

Press release: Swifter justice for London fare dodgers

The new paperless process, in operation at Lavender Hill Magistrates' Court, means thousands of offenders caught dodging fares or using fraudulent tickets can now be punished more swiftly and effectively.

The system has been developed by HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) in partnership with Transport for London (TfL). It means TfL no longer have to manually process and physically deliver case papers to the court. Instead, prosecution evidence is now electronically transferred directly to the court. These cases are then considered by a magistrate and legal advisor on a laptop – freeing up court time to focus on more serious crimes.

Under the new system, Transport for London can prosecute some 18,000 commuter crimes a year in the capital more quickly and efficiently.

Justice Minister Dominic Raab said:

Using smart technology to punish fare dodgers swiftly and effectively is just one example of how our courts' reform programme will strengthen the justice system.

We are investing £1 billion to digitise the justice system – making it more accessible for all citizens, more sensitive for witnesses, and delivering better value for taxpayers' money.

Siwan Hayward, TfL's Head of Transport Policing, said:

We use the courts to tackle the minority of people who purposefully avoid paying their fares, licensed drivers and private hire operators who break the law, and companies who obstruct the pavements and streets.

That's why we have worked with HMCTS to streamline what has historically been a labour intensive, paper heavy process. The real-time aspect of the system results in court notices being issued within weeks of an offence and prosecutions are concluded sooner so individuals and businesses receive a faster resolution.

The new system enables our Investigations and Prosecutions team more time to target illegal behaviour and bring those who break the law to justice.

The system has already:

- processed around 4,200 cases since April 2017 and returned 3,000 sentences
- removed the need for documents to be physically transported by staff between TfL and the court
- allowed results of cases to be obtained by TfL immediately
- made enforcement faster.

Future developments will include speeding up the process for those guilty pleas which can be fast tracked, and eventually for an online system to replace the paper based system, further improving response times. Plans are also in place to offer the system to other large public service organisations who prosecute thousands of cases a year where the potential benefits would then be magnified.

Note to editors:

Evidence shows offering people the chance to plead online in these kinds of cases actually means more respond than when we ask for pleas on paper. The process will mostly replace letters (that don't work very well), and court hearings where the person doesn't turn up, not physical court appearances.

[Press release: Too good to be true...it usually is. Directors given 15 year bans](#)

Robert Adolf Mathilde Stitzinger and Omar Babbar Amighetti were each disqualified as directors for 15 years on 16 August 2017 for their part in a bank transaction scam involving Miami International Bank Ltd, a UK incorporated company.

The directors persuaded a US investor to pay €200,000 into a bank account held in Liechtenstein on the promise that the investment would yield a promised return of €10million within 15 days of payment.

The investor paid €200,000 into the Liechtenstein bank account in the name of Mr Stitzinger on 15 May 2014. The funds were never returned to the investor and no explanation was provided as to what happened.

A similar scam was operated in New Zealand also with the name "Miami International Bank Limited". This scam attracted the attention of the FBI in the United States who issued warnings about that company on its website. A previous company director of the UK company, was shown as "president" of the New Zealand company.

A winding up order was made against Miami International Bank Ltd on 16

December 2015 upon the petition of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy following an investigation by the Insolvency Service. Anthony Hannon, Official Receiver of Public Interest Unit (South) was appointed as liquidator.

Anthony Hannon, Official Receiver in the Public Interest Unit, said:

The Insolvency Service will look closely at any evidence of misconduct and take appropriate action where others have suffered as a result of directors actions, as has happened in this case.

Miami International Bank Ltd was incorporated on 2 June 2009 (CRN: 06922097) and remained a dormant company.

The Disqualification Order was pronounced by Chief Registrar Briggs on 16 August 2017, with the Deputy Official Receiver appearing on behalf of the Secretary of State. The defendants were not present or represented.

Mr Stitzinger and Mr Amighetti were appointed as directors of Miami International Bank Ltd on 22 July 2013.

Mr Robert Adolf Mathilde Stitzinger is of the Netherlands and his date of birth is August 1968.

Mr Omar Babbar Amighetti is of Costa Rica and his date of birth is February 1958.

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

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](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[News story: Over 160 firms are now signed up to the Women in Finance Charter](#)

A further 26 companies have signed up to the [Women in Finance Charter](#), including the Bank of England, Deloitte, and Tesco Bank, increasing the number of employees covered by [the Charter](#) to over 600,000. To coincide with the launch, and in collaboration with HM Treasury, Virgin Money has also created the Women in Finance app to support companies who want to sign [the Charter](#) and take action to improve gender balance within their organisation.

