

# Press release: Charity regulator sets out scope of statutory inquiry into Oxfam

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has today set out the scope of its statutory inquiry into Oxfam, registered charity number 202918.

The inquiry was opened on 12 February 2018 after the Commission examined documents sent on Monday by Oxfam regarding allegations of misconduct by staff involved in its humanitarian response in Haiti. The Commission has concerns that Oxfam may not have fully and frankly disclosed material details about the allegations at the time in 2011, its handling of the incidents since, and the impact that these have both had on public trust and confidence.

The purpose of the statutory inquiry is to:

1. examine the charity's governance (including leadership and culture), its management and its policies and practices with regard to safeguarding, in the context of the applicable law, good practice and its obligations as a charity, both generally and particularly in relation to:
  - its response, general handling and disclosure to the Commission, statutory funders and other key donors, agencies and stakeholders in relation to serious safeguarding incidents which have taken place since 2011 including its Haiti programme
  - its responsibility to provide a safe environment for its beneficiaries, staff and other charity workers in the delivery of its overseas programmes and generally
  - its recruitment and supervision of its employees, volunteers and other charity workers
  - maintaining its reputation as a major aid charity which can be entrusted with international, governmental and public support and the confidence of its beneficiaries, staff and volunteers
2. scrutinise and review the charity's progress with implementing the requirements in the action plan agreed with the Commission in 2017 and ensure such other actions that may be required to address the findings from the inquiry's work are undertaken

**Michelle Russell, Director of Investigations, Monitoring and Enforcement at the Charity Commission said:**

Acting in the public interest as regulator, this inquiry must and will establish the facts about what the charity knew about events in Haiti in 2011, and how it responded at the time and since. The inquiry will also help us, and the public, understand Oxfam's overall approach to safeguarding those who come into contact with

the charity – whether they be beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, or the wider communities in which they work. Resolving this is key to upholding public and donor trust and confidence in charity.

This week Oxfam's Chair Caroline Thomson has given us an unequivocal commitment to co-operating fully with the inquiry to ensure our work progresses thoroughly and speedily and to resolving the issues faced by the charity to restore public trust and confidence in Oxfam.

It is expected that the inquiry will review and consider:

- case records to test and verify assurances on the charity's handling of cases
- the charity's handling of the allegations in Haiti; the extent of the charity's knowledge of similar allegations against its staff which predated Haiti (including Chad and Liberia); and the matters or risks arising from its handling and subsequent decision making
- the charity's reporting and communications with law enforcement and other agencies and donors, including DFID and DEC

Anyone with information that could be relevant to the inquiry is advised to contact [OxfamInquiry@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:OxfamInquiry@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk).

The inquiry will assess what additional actions will need to be taken by the charity in order to address the findings from the inquiry's work and to assist in restoring public trust and confidence in Oxfam. The scope of the inquiry will include the charity's trading division and may be amended if other issues emerge during the course of the investigation which raise additional regulatory concerns.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. [Reports of previous inquiries](#) by the Commission are available on GOV.UK.

The charity's details can be viewed on the Commission's [online charity search tool](#).

Ends

#### **Notes to editors**

1. Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).
2. Search for charities on our [online register](#).
3. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the Commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.
4. The Commission has been engaged with Oxfam on its safeguarding culture and practices since last year. As a result of the Commission's

engagement, the charity committed to a number of actions in [late 2017](#) to review and improve:

- the charity's governance of safeguarding, including leadership, culture, role modelling and internal reporting;
  - the charity's HR culture, policies and practice;
  - the charity's organisation structures, management reporting lines and resourcing to support the effective delivery of the charity's safeguarding objectives; and
  - the safeguarding management framework where the charity has shared responsibilities in the Oxfam confederation, in particular with Oxfam International
- 

## **News story: Firing of 50,000th simulated round from turret trainer signals savings of £125M**

The trainer, based at Tidworth Garrison in Wiltshire, was first introduced in 2005 to train the commander, gunner and loader of an AS90 – a self-propelled 155mm Howitzer gun.

It is designed to allow gun crews to practice their routine firing drills, turret operating procedures and crew duties without the expense of live firing and offers the immersion and realism of firing, with a reduced safety risk and a highly reduced cost.

Based on a real AS90 turret, the trainer uses an electro-mechanical system to fully replicate a complete firing cycle. This includes the weight and size of the artillery rounds and the noise and turret movement on firing.

Since the trainer was introduced more than 8,500 soldiers have used the equipment. This experience enhances their safety for when they progress to live firing and allows them to focus on more advanced training scenarios.

Defence Minister Guto Bebb said:

This equipment provides high quality training for the British Army that's also cost efficient. As live firing events are extremely expensive and can be logistically challenging, using the AS90 turret trainer is a great alternative. It also offers immersive training that prepares users for live firing both in practice and on the battlefield.

