

# International Paint spills banned chemical into conservation area

International Paint Ltd, owned by multi-national AkzoNobel, appeared before Plymouth Crown Court on Thursday 27 October 2022, where, at the end of a nine-day hearing, it was found guilty on two charges.

The company denied both offences relating to the discharge of hazardous waste from a tank located on the quay at its Newton Ferrers paint testing facility.

The case is adjourned until January for sentencing.

The court heard that the Environment Agency launched an investigation after the company tried to sell the premises in 2015 and possible pollution was reported by Simon Friend of Red Earth Developments.

International Paint Ltd manufactured paints, including anti-fouling paints for ships, and had run a testing facility on the River Yealm at Newton Creek near Newton Ferrers since 1928. The estuary is a Special Area of Conservation due to its rich flora and fauna.

Since the 1970s, formulations containing tributyltin (TBT) had been used as a coating to prevent the build-up of organisms and plants on ships' hulls. But it proved to be so toxic to the wider marine environment that it was banned from use on small vessels in the UK in the late 1980s and was banned completely worldwide during the 2000s.

One drop of TBT in an Olympic-sized swimming pool equals one part per trillion (PPT). The safe level of TBT is 0.2 PPT or a fifth of a drop.

The Environment Agency's investigation found evidence that the chemical, along with copper, arsenic and mercury, had been present in sediment in the tank at the site and some of the sediment had escaped out into the estuary.

A bung on another tank was found to have come out leaving it open to the estuary, before it was eventually permanently sealed with concrete. The company denied having caused the discharge of the sediment into the estuary but did not answer what had happened to it.

Leading expert, Dr Michael Waldock, whose work led to the banning of TBT, carried out a review of sample analysis results from sediment from the tank and from the adjacent estuary for the Environment Agency. He found that nine out of 11 samples exceeded the safe limit for TBT and that, close to the site, one sample contained 80,000 times the safe level. He concluded that the TBT levels in the estuary were sufficient to have had a major toxic effect on marine life there.

James Wimpress of the Environment Agency said:

The company owned by a multi-national firm, and with a turnover of £134m in 2020, failed in its duty of care to the environment. The company denied any wrongdoing during the investigation and throughout the trial.

We are extremely pleased with the outcome and hope this serves as a warning to other companies that we will not hesitate to pursue those that act without regard to their responsibilities.

## Background

- Between 2 September 2015 and 27 October 2016, International Paint Ltd caused a water discharge activity otherwise than as authorised by an environmental permit, namely the discharge of hazardous waste sediments into the river Yealm estuary from the Quay Tank at 101 Yealm Road, Newton Ferrers. The said sediments being hazardous waste due to the presence of elevated levels of tributyltin (TBT), copper, mercury and arsenic, contrary to Regulations 12(1)(b) and 38 (1) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.
- Between 2 September 2015 and 27 October 2016, at 101 Yealm Road, Newton Ferrers, being a person who produces controlled waste, International Paint Ltd failed in its duty to take all such measures applicable to them in that capacity as were reasonable in the circumstances in that they failed to prevent the escape of waste, namely sediment containing elevated levels of tributyltin (TBT), copper, mercury and arsenic from their control, namely the Quay Tank at the above premises, contrary to section s 34(1)(b) and (6) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, contrary to s.34(6) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

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## Bovine TB: authorisation for badger control in 2022

Natural England has licensed and authorised 11 new badger control areas to begin operations in 2022. It has also authorised the licence holders to resume operations in 29 existing badger control areas in 2022. Licence holders met all the criteria specified in Defra's [guidance to Natural England](#), dated May 2021.

Natural England has reissued the Annex A for 10 licences due to a change to their control areas as licensed in 2020/2021. These areas were: 46 – Gloucestershire, 50 – Shropshire, 51 – Somerset, 53 – Wiltshire, 55 – Shropshire, 56 – Hampshire, 57 – Berkshire, 58 – Staffordshire, 60 –

Shropshire, 61- Oxfordshire.

It has also reissued the Annex B for all existing licences from area 33 to area 62 (inclusive). This follows a review of the conditions relating to licensed actions on or around protected sites.

