

[News story: Statement on Ofwat and rebuilding public trust in the water sector](#)

Ofwat, the economic regulator of the water sector in England and Wales, has set out its [agenda](#) for rebuilding public trust in the water sector.

On 31 January, Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Defra, wrote to Jonson Cox, Chairman of Ofwat, asking him to investigate what changes could be made to improve water companies' corporate behaviours.

The Environment Agency regulates the environmental performance of water companies. In February, the Environment Agency released the [State of the Environment report for water quality](#).

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:

"We welcome the Secretary of State and Ofwat's call for water companies to act as diligently for their customers and the natural world as their owners. Jonson Cox says they should consider sharing water resources better. Today, the Environment Agency is meeting senior water company representatives to agree how to increase collaboration and coordination across the sector.

"Since 2005, the water industry has invested billions in the environment and brought compliance for discharge at wastewater treatment works to 99 per cent, but this is not a moment for congratulations. Water companies are responsible for at least one serious pollution incident every week. The courts need to make fines for pollution incidents proportionate to the turnover of companies. Sentencing guidelines in 2014 did bring in higher fines for environmental offences, but financial penalties must force board members to seriously consider environment risk, and not see it as an operational expense.

"In line with the ambition of the 25 Year Environment Plan, water companies also need to do more to act on climate change. England's flood and drought risks are increasing so we need to see more action to provide water security. Water companies shouldn't think of climate resilience as just expenditure. On Friday, Mark Carney spoke of the major opportunity for investors and creditors it brings in long-term infrastructure."

[Company fined after worker falls from](#)

Ladder

Safestyle UK was sentenced today after a worker fell from a ladder sustaining a fracture to his lower leg.

Sheffield Magistrates' Court heard how, on 1 March 2017, a window installer working for H.P.A.S. Limited, trading as Safestyle UK, was attempting to install a first-floor rear bedroom window at a property on Cemetery Road, Doncaster, when the ladder he was climbing slipped. The ladder was not footed or tied and the operative fell from a height of over three metres, sustaining a broken knee cap which required surgery.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company's system for planning work at height was inadequate in that it failed to ensure that work was carried out in a safe manner. Windows were found to be not routinely installed from the inside and ladders were used in a way that constituted serious risk. Additionally, there was no system of monitoring or supervision in place and operatives were left to their own devices.

H.P.A.S. Limited trading as Safestyle UK, of Style House, Eldon Place, Bradford, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1) of The Work at Height Regulations 2005 and was fined £850,000 with £1,083 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Stuart Whitesmith said: "This incident could easily have been prevented had the company implemented reasonably practicable precautions.

"Such precautions include having effective and enforced safe systems of work, whereby windows are installed internally where possible, or by using suitable access solutions which provide edge protection, and having a formal system in place to ensure works are appropriately supervised."

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.

[CE attends Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference \(with photos/videos\)](#)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (April 10) attended the Opening Ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2018 in Hainan, and met with the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the Secretary of the CPC Guangzhou Municipal Committee.

Mrs Lam, together with the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, and the Director of the Chief Executive's Office, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, attended in the morning the Opening Ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2018, the theme of which is "An Open and Innovative Asia for a World of Greater Prosperity". At the Opening Ceremony, Mrs Lam and the other officials listened to the keynote speech delivered by President Xi Jinping. Noting the President said in his speech that the nation will continue to further its opening up, Mrs Lam considered it very good news to Hong Kong as the nation's most open centre for finance and trade. She said that Hong Kong has benefited from the reform and opening up of the nation in the past 40 years and it will continue to give full play to its strengths to contribute to the country. She said she believed that further opening up of the country is set to bring about new opportunities and impetus to the economic development of Hong Kong, Asia and the world.

Mrs Lam and the other officials met with the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, in the afternoon. Noting that there is a large Pakistani community in Hong Kong and many of its members were born, raised and educated in the city, Mrs Lam said the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government is committed to providing them as well as other ethnic minorities with equal opportunities and facilitating their integration into Hong Kong through policy initiatives. As Pakistan is an important country along the Belt and Road and with the Pakistan Chamber of Commerce set up in Hong Kong in 2013, she expressed the hope that co-operation between the two governments will be strengthened. Given Hong Kong's experiences and advantages in infrastructure financing, risk management, project supervision and construction, she said Hong Kong is keen to participate in the development of Pakistan. She also said more Pakistani students are welcome to study in Hong Kong to promote exchanges between people from the two places.

Mrs Lam and the other officials then met with the Secretary of the CPC Guangzhou Municipal Committee, Mr Ren Xuefeng. Mrs Lam noted that she had found during her attendance at the Forum that many people are very interested in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area. With the forthcoming promulgation of the relevant development plan, it is important to enhance understanding of the Bay Area among the people in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, she said. Thanking Mr Ren for his concern about the development of Hong Kong young people all along, she expressed the hope that more opportunities will be made available to people from Guangzhou and Hong Kong, especially the young

people, with the development of the Bay Area in the future.

