

# Press release: Debt management bosses banned after transferring half-a-million from own companies

Andrew Brooke (45) and Gary Gregson (38) have been disqualified for 13 and 10 years respectively and are now prevented from acting, directly or indirectly, as directors of companies.

Gary Gregson was the main director of Gregson and Brooke Financial Services Ltd (GBFS) and One Tick Ltd (OT). The companies provided debt management services to people in financial distress, helping them to come to agreements with their creditors and pay down their debts.

The companies operated through various different trading names, including Expert Money Solutions.

Together GBFS and OT received payments from customers into debt payment plans and offered a 'credit resolve' product, which attempted to challenge the enforceability of credit agreements signed by their clients, as well as reclaiming PPI payments.

Although this was a legitimate service, GBFS and OT would pay minimal contributions to the credit providers from their clients' debt payment plans, while keeping a significant portion of their clients' money to go towards 'service fees'.

Some customers complained to the Financial Ombudsman that their debts had increased, despite having paid money into their debt payment plans.

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), the financial services regulator, visited the offices of GBFS and OT in July 2014 and as a result the firm agreed to stop accepting new customers.

The FCA also warned Gary Gregson that the companies could be closed down after they were unable to provide adequate records of how much money was being held on behalf of their clients.

Gary Gregson agreed not to withdraw fees, other than to pay staff, but then proceeded to transfer £210,006 from GBFS and OT to himself and third parties he was connected to, before resigning his directorships.

The firms then came under the stewardship of Andrew Brooke, who was reappointed as a director of the companies on 20 August 2014. The FCA continued to have concerns and issued Supervisory Notices to GBFS and OT on 29 August 2014.

But Andrew Brooke then proceeded to transfer a total of £442,000 to another company he was a director of before both GBFS and OT entered into administration in October 2014.

Following the collapse of the companies, the Insolvency Service investigated due to concerns identified by the firms' administrators.

Gary Gregson was disqualified by the court for 10 years, beginning on 7 March 2018, for a lack of commercial probity and failure to ensure the debt management companies, including another failed company, Gregson and Brooke Ltd (GAB), adhered to guidance issued by the regulator.

Andrew Brooke was disqualified at an earlier hearing for 13 years, beginning on 7 July 2017, having also acted with a lack of commercial probity and failure to ensure GAB adhered to the regulator's guidance.

At the same time as Andrew Brooke was disqualified, his wife Shalles Fee Onido (43), also known as Shalles Brooke, and Nova Espoltero (33) were disqualified for four years each having allowed Andrew Brooke to authorise £442,000 worth of transfers from GBFS and OT.

Robert Clarke, Head of Insolvent Investigations North for the Insolvency Service, said:

"The real victims here are Brooke and Gregson's clients who sought genuine assistance to help manage their debts but many received little or no benefit at all from instructing the companies to act on their behalf.

"Brooke and Gregson clearly put their own interests ahead of their clients. The vast amount of money they transferred out of their companies and their timing as the net was closing in from the FCA showed a cynical disregard for the needs of their customers.

"I would also like to thank the FCA, whose cooperation was crucial in securing these disqualifications."

Jonathan Davidson, Director of Supervision – retail and authorisations at the FCA said:

"These individuals were more interested in lining their own pockets than helping potentially vulnerable people get out of debt. This case shows what can be achieved when we work with partners, like the Insolvency Service, to ensure people face the consequences of their actions.

"We are pleased that as result of our partnership it will be years before they have any involvement in the business community again as directors."

## **Notes to editor**

### **Information on the Directors**

Gary John Gregson lives in Manchester, having previously resided in Bolton.

Andrew Roy Brooke lives in Digos City, Philippines, having previously resided in Bolton.

Shalles Fee Onido lives in Digos City, Philippines.

Nova Espoltero lives in Davao City, Philippines.

### **Information on the companies**

Information from Companies house regarding Gregson and Brooke Limited ([CRO No. 06194937](#)). The company went into liquidation on 7 July 2014 and had an estimated deficiency of £1,956,491.

Information from Companies house regarding Gregson and Brooke Financial Services Ltd ([CRO No. 07338291](#)). The company went into Administration on 27 October 2014 and the Joint Administrators' Progress Report, dated 15 April 2016, disclosed an estimated deficiency of £2,307,440.

