

# Press release: Military charity successfully reconstructed as a result of charity regulator's inquiry

A charity originally set up to establish memorials to D-Day veterans, and which now supports former members of the armed forces, has been successfully reconstructed as a result of a Charity Commission inquiry that facilitated the appointment of new trustees.

The Commission's existing engagement with [The Veterans Charity](#) escalated to a formal inquiry in April 2015, after three individuals connected to the charity, including the chief executive, were arrested by British Transport Police over concerns about the charity's fundraising practices. The publication of the report was delayed as the Commission awaited the outcome of the trial of the charity's chief executive for charges of theft and fraud by abuse of position; that trial ended when the judge ordered the jury to find him not guilty due to a lack of evidence.

The Commission used its powers on opening the inquiry to safeguard the charity's assets by freezing the bank accounts; while that freezing order was in place, the regulator monitored and authorised all of the charity's expenditure, ensuring that each transaction was necessary and a proper application of the charity's funds. It also exercised other statutory powers to ensure that funds collected from the public in particular through an annual event known as The Forces March were adequately protected while reconstruction took place.

During the early stages of the inquiry, the Commission identified a number of shortcomings in the charity's administration, including that the charity's finances were under the sole control of the chief executive, with limited oversight by the trustees. For a significant period of time the chief executive had sole control of the charity's bank accounts, including its cheque book, debit card and online banking facility.

The inquiry found that nearly £38,000 of the charity's expenditure had been withdrawn as cash during the period between January 2010 and May 2015, equating to over £500 each month. The inquiry was informed by the charity that the invoices for expenditure before 2013 were lost as a result of an office move. The inquiry was advised that cash withdrawals were used to repay subsistence claims for expenditure on charity business including accommodation, fuel, event costs such as the purchase of stocks, and support for beneficiaries. However there was very little supporting documentary evidence to confirm how these charitable funds had been applied.

In a report published today, the regulator concludes that the trustees of the charity at the time the inquiry opened were responsible for mismanagement in the administration of the charity, after failing to properly oversee the charity's chief executive or implement effective financial controls or

maintain adequate financial records.

Notwithstanding these concerns, the inquiry was satisfied as a result of its investigative work that the charity was undertaking work to provide urgent short term support for veterans in need. It therefore sought volunteers from the charity sector to assist in the charity's reconstruction. Three people stepped forward to help – two of whom remain as trustees today.

The Commission revoked its protective measures in early 2016 following the strengthening of the charity's governance and financial controls. The Commission is satisfied that its original regulatory concerns have been addressed following a further inspection of records and meeting with the trustees.

**Harvey Grenville, Head of Investigations and Enforcement at the Charity Commission, says:**

This charity has undertaken valuable work to support veterans in urgent short term need, and our report acknowledges the new trustees' contribution to the reconstruction of this charity. This is a collaborative model with sector professionals which we would like to see further developed to assist the reconstruction of certain charities which are in difficulty.

The charity's work prior to this reconstruction was undermined by poor management on the part of the charity's trustees at the time. This was a charity without adequate systems and controls in place, and limited oversight of the chief executive by the trustees. This is unacceptable, and we are critical of the trustees at that time for their failings.

When the public give to charity, they have a right to expect that their donations will be carefully managed, and be applied solely in furtherance of the charity's aims. Trustees may hand day-to-day operations to staff – but they must retain oversight, and ultimately, they are always responsible for everything that happens in their charity.

I am grateful, especially to the new trustees, for their hard work in turning the charity around, and ensuring its processes and systems are strengthened so that the charity's work can continue.

The investigation concludes with the publication of this report. The [full report](#) is available on gov.uk.

**Ends**

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## [News story: CEN updates affecting chemical measurements July 2018](#)

### Fertilizers

[Regulation \(EC\) No 2003/2003](#) concerns fertilizers placed on the EU market and designated as an 'EC fertilizer'. The Regulation states that the content of one or more of the micro-nutrients boron, cobalt, copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum, or zinc present in specified types of fertilizers shall be declared where certain conditions are fulfilled where sampling and analysis methods shall, wherever possible, use European Standards. Further amendments to the Regulation have been made and a consolidated version of the Regulation up to 2016 can be found [here](#).

#### [EN 17041:2018](#)

Fertilizers – Determination of boron in concentrations  $\leq 10$  % using spectrometry with azomethine-H

EN 17041:2018 describes a spectrophotometric method for the determination of total and water extractable boron in mineral fertilizers by measuring the yellow coloured complex formed in solution by the reaction of boron with azomethine-H {4-hydroxy-5-[(6-oxocyclohexa-2,4-dien-1-ylidene)methylamino]naphthalene-2,7-disulfonic acid}. The method is suitable for concentrations of boron in mineral fertilizers equal to or less than 10%.