The 50,000th simulated round was fired by Lieutenant General Paul Jaques,

Chief of Materiel (Land) at Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S), the MOD's procurement agency based at MOD Abbey Wood in Bristol.

Lt Gen Paul Jaques said:

This firing marks another milestone demonstrating Defence's innovative and cost-saving approach to deliver effective and worthwhile training for our personnel. I'm exceedingly proud of the team's work and the benefits gained by the soldiers that get to use the training equipment.

The milestone, on February 14, represented savings of approximately £125 million over a 12-year period on the basis that live rounds cost £2,500 per use.

---

## [News story: Regenerative medicine at the front line network event – information pack](#)

At the event in Bristol, a series of presentations provided details of the 2 challenges that make up the Defence and Security Accelerator competition [Regenerative medicine at the front line](#).

### **Event slides**

To set the scene, DASA Innovation Partner Jim Pennycook opened the event by giving an update on the Accelerator and an overview of research funding opportunities for innovative science and technology providers.

### **Challenge context and overview**

Dr Abi Spear, Dstl's Principal Scientist gave an overview of the competition and outlined its strategic importance. Lt Col Graham Lawton also briefed the audience on how front line services would use these emerging technologies and the difference it's hoped it will make.

### **Technical overview**

Dr Abi Spear then gave a technical overview and outlined the competition challenges. Information on the competition process was briefed by Emma Howe,

Accelerator Competition Manager.

## How to work with DASA

Mike Madden, Open Call for Innovation Lead outlined how organisations can work with DASA and gave advice on how to submit good proposals for funding.

The competition closes at midday on 11 April 2018.

All queries will be answered by email. Send queries to our competition [DSTLRegenDefenceAccelerator@dstl.gov.uk](mailto:DSTLRegenDefenceAccelerator@dstl.gov.uk) and DASA [accelerator@dstl.gov.uk](mailto:accelerator@dstl.gov.uk) email inbox.

---

## News story: Update for Carillion workers: claiming redundancy payments

All employees of the group will be eligible to make a claim for redundancy, including those transferring to new suppliers.

We have established a specialist team spanning both the Redundancy Payments Service in the Insolvency Service and the company's HR department to process these payments as quickly as possible. You should expect receive the information you need to submit your claim within seven days of being made redundant or transferring to a new employer.

As a result of the systems we have established to prioritise these payments we are aiming to pay your claim quicker than our agreed 14 day target.

- in total, to date 6,668 jobs have been saved and 989 jobs have been made redundant through the liquidation
- further information about rights in redundancy is available on [gov.uk](http://gov.uk)
- continued support by Carillion's public and private sector customers is enabling as many employees as possible to be retained in the interim until all contracts have been worked through

---

## Government response: Update on

# disposal of dredged material at Sprey Point, Devon

The MMO granted a marine licence to Exmouth Marina in August 2017 for maintenance dredging of Exmouth Marina and disposal of materials at the Sprey Point disposal site. The dredging is due to take place in February 2018.

Information about the marine activities and licence documents are available online via the [MMO's public register](#) (case reference MLA/2016/00372). The MMO is in the process of updating this with additional information requested by local residents.

## **Consultation on licence application**

A public consultation on the application was held in November 2016. As part of this process views were also sought from the local planning and harbour authority which covers the marina, and the MMO's primary advisors including Natural England, the Environment Agency, the Crown Estate and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science. Trinity House were also consulted on navigational issues.

We resolved issues raised as part of the consultation process.

The [public consultation process](#) for marine licence applications is explained in further detail on the MMO's blog.

## **Managing adverse impact on the marine area**

The MMO is aware of the local concern about the potential impact on the marine environment after a pollution incident occurred following previous disposal activity in 2012, although there is no evidence which directly links the two events. Following full consideration of all information, including the responses from our primary and scientific advisors, we have applied additional licence conditions, in particular regarding tide working and seasonality to mitigate the risk of any material being washed ashore and impacting on bathing water quality.

Potential contamination arising as a result of the disposal activity was also addressed as part of the application process. The assessment, which was carried out in line with the OSPAR Guidelines, has shown that the material is suitable for disposal at sea.

The MMO's coastal office will monitor and inspect the activity as appropriate to ensure that the licence conditions are adhered to and will work with other relevant agencies to look at any further concerns.

## **Disposal sites**

It is up to applicants to nominate the disposal site as part of their marine licence application. The MMO then makes a decision based on the suitability of the material.

Where a marine licensable process involves any waste management activity then the provisions of the Waste Hierarchy of the Waste Framework Directive (WFD) (Directive 2008/98/EC) directive have to be considered. Applicants are required to submit evidence that they have considered alternatives to disposal under all aspects of the Waste Hierarchy (Reduce, Re-use, Recycle, Recovery, and Disposal). However the MMO accepts that in some cases disposal at sea is appropriate.