Information from Companies house regarding One Tick Ltd ([CRO No. 06904931](#)). The company went into administration on 27 October 2014 and the Joint Administrators' Progress Report, dated 15 April 2016, disclosed an estimated deficiency of £183,858.

### **Court details**

Gregson attended a trial in February 2018 in the High Court at Manchester District Registry. His Honour Judge Davies found that Gregson transferred a total of £144,781 from Gregson and Brooke Financial Services Ltd and £65,225 from One Tick Ltd to himself and third parties connected to him between 28 July 2014 and 21 August 2014. Mr Gregson told the Court that the transfers had been made as repayments of loans he had given to the companies.

Brooke was disqualified at an uncontested hearing in June 2017 in the High Court at Manchester District Registry. His Honour Judge Bird concluded that Brooke transferred a total of £285,000 and £157,000 from GBFS and OT respectively to another company of which he was a director after the FCA had issued the Supervisory Notices on 29 August 2014. The third party company had issued single page invoices to GBFS and OT on 15 August 2014 with the only narrative being 'commission'.

### **What is a disqualification order?**

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

In addition that person cannot act as an insolvency practitioner and there are many other restrictions are placed on disqualified directors by other regulations. Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings. Further information on director disqualifications and restrictions is [available](#).

The Insolvency Service administers the insolvency regime, investigating all compulsory liquidations and individual insolvencies (bankruptcies) through

the Official Receiver to establish why they became insolvent. It may also use powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK. In addition, the agency authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, deals with disqualification of directors in corporate failures, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

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

## About the Financial Conduct Authority

1. On 18 September 2014 the Financial Conduct Authority [issued a Consumer Warning](#) about Gregson and Brooke Financial Services and One Tick (and another connected company, The Money Management Service Ltd) advising customers to stop making payments to the firms.
2. On 1 April 2013 the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) became responsible for the conduct supervision of all regulated financial firms and the prudential supervision of those not supervised by the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA).
3. The FCA took over regulation of consumer credit, which includes debt management firms, on 1 April 2014.
4. The FCA has an overarching strategic objective of ensuring the relevant markets function well. To support this it has three operational objectives: to secure an appropriate degree of protection for consumers; to protect and enhance the integrity of the UK financial system; and to promote effective competition in the interests of consumers.
5. Find out more information [about the FCA](#).

### FCA press office contact details:

Press: 0207 066 3232

Outside office hours: 07795 351 956

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7596 6187 or 020 7637 6498

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

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## [Press release: Foreign flagged ships detained in the UK during March 2018](#)

During March, there were four new detentions of foreign flagged vessels in a

UK port, four vessels remained under detention from previous months. A total of four vessels remain under detention at the end of March.

1. In response to one of the recommendations of Lord Donaldson's inquiry into the prevention of pollution from merchant shipping, and in compliance with the EU Directive on Port State Control (2009/16/EC as amended), the Maritime and Coastguard agency (MCA) publishes details of the foreign flagged vessels detained in UK ports each month.
2. The UK is part of a regional agreement on port state control known as the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Paris MOU) and information on all ships that are inspected is held centrally in an electronic database known as THETIS. This allows the ships with a high risk rating and poor detention records to be targeted for future inspection.
3. Inspections of foreign flagged ships in UK ports are undertaken by surveyors from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. When a ship is found to be not in compliance with applicable convention requirements, a deficiency may be raised. If any of their deficiencies are so serious they have to be rectified before departure, then the ship will be detained.
4. All deficiencies should be rectified before departure if at all possible.
5. When applicable, the list includes those passenger craft prevented from operating under the provisions of the EU Directive on Mandatory Surveys for the safe operation of regular Ro-Ro ferry and high speed passenger craft services (1999/35/EU).

#### Notes on the list of detentions

- Full details of the ship. The accompanying detention list shows ship's International Maritime Organization (IMO) number which is unchanging throughout the ship's life and uniquely identifies it. It also shows the ship's name and flag state at the time of its inspection.
- Company. The company shown in the vessel's Safety Management Certificate (SMC) or if there is no SMC, then the party otherwise believed to be responsible for the safety of the ship at the time of inspection.
- Classification Society. The list shows the Classification Society responsible for classing the ship only.
- Recognised Organisation. Responsible for conducting the statutory surveys: and issuing statutory certificates on behalf of the Flag State
- White (WL), Grey (GL) and Black lists (BL) are issued by the Paris MoU on 01 July each year and shows the performance of flag State.

