with detainees held incommunicado, overcrowding, beatings and insufficient food and water and denied access to medical treatment and legal advice. We understand detainees’ families were not informed about the whereabouts of their loved ones. Of particular concern are

reported instances of sexual and gender based violence, including threats and allegations of rape.

ODIHR was unable to deploy a Mission to observe the 9 August election because the Belarusian authorities failed to issue a timely invitation.

Opposition candidates were detained in the run-up to the Presidential election. Prominent blogger Sergei Tikhanovsky was arrested before he was able to submit his application to run; former CEO of Belgazprombank Victor Babaryka, along with his son, were arrested while submitting signatures to support his candidacy; and former diplomat Valery Tsepka was removed from the electoral race after the Central Election Commission (CEC) invalidated a large number of his signatures.

We call for the Belarusian Government to cease and desist the detainment and use of violence against peaceful protesters, and to immediately release detainees and political prisoners, including Olga Kovalkova and Sergei Dylevsky, respond constructively to the Coordination Council's offer of dialogue, accept the offer of support from the OSCE Chair, and engage with Belarusian society and community groups. We are alarmed by allegations of arbitrary arrests and allegations of torture and other forms of ill-treatment.

Let me be clear – our concerns have nothing to do with geopolitics. We wholly reject any claim that the situation in Belarus has anything to do with the strategic interests of Eastern and Western countries. The topic being discussed here today has nothing to do with the EU, NATO, or Russia, and everything to do with the people of Belarus, their human rights and their right to self-government. As a member of the OSCE, the government of Belarus has freely signed up to a body of principles and commitments to protect the rights of their citizens – and as participating States, we are duty-bound to call out human rights violations within the OSCE region when they occur.

Mr. Chairperson, all OSCE Member States commit to holding free and fair democratic elections, and to uphold the right to freedom of peaceful assembly both in law and practice. There is strong evidence that the Republic of Belarus has not done so.

We call on Belarus to respect their OSCE commitments on democracy and human rights and – once again – to engage in political dialogue. It is essential for the people of Belarus to determine their own future.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Cancellation

and refund updates

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) remains of the view that a consumer will generally be entitled to a refund when they have paid money in advance for services or goods that cannot be provided because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Given the evolving situation, the CMA has provided more detail on issues such as the difference between lockdown laws and government guidance, and their impact on cancellations and refunds.

Lockdown laws

These are pieces of legislation such as the various Health Protection Regulations across the UK. If contracts cannot go ahead because of lockdown laws then, for most consumer contracts, the CMA would expect a consumer to be offered a full refund.

If contracts are partially affected by lockdown laws then, depending on the circumstances and the scale of the impact, consumers may be entitled to a refund or a price reduction.

Government guidance

The government has issued guidance in place of or in addition to lockdown laws. As these are guidance and not law, whether a consumer is entitled to a refund will vary according to the specific circumstances.

For example, if a package holiday is cancelled in light of Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice against travel to the relevant country, there are specific protections which mean that consumers should be entitled to a full refund.

In other situations, it will not always be the case that a full refund is due because government guidance does not create legal restrictions and will not necessarily mean that a contract cannot be performed.

But even where that is the case, it is important for businesses and consumers to follow government guidance and it is the CMA's view that businesses should treat their customers fairly and responsibly, including trying to find a mutually acceptable solution.

The CMA has also written to certain package travel companies involved in group trips to explain its view on when customers should be offered a refund.

This follows complaints about some package travel organisers advising customers that they are not entitled to a refund as their contract was between the company and a group, such as a school, rather than made directly with the customer. It is the CMA's view that the Package Travel Regulations apply to these group travel packages, and that individual customers should be

entitled to a refund if they have paid money in advance for a group trip that is cancelled because of the pandemic.

The CMA's statement on consumer protection law, setting out its views, is designed to help consumers understand their rights and to help businesses treat their customers fairly. Ultimately only a court can decide how the law applies in each circumstance.

Head of the CMA's Covid-19 Taskforce Will Hayter said:

Our view is that consumers will generally be entitled to a refund when they have paid in advance for services or goods that cannot be provided because of legal restrictions as a result of the pandemic.

If complying with government guidance adversely impacts consumers, our message to businesses is that they should treat their customers fairly and responsibly – including trying to find a mutually acceptable solution.

In the case of package holidays, including some group trips, if these are cancelled because of the pandemic, for example because of changing Foreign Office travel advice, our clear view is that individual customers who have paid in advance should be entitled to a full refund.

Today's updates come as part of wider CMA work on cancellations and refunds, which has included commitments from major holiday lets firms Sykes Cottages and Vacation Rentals to offer people refunds for cancelled bookings.

Notes to Editors

1. The package holiday regulations referred to are the Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018.
2. For media enquiries, contact the CMA press office on 020 3738 6460 or press@cma.gov.uk.

[Rogue emergency services publisher](#)

shut down

Harlequin Print Ltd was wound up in the public interest on 27 August 2020 in the High Court, Manchester, before District Judge Woodward. The Official Receiver has been appointed as liquidator of the company.