Table 1: Badger control areas authorised in 2022

<b>Area number and county</b>	<b>Minimum number</b>	<b>Maximum number</b>	<b>Authorisation date</b>	<b>Year of operations</b>
Area 33 – Avon	360	993	26 August	Year 4
Area 34 – Cheshire	845	1685	26 August	Year 4
Area 35 – Cornwall	529	2163	26 August	Year 4
Area 36 – Staffordshire	47	594	26 August	Year 4
Area 37 – Devon	0	770	26 August	Year 4
Area 38 – Devon	0	963	26 August	Year 4
Area 39 – Dorset	40	473	26 August	Year 4
Area 40 – Herefordshire	0	691	26 August	Year 4
Area 41 – Staffordshire	0	144	26 August	Year 4
Area 42 – Wiltshire	0	2437	26 August	Year 4
Area 43 – Wiltshire	383	1324	26 August	Year 4
Area 44 – Avon	676	1700	26 August	Year 3
Area 45 – Derbyshire	171	1421	26 August	Year 3
Area 46 – Gloucestershire	201	427	26 August	Year 3
Area 47 – Herefordshire	349	1150	26 August	Year 3
Area 48 – Leicestershire	247	596	26 August	Year 3
Area 49 – Oxfordshire	242	735	26 August	Year 3
Area 50 – Shropshire	2675	4766	26 August	Year 3
Area 51 – Somerset	259	1887	26 August	Year 3
Area 52 – Warwickshire	644	1487	26 August	Year 3
Area 53 – Wiltshire	195	447	26 August	Year 3
Area 54 – Lincolnshire	N/A	N/A	26 August	Year 3
Area 55 – Shropshire	335	493	26 August	Year 2
Area 56 – Hampshire	651	1026	26 August	Year 2
Area 57 – Berkshire	312	457	26 August	Year 2
Area 58 – Staffordshire	464	861	26 August	Year 2
Area 59 – Worcestershire	142	362	26 August	Year 2
Area 60 – Shropshire	1137	1940	26 August	Year 2
Area 61 – Oxfordshire	497	882	26 August	Year 2
Area 62 – Buckinghamshire	680	922	26 August	Year 1
Area 63 – Cornwall	278	377	26 August	Year 1
Area 64 – Cornwall	281	381	26 August	Year 1
Area 65 – Derbyshire	697	944	26 August	Year 1
Area 66 – Devon	408	553	26 August	Year 1
Area 67- Hampshire	413	560	26 August	Year 1

Area number and county	Minimum number	Maximum number	Authorisation date	Year of operations
Area 68 – Northamptonshire	1353	1834	26 August	Year 1
Area 69 – Oxfordshire	570	772	26 August	Year 1
Area 70 – Somerset	270	366	26 August	Year 1
Area 71 – Warwickshire	680	922	26 August	Year 1
Area 72 – Warwickshire	1442	1954	26 August	Year 1

Licence holders carry out operations under a 4-year licence. This allows badger control to take place in the licensed control area every year between 1 June and 31 January inclusive.

The licence holder will decide the start date for control operations within this period.

Natural England has confirmed to the licence holders the minimum and maximum numbers of badgers they can remove.

Protected sites listed in the Annex Bs are not necessarily part of any active operations. These can and will only occur on protected sites where the landowner or occupier has granted permission.

The licences only permit badger control to take place outside these closed seasons:

- controlled shooting – 1 February to 31 May
- cage-trapping and shooting – 1 December to 31 May

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## **North Korea ballistic missile tests: FCDO statement**

Press release

A Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office spokesperson statement on North Korea's ballistic missile tests on 28 October.



A Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office spokesperson said:

The two short range ballistic missile tests by North Korea on 28 October are a clear violation of UN Security Council Resolutions.

The UK is working closely with our partners to urge North Korea to return to diplomacy and take credible steps towards denuclearisation in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. We call on North Korea to prioritise the well-being of its people instead of the unlawful pursuit of nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

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## [Rare Victoria Cross awarded following Far East battles in Second World War at risk of leaving the UK](#)

- Medal, along with four others, is valued at more than £660,000
- Cross was awarded posthumously to Squadron Leader A.S.K. Scarf who died after returning from a raid gravely injured

A Victoria Cross awarded to RAF Squadron Leader A.S.K. Scarf is at risk of leaving the UK after being sold abroad for more than £660,000.

The medal, along with four others – the 1939-1945 Star, Pacific Star, Defence Medal and British War Medal – was awarded posthumously to Scarf in 1946. The Victoria Cross was presented to his widow, Mrs Elizabeth Scarf, by King George VI at Buckingham Palace.

While the campaign medals within this group are relatively common and were issued to all personnel who met the qualifying criteria, the Victoria Cross is incredibly rare. Only 1,358 have been awarded since its inception in 1856 with just 181 awarded during the Second World War. Of the 22 awarded during the conflict to the RAF, this Victoria Cross is of particular interest because it is the only one awarded to the RAF for their service in the Far East.