HM Treasury's [Women in Finance Charter](#) asks financial firms to commit to four industry actions to prepare their female talent for leadership positions. Over 600,000 employees in the UK – over half of those employed in financial services – are now covered by the plan, an increase of over 43,000 since July this year.

Since [the Charter](#) launched, 120 financial services firms have committed to have at least 30% women in senior roles by 2021 and of those, 40 firms have committed to a 50/50 gender split in senior roles by 2021.

Today's (10 November 2017) new signatories will announce their targets in February 2018.

Among the new signatories to [the Charter](#) are the Payment Systems Regulator,

RSA Group, Allianz Insurance, UK Finance, the Association for Financial Markets in Europe, Old Mutual Wealth and Funding Circle.

The Women in Finance app which is also announced today, will feature video case studies, research and practical tools to support companies who want to act on the gender balance within their organisation.

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury, Stephen Barclay, said:

This is another excellent group of signatories to the Women in Finance Charter. Their actions, alongside those of the other signatories, have the potential to make the UK's pre-eminent financial services sector more representative and more inclusive. I'm keen to see even more firms follow their example and make a positive, public commitment to improve gender balance in our financial services.

Jayne-Anne Gadhia, CEO of Virgin Money and the government's Women in Finance Champion said:

I'm delighted to see that 162 companies have now signed up to the Women in Finance Charter. Improving the gender balance of the financial services sector will undoubtedly improve productivity, profitability and outcomes for customers.

There are a range of issues organisations must address to develop fully inclusive workplaces. Through a recent YouGov survey we asked managers in Financial Services how greater equality in Financial Services could be achieved and they identified ten positive actions to help create the right culture.

To drive change, the Women in Finance company signatories have collaborated to share best practice on these ten positive actions, which are now freely available through the 'Women in Finance App' which is launched today. I believe this innovation will help drive improved gender balance throughout the Financial Services industry.

Stephen Jones, Chief Executive of UK Finance, said:

The Women in Finance Charter is an important part of the initiatives and support across the financial services industry for the advancement of women in senior management positions. UK Finance is proud to commit to the Charter and we have set ourselves the target of achieving 40 per cent female representation within senior management over three years, and aspire to achieve gender parity over the medium term.

[Press release: New Secretary of State for International Development](#)

Prime Minister Theresa May has appointed the Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt as International Development Secretary.

Secretary of State for International Development, Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt, said:

I am honoured to have been appointed International Development Secretary by the Prime Minister.

I look forward to working with the fantastic and dedicated DFID team to build a safer, healthier world for us all and giving the British people every reason to feel pride in what we do.

ENDS

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[Press release: PM will meet with leaders of European business organisations: 9 November 2017](#)

The Prime Minister will meet with leaders from European business organisations on Monday (13) to discuss shared opportunities for industry as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

Theresa May will speak about the mutual importance of maintaining and developing the strong connections between EU and UK markets.

Mrs May will reiterate the UK's commitment to securing an implementation period of around two years once Britain leaves the EU in March 2019.

And she will ask the business experts from organisations including the CBI

and BusinessEurope to share their input on how the UK and EU can continue to thrive side by side in industry and economic development.

The Prime Minister will also reiterate her vision set out in Florence for a bold and deep economic partnership with the EU – one in which the UK continues to be a global, free trading nation and the strongest friend and partner to the EU.

Alongside colleagues from the Department for Exiting the EU, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Treasury, the Prime Minister will reflect on the historic strong relationship between European business and the UK – from BMW in Oxford building electric MINIs to Arla's work with dairy farmers across Britain.

The government has been engaging with industry through the Business Advisory Council since July this year as a vital part of preparations for leaving the EU. But this is the first meeting where she will engage directly with leaders from EU Business Organisations.

Greg Clark, Secretary of State for BEIS, will also set out the aims for the upcoming Industrial Strategy which will play a key role in UK's free market economy delivering economic and social progress for everyone in society.

Ministers attending the Downing Street roundtable, which the CBI helped to organise, will be:

- Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
- Rt Hon David Davis MP, Secretary of State for Exiting the EU
- Stephen Barclay MP, Economic Secretary to the Treasury

Attending businesses organisations will be:

- CBI (UK)
- Institute of Directors (UK)
- BusinessEurope (EU)
- European Services Forum (EU)
- BDI (Germany)
- BDA (Germany)
- MEDEF (France)
- Confindustria (Italy)
- CEOE (Spain)
- VNO-NCW (Netherlands)
- Ibec (Ireland)
- Confederation of Swedish Enterprise (Sweden)
- Polish Confederation of Private Employers (Lewiatan)
- Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic, SPCR (Czech Republic)
- VBO/FEB (Belgium)