## SHIPS DETAINED IN MARCH 2018

### Vessel Name: ANNA

GT: 39709

IMO: 9255593

Flag: Bahamas (White List)

Company: Adelfia Navigation SA

Classification Society: LR

Recognised Organisation: LR Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: LR

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: LR

Date and Place of Detention: 31st March at Immingham

Summary: Fifteen deficiencies with two ground for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes
10127 – Voyage or passage plan	Not as required	No
11101 – Lifeboats	Inoperative	Yes
10101 – Pilot ladders and hoist/pilot transfer arrangements	Missing	No
04109 – Fire drills	Lack of control	No
02105 – Steering gear	Not as required	No
04108 – Muster list	Incomplete	No
05105 – MF/HF Radio installation	Not as required	No
01331 – Collective bargaining agreement	Missing	No
11117 – Lifebuoys incl. provision and disposition	Not as required	No
18432 – Risk evaluation, training and instruction to seafarers	Missing	No
11124 – Embarkation arrangement survival craft	Not properly maintained	No
18416 – Ropes and wires	Damaged	No
11116 – Distress flares	Insufficient	No
11103 – Stowage and provision of Lifeboats	Not as required	No

This vessel was still detained on 31st March 2018

### Vessel Name: K DADAYLI

GT: 5751

IMO: 9513191

Flag: Panama (White List)

Company: Dadaylilar Denizcilik Nakliyat

Classification Society: RINA

Recognised Organisation: PHRS Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: PHRS/BV

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: PHRS/BV

Date and Place of Detention: 26th March at Immingham

Summary: Twenty nine deficiencies with four ground for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
01316 – Cargo Information	Missing information	No
07199 – Other (fire safety)	Other	Yes
09235 – Fitness for duty – work and rest hours	Rest hours insufficient	No
10101 – Pilot ladders and hoist/pilot transfer arrangements	Missing	No
04108 – Muster list	Incomplete	No
10127 – Voyage or passenger plan	Lack of information	No
11131 – On board training and instructions	Missing information	No
11131 – On board training and instructions	Lack of training	No
11117 – Lifebuoys incl. provision and disposition	Not as required	No
05104 – MF Radio installation	Not as required	No
07111 – Personal equipment for fire safety	Not properly maintained	No
18418 – Winches & capstans	Inoperative	No
03108 – Ventilators, air pipes, casing	Not as required	Yes
18432 – Risk evaluation, training and instruction to seafarers	Missing	No
03113 – Bulwarks and freeing ports	Not as required	No
11105 – Rescue boat inventory	Not as required	No
11104 – Rescue boats	Missing equipment	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes
01333 – Ship specific plans for the recovery of persons from water	Incomplete	No
11104 – Rescue boats	Not properly maintained	No
05116 – Operation/maintenance	Not properly maintained	No
06105 – Atmosphere testing instrument	Missing	No

03108 – Ventilators, air pipes, casings	Not properly maintained	Yes
04103 – Emergency, lighting, batteries and switches	Inoperative	No
07114 – Remote means of control (opening, pumps, ventilation, etc.) Machinery spaces	Not as required	No
07106 – Fire detection and alarm system	Not properly maintained	No
11101 – Lifeboats	Not ready for use	No
07125 – Evaluation of crew performance (fire drills)	Lack of familiarity	No
07106 – Fire detection and alarm system	Not as required	No

This vessel was still detained on 31st March 2018

**Vessel Name: AMIRA MARIAM**

GT: 15349

IMO: 9167631

Flag: Tuvalu (Not Listed)

Company: Elamira for Maritime Agencies Co Sae

Classification Society: BV

Recognised Organisation: BV

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: IS Class

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: IS Class

Date and Place of Detention: 22nd March 2018 at Liverpool

Summary: Sixteen deficiencies with four ground for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
11110 – Stowage & provision of liferafts	HRU improperly fitted	Yes
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire resisting divisions	Not as required	Yes
18405 – Electrical	Unsafe	No
07113 – Fire pumps & IT's pipes	Inoperative	No
01209 – Manning specified by the minimum safe manning doc.	Not as required	Yes
01220 – Seafarer employment agreements (SEA)	Not as required	No
01306 – Shipboard working arrangements	Not properly filled	No
10101 – Pilot ladders and hoist/pilot transfer arrangement	Damaged	No