Scarf's Victoria Cross was awarded in recognition of his bravery on a daylight raid on Singora, Malaya, on 9 December 1941. Scarf was responsible for spearheading the raid which saw all available aircraft ordered to take part. He had just taken off when enemy aircraft arrived – destroying or disabling the rest of the machines. He flew alone to Singora and, despite attacks from enemy fighter planes, completed his bombing run. On his way back his aircraft was attacked and he was severely wounded. He crash landed at Alor Star without causing any injury to his crew. He died two hours later in hospital.

Scarf's pregnant wife was a nurse and based at the Alor Star hospital but had been evacuated south. The two other crewmen on Scarf's plane were also given awards for their courage during the action. Sergeant (later Squadron Leader) Paddy Calder was awarded a Distinguished Flying Medal and Sergeant Cyril Rich, who was killed in action in 1943, was posthumously mentioned in Despatches.

Arts Minister Stuart Andrew said:

Stories like these remind us of the sacrifices those who served in the Second World War made for the freedoms we enjoy today.

This Victoria Cross and collection of medals represent not only A.S.K. Scarf's story but the stories and experiences of all those who fought, lived and died in the conflict. I hope that a UK buyer can be found so these incredibly important objects can be displayed for future generations to see.

The minister's decision follows the advice of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest (RCEWA). The committee noted the medals represented an extraordinary and highly poignant story of great personal courage from an under-researched campaign of the Second World War. As the only Victoria Cross awarded to the RAF for the Far East and wider Pacific campaign, the medals represent a unique and significant element of a particular moment in British military history.

Committee Member, Tim Pestell, said:

Famous as the ultimate symbol of bravery in combat, the Victoria Cross remains our most nationally significant military award following its establishment over 160 years ago. The example in this group of medals provides a poignant yet powerful reminder of the

attributes required to win the award, in a tale that could have come straight from a Boy's Own story. Not only does Squadron Leader Scarf's award speak eloquently of the determination and bravery displayed in winning a VC, its acquisition by a UK institution would provide a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made by British and Commonwealth servicemen fighting in the 'forgotten war' of the Far East.

The RCEWA made its recommendation on the grounds of the sets outstanding significance for the study of the British Far East campaign during the Second World War as well as the role of the RAF within this context.

The decision on the export licence application for the medal will be deferred for a period ending on 27 January 2023 inclusive. At the end of the first deferral period owners will have a consideration period of 15 business days to consider any offer(s) to purchase the set of medals at the recommended price of £660,000 (plus VAT of £22,000 which can be reclaimed by an eligible institution). The second deferral period will commence following the signing of an Option Agreement and will last for three months.

ENDS

#### Notes to editors

1. Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the medals should contact the RCEWA on 0161 934 4317.
2. Provenance: This medal set was awarded posthumously to Mrs Elizabeth 'Sallie' Scarf, the widow of the deceased Squadron Leader Arthur 'Pongo' Scarf. The Victoria Cross was presented by King George VI at Buckingham Palace on 30 June 1946. It has been passed down through the family into the hands of the present owner, who is a direct descendent of Scarf.
3. The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest is an independent body, serviced by The Arts Council, which advises the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on whether a cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria.
4. [Arts Council England](#) is the national development agency for creativity and culture. ACE have set out their strategic vision in Let's Create that by 2030 want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. ACE invest public money from the Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision.
5. Following the [Covid-19](#) crisis, the Arts Council developed a £160 million Emergency Response Package, with nearly 90% coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. ACE are also one of the bodies responsible for administering the Government's unprecedented Culture Recovery Fund.

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# PM call with President Macron of France: 28 October 2022

Press release

The Prime Minister spoke to French President Macron this morning.



The Prime Minister spoke to French President Macron this morning.

President Macron congratulated him on his appointment, and the Prime Minister stressed the importance he places on the UK's relationship with France – our neighbour and ally.

The leaders agreed that there are a huge range of areas where UK-France cooperation is vital, including on Ukraine, climate, defence and the economy. The Prime Minister also noted the strong historic and cultural links between our countries, as exemplified by President Macron's moving words following the death of Her Majesty The Queen.

The Prime Minister and President Macron discussed a range of global issues, including Russia's invasion of Ukraine. They agreed on the importance of continuing to work in support of Ukraine. As people across Europe face a difficult winter, with rising energy costs resulting from Putin's invasion, the leaders resolved to work together to secure a more stable energy future. This includes increasing cooperation on nuclear energy.

The Prime Minister stressed the importance for both nations to make the Channel route completely unviable for people traffickers. The leaders committed to deepening our partnership to deter deadly journeys across the Channel that benefit organised criminals.

The Prime Minister and President Macron looked forward to meeting soon, and to holding a UK-France Summit next year.

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