In considering the petitions, the court heard that Harlequin Print was a publishing company based in Liverpool. Trading from October 2018, Harlequin Print pitched to businesses, local authorities, schools, and sports and social clubs, to advertise in magazines the publisher produced.

Prospective clients were told that the publications covered the emergency services, including fire safety and crime prevention.

Complaints, however, were made about the company and the Insolvency Service carried out confidential enquiries into Harlequin Print.

Enquiries uncovered that the company made false and misleading statements. Clients were told that the magazines would be distributed to local businesses and schools. Investigators, however, found no evidence that the magazines were ever produced or distributed.

Sales staff falsely claimed to work for the emergency services or associated charities and inflated the numbers of magazines produced and distributed.

Harlequin Print's company records showed that 93 companies had been victim to the publisher's rogue activities between October 2018 until February 2020. Victims reported that the company used forceful and bullish sales tactics and some businesses were threatened with debt enforcement action to pay invoices they had not agreed.

Investigators found the company had minimal expenditure and the proceeds of sales were removed by the publisher's director. Harlequin Print did not make any financial contributions to the emergency services or associated charities they falsely claimed they were supporting.

During investigations, the company and its director failed to cooperate with enquiries, did not deliver accounting or trading records and broadly, traded with a lack of transparency.

David Hope , Chief Investigator, said:

Harlequin Print dishonestly targeted nearly 100 companies to advertise in magazines that did not support the emergency services or support charitable initiatives.

The courts have rightfully recognised the damage and harm Harlequin Print was causing and has wound-up the company in the public interest to ensure no further business will become a victim of their unscrupulous conduct.

All public enquiries concerning the affairs of the companies should be made to: birkenhead.0R@insolvency.gov.uk quoting CIB57545.

Harlequin Print Ltd (Company number 11604295)

The petitions were presented on 13 July 2020 under s124A of the Insolvency Act 1986. The Official Receiver was appointed as liquidator of the companies on 27 August 2020 by District Judge Woodward

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). [Information about how to complain about a live company](#).

[Information about the work of the Insolvency Service](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Army's construction vehicles boosted by £240 million contract](#)

The fleet – known as MITER – is a valuable asset in peace time activities and operations around the world. In recent years the equipment has been used to help with recovery following the devastation caused by Hurricanes Irma and Dorian in the Caribbean, during major flooding incidents in the UK and supporting the military response to COVID-19 by loading and off-loading vital medical supplies from distribution centres.

Now a new seven-year contract has been awarded to AmeyBriggs to maintain, manage and support the MOD's fleet of construction and mechanical vehicles.

Vehicles in the MITER fleet include excavators, bulldozers, cranes and forklift trucks and meet the MOD's need for earth-moving, engineer construction and mechanical handling capabilities.

Offering MOD £136 million in savings over the next 10 years, the contract will also sustain jobs across the UK.

Defence Minister Jeremy Quin said:

Our Armed Forces deserve the best equipment for their vital operations, both in the UK and right across the world. From humanitarian support to keeping our country safe, construction and mechanical vehicles are a key asset for defence.

This contract is the result of excellent industry collaboration, and I am pleased that we are continuing to support jobs across the country.

The contract was negotiated by Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), the procurement arm of the MOD. MITER sees three existing contracts – Defence Mechanical Handling Equipment, Protected Engineering Equipment and C-Vehicle capability – brought under one umbrella contract.

This is part of defence's "Whole Force" approach, which puts equipment, personnel for military tasks, new information systems and infrastructure support under one arrangement.

Simon Herrington, who led the DE&S team securing the contract, said:

This has been a culmination of five years hard work with a small dedicated project team assisted with subject matter experts and a very good working relationship with the Army as lead customer.

This hard work and collaborative working has resulted in the project being able to declare a £136M efficiency for DE&S and the Army, a really great achievement.

AmeyBriggs is a new joint venture between infrastructure support service provider Amey plc and Briggs Defence, a specialist division of asset management and engineering services provider Briggs Equipment.

Under MITER, AmeyBriggs will not only manage and maintain this key equipment, but also provide support for military personnel to ensure safe and effective use.

Major General Simon Hamilton CBE, Army Director Support said:

I'm particularly enthusiastic about Project MITER. We have taken three previous overlapping mechanisms for provision of Mechanical Handling Equipment, Construction and Protected Plant and melded them into one to achieve efficiencies.

Moreover, we have designed-in contractual innovation and flexibility by integrating a fleet of military, leased and hired equipment; this means we only pay for what we need when we need it, but can scale-up quickly as necessary; we will also benefit from emerging technologies as they develop. Importantly, MITER embraces a Whole Force Approach, presenting opportunities for enhancing the skills of both regular and reserve personnel.

To manage the contract, around 180 staff and supply chain partners will be transferred into AmeyBriggs from the current support teams which brings

together a wealth of knowledge, skills and experience.

Chris Bushell, Director General (Land) at DE&S said:

The successful contract award for MITER is an excellent example of DE&S and industry working closely together to deliver an innovative solution. This will provide the Armed Forces with a key capability, to deliver operational effect all over the world, on time and at a price that represents great value for money.