07108 – Ready availability of fire fighting equipment	Missing	No
10116 – Nautical publications	Missing	No
10129 – Navigation records	Missing	No
18302 – Sanitary facilities	Not properly maintained	No
11101 – Lifeboats	Not properly maintained	No
10133 – Bridge operations	Lack of familiarity	No
04108 – Muster list	Incomplete	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes

This vessel was released on 30th March 2018

**Vessel Name: FRISIAN LADY**

GT: 3666

IMO: 9246906

Flag: Netherlands (White List)

Company: Boomsma Shipping BV

Classification Society: LR

Recognised Organisation: LR

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: LR

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: LR

Date and Place of Detention: 7th March at Immingham

Summary: Twelve deficiencies with four ground for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
10114 – Voyage data recorder (VDR)/Simplified Voyage data recorder (S-VDR)	Inoperative	Yes
01105 – Cargo Ship Safety (including exemption)	Missing	No
10109 – Lights, shapes, sound-signals	Missing	Yes
11117 – Lifebuoys incl. provision and disposition	Not as required	No
03108 – Ventilators, air pipes, casings	Damaged	No
09235 – Fitness for duty – work and rest hours	Rest hours insufficient	No
11104 – Rescue boats	Damaged	Yes
18420 – Cleanliness of engine room	Not as required	No

18408 – Electrical	Unsafe	No
13101 – Propulsion main engine	Not as required	No
03199 – Other (load lines)	Other	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes

This vessel was released on 13th March 2018

## **DETENTIONS CARRIED OVER FROM PREVIOUS MONTHS**

**Vessel Name: SOUTHERN BREEZE**

GT: 4109

IMO: 9437763

Flag: Malta (White List)

Company: Sonata D00

Classification Society: BV

Recognised Organisation: BV Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: BV

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: BV

Date and Place of Detention: 28th February 2018 at Fowey

Summary: Eight deficiencies with one ground for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
18203 – Wages	Missing	Yes
18203 – Wages	Missing	No
18204 – Calculation and payment of wages	Not according to SEA	No
01220 – Seafarers' employment agreement (SEA)	Not properly filled	No
18199 – Other (Minimum requirements)	Not as required	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	No
02103 – Stability/strength/ loading information and instruments	Not as required	No
11102 – Lifeboat inventory	Not properly stowed	No

This vessel was released on 6th March 2018

**Vessel Name: DEEPSEA WORKER**

GT: 3345

IMO: 7905285

Flag: St Vincent & Grenadines

Company: Seaway Offshore LLC

Classification Society: DNV GL

Recognised Organisation: DNV GL

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: DNV GL

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: DNV GL

Date and Place of Detention: 19th January 2018 at Sunderland

Summary: Fifteen deficiencies with one grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
16105 – Access control	Not as required	No
01214 – Enforcement by flag state	Missing	No
01137 – Civil liability for oil pollution damage cert	Missing	No
10127 – Voyage or passage plan	Lack of information	No
10116 – Nautical publications	Missing	No
18399 – Other (Accommodation, recreational facilities)	Other	No
07122 – Fire control plan	Not updated	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes
07109 – Fixed fire extinguishing installation	Not as required	No
18302 – Sanitary Facilities	Not as required	No
18324 – Cold room, cold room cleanliness, cold room temperature	Inoperative	No
14499 – Other (Marpol Annex IV)	Other	No
07114 – Remote means of control (opening, pumps, ventilation etc.) Machinery spaces	Inoperative	No
03108 – Ventilators air pipes, casings	Corroded	No
14108 – 15ppm alarm arrangements	Inoperative	No

This vessel was released on 29th March 2018

**Vessel Name: SEA TRIDENT**

GT: 964.

IMO No: 7393169.

