

Press release: Diamonds aren't forever for banned jewellery seller

The sole registered director of AS Diamonds Limited in Arlington Court, Stevenage, has been disqualified from acting as a company director for six years failing to provide adequate company records, whilst also treating HMRC detrimentally in comparison to other creditors.

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy accepted an undertaking from Gary Wright effective from 11 October 2017.

Although Gary Wright provided some accounting records to the liquidator they were inadequate and it was not possible in particular to verify the purpose of payments to himself of over £160,000 as well as cash withdrawals of £40,000 and the validity of a supplier invoice to the value of £33,000.

During the period of trading, Gary Wright caused AS Diamonds Limited to treat HMRC detrimentally in comparison to other creditors. Although AS Diamonds Limited charged VAT on its sales invoices, no VAT returns were ever submitted and HMRC therefore duly issued assessments totaling £123,922. An analysis of the company's bank account revealed that in excess of £490,000 was paid out, of which, nothing was paid to HMRC in respect of its accruing VAT debt.

Additionally, during the period 11 December to 22 December 2014, £49,967 was transferred to Gary Wright's personal bank account which was to the detriment of creditors in general.

Commenting on the disqualification, David Brooks, a Chief Investigator with the Insolvency Service said:

The period of this disqualification contained within the undertaking signed by Gary Wright sends a clear message to other company directors.

Company directors have a statutory duty under the Companies Act to keep adequate company records which should amongst other things satisfactorily explain payments.

Further, much of the public service is funded by the correct amount of taxes being paid. By not declaring and paying the correct amount of taxes, Gary Wright has ultimately deprived the public services and the public from receiving the services it deserves. The Insolvency Service therefore will not hesitate to remove them from the business environment in order to protect the public.

Gary Wright, 37 – date of birth, December 1980, was a registered director of AS Diamonds Limited (Company No. 08514671), which was incorporated in May 2013 and traded as a wholesaler of watches and jewellery from Arlington Court, Stevenage.

Gary Wright, of Stevenage, has been disqualified for 6 years from 11 October 2017.

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](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

Press release: Bethnal Green restauranters each disqualified for 6 years

Salahuddin Sahibzada and Muhammad Anjum have each been disqualified for six years having given disqualification undertakings to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, which commenced on 25 September 2017 and 3 October 2017, respectively.

Mr Sahibzada and Mr Anjum were the directors of New Lahore Express Limited, and on 18 April 2016 Home Office Immigration Enforcement Officers discovered that the company was employing five illegal workers.

The company went into liquidation on 17 August 2016 owing creditors £90,973. A penalty of £30,000 was imposed by the Home Office Immigration and Enforcement on 29 June 2016 for employing illegal workers which remained unpaid.

Commenting on the disqualification, Martin Gitner, Deputy Head of Investigations, West Midlands stated:

Illegal workers are not protected under employment law, and as well as cheating legitimate job seekers out of employment opportunities these employers defraud the tax payer and undercut honest competitors.

The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, makes employers responsible for preventing illegal workers in the UK. To comply with the law, a company must check and be able to prove documents have been checked prior to recruitment that show a person is entitled to work.

The public has a right to expect that those who break the law will face the consequences and this should serve as a warning to other directors tempted to take on illegal staff.

Mr Salahuddin Sahibzada resides in Eastbourne and his date of birth is August 1973.

Mr Muhammad Anjum resides in Southend On Sea and his date of birth January 1963.

New Lahore Express Limited (CR0 No. 06800253) was incorporated on 23 January

2009.

New Lahore Express Limited traded from 265 Bethnal Green Road, London E2 6AH and its registered office was at the same address.

Mr Sahibzada was a director from 29 September 2009 to the date of liquidation.

Mr Anjum was a director from 14 May 2014 to the date of liquidation.

The Company went to creditors voluntary liquidation on 17 August 2016 with as estimated deficiency of £90,973.

On 4 September 2017, the Secretary of State accepted a disqualification undertaking from Mr Sahibzada, effective from 25 September 2017, for a period of 6 years.

On 12 September 2017, the Secretary of State accepted a disqualification undertaking from Mr Anjum, effective from 3 October 2017, for a period of 6 years.

Following a visit from Home Office Immigration Officers in April 2016, a breach was discovered, New Lahore Express Limited was issued with a penalty notice in the sum of £30,000 which remained outstanding at the date of liquidation.

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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.

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You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

News story: Apply to the Attorney General's Civil Counsel: Regional panel

Applications are invited from advocates interested in joining the Regional panel to undertake civil and EU work for government departments.

The Attorney General is establishing three separate panels in the Regions:

- A panel for senior juniors
- B panel for middle juniors
- C panel for junior juniors

Members of the Regional panel will be expected to have at least 2 years' experience in actual practice by 30 November 2017 (starting from end of second 6 months' pupillage for barristers or end of training contract for solicitors).