Mrs Lam returned to Hong Kong this afternoon.



[Press release: Free tyre checks at](#)

fire charity car wash

In a national project being trialled in the North West, Highways England is working with fire and rescue services to offer free tyre safety checks and advice alongside a long-running programme of fire station charity car washes. As part of the pilot project, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and The Fire Fighters Charity have allowed Highways England traffic officers and other staff to run the tyre checking service at several car wash events – with the latest at Lancashire’s Fulwood fire station on Saturday (14 April).

Highways England is working to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on England’s motorways and major A roads by 40 percent by 2020 and says focusing on tyre safety will make an important contribution. The tie-up with firefighters and the established charity car wash events is seen as a friendly and informal way of reaching drivers to spread the tyre safety message.



Highways England traffic officer Neil Waring, from Knutsford outstation, checking car tyres at one of Cheshire’s charity car wash events last month

Stuart Lovatt, Highways England’s Road Safety Lead, said:

Highways England and fire and rescue services have a mutual interest in reducing the number of incidents caused by poorly-inflated or damaged tyres which could be picked up by simple and

regular checks. The Fire Fighters Charity's National Car Wash programme is now huge – involving some 20,000 vehicles across more than 600 events annually. We think it's a great way of reaching out to potentially thousands of drivers to check their tyres for free and give them safety advice while they wait for their cars to be washed.

The feedback from the first 2 events we've run at Frodsham and Ellesmere Port fire stations last month has been really positive and after Saturday's visit to Fulwood we'll be assessing whether we can extend the idea right across the country.

Firefighters are among the emergency service workers called out to tyre-related incidents on the motorway and major A road network while Highways England traffic officers and colleagues have to manage the congestion caused by breakdowns, punctures and road traffic collisions. Statistics show:

- there were 80,000 tyre incidents on England's network of motorways and major A roads between 2013 and 2015
- Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service was called out to over 4,500 vehicle incidents between 2015 and 2017
- Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service was called out to 2,866 vehicle incidents over the same period
- 27% of vehicles have at least one illegal tyre (Tyresafe 2016)
- 40% of road traffic accidents caused by vehicle defects are tyre related (DfT 2015)



Hi-tech scanners are being used to carry out the free tread and pressure

checks

Tony Crook, an Area Manager at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, said:

We attend over a thousand road traffic collisions each year and some of these could have been prevented if the vehicles involved were fitted with legal tyres.

Our firefighters see first-hand the dangers of driving poorly-maintained vehicles and we hope that this new partnership with Highways England will result in preventing crashes and even saving lives.

Watch Manager Andy Gray, a Road Safety Officer at Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, said:

Tyre treads are designed to give good grip on wet roads. As the tread wears down the tyre loses the ability of good grip. It is essential that people regularly check their tyres. Many tyres only get checked at their yearly MOT inspection and then subsequently fail, resulting in a vehicle that could well have been driving with unsafe tyres for some time.

This partnership not only benefits people immediately with the tyre checks but crews will show and educate them on how to check their tyres in the future. The Fire Fighters Charity also benefits from the public's kind donations from the car wash events. These are positive events where you can meet multiple partners who want to engage with you and help keep you safe on the roads.

Drivers attending Saturday's car wash event can get a free hi-tech check of their tyres from 3D tyre tread checking scanners linked to an app on a smart device. The scanners allow a quick and easy way to check tyre tread levels and provide instant feedback and advice to motorists, via a print out.

More information about the Fire Fighters Charity can be found on their [website](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

News story: Changes to the assessment economic link conditions

All UK fishing licences contain a condition that requires vessels to demonstrate a genuine economic link with the UK. The economic link condition applies to landings of quota species and is assessed on a yearly basis.

From 1 May 2018 we will be changing the current assessment period of 1 April to 31 March to 01 January to 31 December (the 'calendar year'). This is to bring the assessment period in line with the yearly monitoring of quota uptake and to help those vessel owners who are required to comply with this condition to manage their quota for the year.

This change will also ensure that the English inshore fleet will benefit earlier in the year from quota donations made in fulfillment of the economic link condition. This gives the English fleet a greater opportunity to use the quota in what can be seasonal fisheries.

The way in which vessel owners must demonstrate an economic link with the UK will not be changed and are listed below by:

- landing over 50% by weight of their catch (which are subject to EU quotas) into UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man ports.
- demonstrating that at least 50% of the total crew man days at sea were accounted for by crew normally resident in UK coastal areas.
- providing proof that routine expenditure in the UK on goods and services for the vessel was equal to either: i) 50% of the value of quota stocks landed net of crew wages, or ii) 50% of the vessel's total operating expenditure for the year, net of crew wages.
- donating quota to the English under-10m fleet equivalent to a value representing 10% of the value of catch landed overseas.
- any combination of the above methods agreed by the MMO.

The change to the assessment period is not expected to affect the ability of vessel owners to comply with the economic link condition.