Flag: PANAMA (white list)

Company:

Classification Society: Expired

Recognised Organisation: Expired

Recognised Organisation for ISM DOC:

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC:

Date and Place of Detention: 17 June 2016, West Cowes

Summary: Seventeen deficiencies with seventeen grounds for detentions

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
01101 – Cargo ship safety equipment cert	Expired	Yes
01102 – Cargo Ship safety construction cert	Expired	Yes
01104 – Cargo ship safety radio cert	Expired	Yes
01108 – Loadline cert	Expired	Yes
01117 – IOPP (International Oil Pollution Prevention cert	Expired	Yes
01119 – International Sewage Pollution Prevention cert	Expired	Yes
01124 – International Air Pollution Prevention cert	Expired	Yes
01137 – Civil liability for bunker oil pollution damage cert	Expired	Yes
01199 – Other certs (Certificate of class)	Expired	Yes
01201 – Certificates for master and officers	Missing	Yes
10111 – Charts	Not updated	Yes
10116 – Publications Nautical	Not updated	Yes
11108 – Inflatable liferafts	Expired	Yes
11116 – Distress flares	Missing	Yes
07109 – Fixed fire fighting extinguishing installation	Not as required	Yes
07110 – Fire fighting equipment & appliances	Not as required	Yes
01140 – Declaration of Maritime Labour Compliance	Missing	Yes

This vessel was still detained on 31st March 2018

**Vessel Name: CIEN PORCIENTO (General Cargo)**

GT: 106.

IMO No: 8944446.

Flag: Unregistered.

Company: Open Window Inc.

Classification Society: Unclassed.

Recognised Organisation: Not applicable.

Recognised Organisation for ISM DOC: Not applicable.

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: Not applicable

Date and Place of detention: 4 March 2010, Lowestoft

Summary: Thirty deficiencies including seven grounds for detention

This vessel was still detained on 31 March 2018

Notes to Editors

- The MCA is a partner in the Sea Vision UK campaign to raise awareness and understanding of the sea and maritime activities. Sea Vision promotes the importance and economic value of the sector and works to highlight the exciting range of activities and career opportunities available to young people within the UK growing maritime sector at [www.seavision.org.uk](http://www.seavision.org.uk)
- Follow us on Twitter: @MCA\_media

For further information please contact Maritime and Coastguard Agency Press Office, on: +44 (0) 2380 329 401 Press releases and further information about the agency is available [here](#).

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## **Press release: British High Commission hosts Commonwealth Big Lunch ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting**

HE Sarah Cooke in a selfie with school girls from Unubini and Tandale Primary Schools

The Big Lunch was the culmination of events in Tanzania ahead of the 2018 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting to be held in the London from 16th to 20th April 2018.

The Meeting will see up to 53 Commonwealth Heads of Government and representatives discuss key issues under the theme of "Towards a Common Future".

Today's Tanzania Commonwealth Big Lunch enabled young female students from the Msichana Initiative Girls Clubs in Unubini Primary School and Tandale Primary School in Dar es Salaam to receive mentorship and advice from some of the most successful and influential women in Tanzania.

The British High Commissioner, HE Sarah Cooke, stated

The Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting taking place in London next week will focus on delivering a fairer and more prosperous, secure and sustainable future for the Commonwealth. I am delighted to invite the young students from the Msichana Initiative Girls Clubs to today's Big Lunch and connect them with inspirational mentors. One billion Commonwealth citizens are under the age of 25, so it is particularly important that the Commonwealth speaks to the challenges its young people face and answers their ambitions for a better life.

The lunch culminated with HE Sarah Cooke presenting the Commonwealth Point of Light Award to Petrider Paul, who was selected by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Petrider is a gender equality activist and was awarded for her exceptional voluntary service campaigning against child marriage and gender-based violence.

I am delighted to present Petrider with the Point of Light Award on behalf of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth commented HE Sarah Cooke. She is an inspiration not only to the young students here today but all young girls and women across Tanzania and the Commonwealth.

Also speaking at the event was Ms. Rebeca Gyumi, founder and Executive Director of Msichana Initiative who recently received the Human Rights Defender award from the UK Government, she said,

We will not consider ourselves successful until we have reached every girl. We do not want to leave anyone behind. I'm happy to see young girls sharing their dreams and aspirations with some of the most remarkable women in Tanzania, this should continue even in our individual spaces, that's how we build strong communities

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## **Press release: Government consults on proposals to toughen rules on building safety**

Tough new rules designed to strengthen fire testing for cladding systems on residential buildings were published for consultation today (11 April 2018) by Housing Secretary Sajid Javid.