This spectrophotometric method requires more preparation, including the removal of organic matter from the extract which interferes with the colour, compared to other equivalent methods using more complex instruments such as inductively coupled plasma atomic emission spectroscopy (ICP-AES) but is considered as reliable and relatively inexpensive. EN 17041 is applicable to water and aqua regia fertilizer extracts obtained using EN 16962 and/or EN 16964 but it is not suitable where the iron concentration is twenty times greater than the boron concentration.

Although the method is only suitable for fertilizer extracts having a boron concentration of 10% or less, the method can be adapted for higher boron concentrations through quantitative dilutions of the extract to be within the specified 10% concentration range.

[EN 17042:2018](#) Fertilizers – Determination of boron in concentrations > 10 % using acidimetric titration

EN 17042:2018 describes a method for the determination of boron in mineral fertilizers by acidimetric titration using sodium hydroxide to a specified pH end-point. The method is suitable for concentrations of boron in the mineral fertilizer in excess of 10%.

Soluble boron extracted from the fertilizer forms boric acid (a weak acid) in solution and can be titrated against a standardised molar solution of sodium hydroxide but only after adding D-mannitol to form a mannitoboric complex which enables titration to an end point of pH 6.3 corresponding to a known mass of boron.

EN 17042 is applicable to water and aqua regia fertiliser extracts obtained using EN 16962 and/or EN 16964.

[EN 17043:2018](#) Fertilizers – Determination of molybdenum in concentrations ≤ 10 % using spectrometry of a complex with ammonium thiocyanate

EN 17043 describes a spectrophotometric method for the determination of total and water extractable molybdenum in mineral fertilizers by measuring the yellow/orange coloured molybdenum (V) thiocyanate complex  $[\text{MoO}(\text{SCN})_5]$  formed by the reaction of molybdenum and ammonium thiocyanate in acid solution. The method is suitable for concentrations of molybdenum in mineral fertilizers equal to or less than 10%.

This spectrophotometric method requires more preparation, including the removal of organic matter from the extract which interferes with the coloured complex, compared to other equivalent methods using more complex instruments such as inductively coupled plasma atomic emission spectroscopy (ICP-AES) but is considered as reliable and relatively inexpensive. EN 17043 is applicable to water and aqua regia fertilizer extracts obtained using EN 16962 and/or EN 16964.

Further information on food and feed legislation can be found on the Government Chemist website:

[Food and feed law: Compendium of UK food and feed legislation with associated context and changes during January to March 2018 – Government Chemist Programme Report](#)

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## **News story: Human Rights Council 39: Promotion of a democratic and equitable international order and SR on Contemporary forms of Slavery**

The United Kingdom welcomes the important contributions made by the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery.

We value her efforts to examine the drivers of all contemporary forms of slavery and give a platform to victims and their families. Developing a shared understanding of this often hidden crime is crucial if we are to eradicate it by 2030.

We welcome the Special Rapporteur's report exploring the impact of slavery and servitude on marginalized migrant women workers in the global domestic economy. Their lack of visibility makes them particularly vulnerable. We must do more to overcome this challenge and strengthen their access to justice and support.

Through advocacy and programmes, the UK is supporting the most vulnerable people in the countries where slavery is most prevalent, focusing on at risk groups like women and girls, children and people on the move. We are working to tackle the root causes of slavery and support victims in a manner that is gender-sensitive. For example, we are funding the second phase of the Work in Freedom programme to help women facing modern slavery and exploitation in domestic households and the garment industry in South Asia and the Middle East. We are also funding a number of programmes: for example, a programme in Ethiopia to support child victims, in particular girls, who have been involved in, or are at risk of becoming involved in, domestic work.

Mdme Special Rapporteur,

Your report provides a comprehensive list of recommended actions for Member States. How should Member States prioritise your recommendations?

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## **News story: Leading industry experts to design new T Levels**

The biggest shake-up of technical education in decades has moved a step closer today (10 September), as more leading employers throw their weight behind the development of new world-class T Levels.

Industry experts, including celebrity hairdresser Lee Stafford, have been appointed to chair new panels which will lead work on designing the content of the next set of new T Levels so that young people will gain the skills employers and the country need for the future.

From 2022 young people choosing to study the Hair, Beauty and Aesthetics T Level can be confident that they have been developed by world-famous businesses including Toni and Guy; those who opt for an Animal Care and Management T Level will be studying programmes designed by the Dogs Trust; and those looking to develop skills by studying the Human Resources T Level will have had their courses developed by experts from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Welcoming the new panel members, Apprenticeships and Skills Minister Anne Milton said:

I am thrilled these talented industry experts have come on board to help make T Levels a success. They will play a key role in creating a world-class technical education system for our country.

Introducing T Levels is a once in a generation moment. The direct experience of panel members will help to create gold-standard T Levels that give young people the skills that employers need.

Lee Stafford, owner and founder of Lee Stafford products and Lee Stafford Education, said:

The youth will be responsible for keeping British hairdressing the best on this planet. We are responsible for helping to shape the youth, which is why I wanted to get involved in the development of T Levels. I'm over the moon to be chairing the T Level Hair, Beauty and Aesthetics employer panel as I believe T Levels will offer amazing opportunities for young people.

Dr Steve Dowbiggin OBE, former Principal of Capel Manor College and now business owner with 50 years' experience in the land-based sector, said:

I am delighted to be chairing the Agriculture, Land Management and Production T Level employer panel, as I am convinced that T Levels will be of major benefit to the Agriculture, Horticulture, Environment and Animal Management and Care sector. This is because T Levels will ensure that the workforce has the experience and qualifications to enable employers to realise the opportunities offered in a post Brexit world. Those gaining T Levels will have achieved a gold standard in skills and knowledge that will greatly improve their employability, career prospects and professional recognition.

Amy Smith, Head of Talent at Framestore, a leading British visual effects company, said:

The visual effects, games and animation industries represent some of the most rapidly developing and valuable skills to the UK economy. Ensuring that we are encouraging young people of all backgrounds and levels to develop skills for our sector will be crucial to our continuing success and to the success of UK Plc. I am thrilled to have been appointed as Chair of the Media, Broadcast and Production employer panel as this is a unique opportunity to develop qualifications for our sector and to help young people to gain the skills that they need for the future.

Vicky Skinner, Education Manager at Pet Industry Federation, said:

I am delighted to be chairing the Animal Care and Management T Level employer panel. I worked in Further Education for 13 years and more recently with a wide range of animal care employers through my role at the Pet Industry Federation. As a result I can see the difference vocational education can make to a young person's life and also how it can support the industry, providing individuals with practical skills and knowledge as well as other transferable skills essential when working with animals. The T Level development is an exciting opportunity to help shape vocational education for the next generation ensuring it meets the needs of an evolving sector.

The employer led panels announced today will shape new T Level programmes in: Animal Care and Management; Agriculture, Land Management and Production; Human Resources; Management and Administration; Catering; Craft and Design; Cultural Heritage and Visitor Attractions; Media, Broadcast and Production; and Hair, Beauty and Aesthetics, and will be first taught from 2022.

The 9 new panels will join the 16 existing T Level panels that are already up and running, designing the outline content for the first tranche of T Levels, in routes including Digital; Legal, Financial and Accounting; Education and Childcare; Health and Science; Engineering and Manufacturing; and Construction.

T Levels are new programmes which will put the British technical education system on a par with the best in the world. They will be a real alternative to A Levels, providing young people with a genuine choice between technical and academic education post 16.

The first three T Level programmes in Digital, Education and Childcare and Construction will be taught from 2020, with further T Levels delivered from 2021.

Further information: The new T Level panel chairs and panel members appointed

today can be found [here](#).

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## [News story: Poster from the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review](#)

The text from the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review (IMMDS) is:

The Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review (IMMDS) is investigating 3 medical interventions where patients have reported problems and suffered serious harm. These are pelvic mesh implants, Primodos and hormonal pregnancy tests, and sodium valproate (Epilim or Depakote). Full details can be found on [their website](#).

The Review wants to make sure any individual or family affected by these three interventions is aware of its work and can make contact or provide evidence.

They are therefore asking Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to distribute a poster to GP practices and community pharmacies so that it can be displayed prominently for members of the public to see, and if possible to feature it on the CCG website. The poster is available in two forms: [print-sized version](#) or [e-version](#).

For further information, please contact the IMMDS Review communications team at [reviewcomms@luther.co.uk](mailto:reviewcomms@luther.co.uk) or on 0207 618 9189.

Anyone who suspects they have had a complication due to a medical device, including from mesh implants or a side effect to a medicine, including from sodium valproate (Epilim or Depakote) is encouraged to report it to the MHRA through its [Yellow Card Scheme](#). Even if information is given to the Review we would also encourage you to report it to us.

Women prescribed Epilim or Depakote (sodium valproate) should not stop their treatment unless told to do so by their GP or healthcare professional.

We are supporting the Review as we recognise it is important to review and learn from how the healthcare system and regulators have handled these issues, including how we make sure the patient voice is carefully heard.

By all parts of the healthcare system working together, we can make sure patients' concerns are addressed.