Appointments will be for 5 years. Those appointed to the Regional C panel will often provide (but not exclusively) the Regional A and B panel members of the future and so should have the potential to join the A panel.

There are vacancies on the panel in all areas of public and private law. The Attorney General is particularly looking to deepen capacity in:

- admiralty/shipping
- aviation
- road and rail
- benefits
- social security & right to reside
- construction
- contract/commercial
- corporate
- costs
- education
- data protection
- directors' disqualification
- energy/utilities
- general tax work – direct and indirect
- human rights

Application

To obtain details about the eligibility requirements and the application process, we recommend reading our [Regional Panel Information Sheet](#) (PDF, 79.9KB, 9 pages) .

To apply, you must first email PanelCounsel@governmentlegal.gov.uk to register an interest. Please note that registering an interest does not commit you to making an application if you later decide not to do so.

Once you have registered, you will be given a link to access our online

portal and download the application pack.

Completed applications must be submitted by midday on Thursday 30 November 2017.

Further information and mentoring

If you have any queries, contact the Government Legal Department Panel Counsel team via email panelcounsel@governmentlegal.gov.uk or on 020 7210 1506.

We encourage applications from a wide range of those eligible to apply. Therefore we will put advocates who want to discuss the application process for the C Panel in touch with an established Panel member as a mentor. The mentor will discuss the application process, the eligibility criteria and the presentation of relevant information on the application form either by telephone or in person.

If you are considering applying and want a mentor, please contact the Government Legal Department Panel Counsel team, via email anna.rickard@governmentlegal.gov.uk before 5pm on 3 November 2017.

News story: Track worker near miss, Egmonton

Around 11:22 hrs on 5 October 2017, a group of track workers narrowly avoided being struck by train reporting number 1D09, the 10:03 hrs passenger train service from London Kings Cross to Leeds. The incident took place close to Egmonton level crossing, which is situated between Newark North Gate and Retford on the East Coast Main Line.

The train was approaching the crossing on the down main line at near to the maximum permitted line speed of 125 mph (200 km/h), when the driver saw a group of track workers in the distance. The driver sounded the train's warning horn, but could see no response from the group. The driver sounded the horn again a few seconds later. He could still see no response, so he initiated an emergency brake application, while continuing to sound the horn.

As the train approached, the group of track workers became aware of the train's warning horn and started to move into the cess. However, the last member of the group got clear of the track very shortly before the train passed them. The train was still travelling close to 125 mph (200 km/h) as it passed the point where the group had been working. It subsequently came to a stand around 0.9 miles (1.4 km) after the emergency brake application was made.

There were no injuries. However, the driver, who believed that the train had struck members of the group, was distressed by the incident.

Our investigation will determine the sequence of events. It will also include consideration of:

- how the system of work the team was using was planned and authorised, including the availability of protection and warning systems
- the way in which the system of work the team were using was implemented on site, including how this may have been affected by the layout of the track, the proximity of the crossing and the work being undertaken
- the competence management of those involved in the planning, authorisation and implementation of the system of work
- the non-technical skills of the site team and any issues associated with workload and fatigue
- any relevant underlying cultural or management factors

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry, the [British Transport 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.

You can [subscribe](#) to automated emails notifying you when we publish our reports.

[News story: Those suffering from problem debt to get vital 'Breathing Space'](#)

The government is [seeking views](#) as it develops a way to provide individuals in debt with up to six weeks free from further interest, charges and enforcement action. This period would give those affected time to take action by seeking financial advice about how to manage and relieve their debt burden.

Debt advice is key in helping people access a range of solutions, including informal repayment plans and debt write-off options, in order to help people get back on their feet.

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

For many people in the UK problem debt seems impossible to escape. Its effects can be far-reaching, impacting all aspects of a person's life and leaving them feeling helpless.

That is why we are working to give people who are overwhelmed by debt more time to seek advice, find a workable solution, and help get their lives back on track.

Although many people can and do use credit successfully to manage their personal finances, for the minority who get into difficulties this government wants to offer more support.

The new scheme could include legal protections that would shield individuals from further creditor action once a plan to repay their debts is in place.

Problem debt, where people are falling behind on their financial repayments or see their debt as a heavy burden, affects millions of people in the UK. Causes can range from the sudden loss of employment to a more gradual dependence on debt to make ends meet, with many people waiting 12 months or more before seeking help.

A six weeks' grace period, where those suffering are safe from enforcement action and interest charges, could help give people the time and opportunity to seek debt advice.

The government is committed to getting this right and over the next twelve weeks will be meeting with key industry representatives from charities, debt advice organisations, lenders and creditors. Members of the wider public who wish to contribute, particularly those affected by this issue, are encouraged to [share their views](#).