The consultation, which aim to improve building safety, will look at restricting or banning the use of 'desktop studies' as a way of assessing the fire performance of external cladding systems.

The revisions come directly as a result of the recommendations made by Dame Judith Hackitt in her interim report from the review into building regulations and fire safety published last year. Government is also going further by asking whether 'desktop studies' should be used at all.

The consultation is seeking views on whether 'desktop studies' are appropriate for all construction products, wall systems (cladding) or for any other purpose.

If 'desktop studies' are deemed appropriate, the proposed changes include improving the transparency of assessments, enabling proper scrutiny of results and ensuring that the studies can only be carried out by properly accredited bodies that have the relevant expertise.

These proposals are subject to a full consultation that will end on 25 May 2018.

Housing Secretary, Sajid Javid said:

We have listened carefully to Dame Judith Hackitt and we are taking action to strengthen building regulations guidance, which could mean that the use of 'desktop studies' are either significantly restricted or banned altogether.

This demonstrates the tough measures we are prepared to take to make sure that cladding tests are as robust as possible and people are safe in their homes.

## **Desktop studies**

Assessment in lieu of tests, also known as 'desktop studies' are an established part of the system for classifying the fire performance of construction products and systems set out in [paragraph 1b of Annex A of Approved Document B](#).

Their use is being considered as part of Dame Judith Hackitt's [independent review into Building Regulations and Fire Safety](#) established by government following the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy. Her final report will be published in the spring.

See further details of the [consultation](#).

The deadline for consultation responses is 25 May. Once closed the department will consider all the comments received and provide a response as soon as possible.

## New British Standard

Government has commissioned the British Standards Institution (BSI) to draft a standard for the extended application of BS8414 results. This will provide detailed rules for assessments relating to cladding systems, in support of the new proposed requirements. Once the new British Standard is introduced for cladding systems, following it would be the expectation.

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## Press release: Directors banned for pocketing millions of Brazilian teak investments

On 12 January 2018, Junie Conrad Omari Bowers and Andrew Nathaniel Skeene gave undertakings to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy of 10 years each.

This means Junie Bowers and Andrew Skeene are prevented from controlling or managing a limited company without leave of the court.

Junie Bowers and Andrew Skeene were directors of GFI, which traded as Global Forestry Investments, and their business promoted two teak investment schemes in Brazil.

The Insolvency Service investigation found Junie Bowers and Andrew Skeene caused or allowed the company to operate with a lack of commercial probity from 24 September 2010 until the company ceased trading in March 2014, following a compulsory liquidation.

Investigators found that GFI received £20,146,631 from the sale of plots in the Belem Sky Project and £3,863,185 from plots sold in the Para Sky Project.

But there was no evidence in GFI's records or information provided by third parties that the majority of investors in the Belem Sky project received any returns after the first year, with investors receiving only £709,884.69 in total.

And there was no evidence in the company records or information provided by third parties of any returns being made to investors in the Para Sky project.

However, investigators discovered that investors' funds for the purchase of plots was paid to trust companies and over £13 million arising from the sale of the plots was paid to the bank accounts of Junie Bowers and Andrew Skeene.

The two directors explained that they had paid themselves the money as it helped ensure that running and operational costs of GFI could be paid whilst



the company had no bank account. But investigators found that £8,820,311 of those monies were used to pay creditors of a Dubai based company controlled by Bowers and Skeene, which was wound up by the High Court in October 2014.

Anthony Hannon, Official Receiver for the Insolvency Service, commented:

Directors who receive investment monies and misapply them for purposes not to the benefit of the company can expect to face the consequences of a lengthy period of disqualification.

Mr Junie Conrad Omari Bowers, date of birth December 1976, resides in South East London.

Mr Andrew Nathaniel Skeene, date of birth November 1977, resides in Croydon.

GFI Consultants Ltd (Company Reg No 7222180) traded from St Clement's House, 27-28 Clements Lane, EC4N 7AE.

The company entered into compulsory liquidation on 3 March 2014 with a deficit to creditors of at least £2,136,888.

On 13 March 2014 Stephen R Penn of Absolute Recovery Limited of First Floor, Block A, Loverall Court, Clayfields, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN4 8QG was appointed liquidator of the company.

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

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 other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and

promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies. The agency also authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

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

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7596 6187 or 020 7637 6498

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: