

News story: Civil news: cancellation of Civil Legal Advice procurement

The procurement process for CLA education and discrimination services from 1 September 2018 is to be cancelled.

We are contacting affected organisations to let them know that we will not be awarding any CLA contracts for education and discrimination services through the current process.

Why are you cancelling the process?

This decision was taken following receipt of insufficient compliant tenders. The procurement process would not have resulted in the award of the intended number of CLA contracts to provide education and discrimination services.

How will these announcements be made?

We will formally write to each affected organisation using the e-Tendering system, advising them of this cancellation, from 5 February 2018.

What will happen next?

We will be contacting each affected organisation to discuss next steps.

Provider enquiries

An update concerning this announcement has been published on our legal aid pages on GOV.UK:

[Civil 2018 contracts tender](#)

Press release: Charity Commission discharges interim manager of Muslim Aid

The Charity Commission has discharged Michael King of Stone King as Interim Manager (IM) of the charity [MA 1985 \(registered charity number 295224\)](#). (This charity was formerly known as Muslim Aid – “the charity”).

In November 2013, the regulator opened a statutory inquiry into the charity to examine a number of financial irregularities relating to areas of the

charity's overseas activities. In January 2015, as part of the investigation the Commission issued an order requiring the charity to improve its governance and financial management. The charity was given 12 months to comply with the order. The Commission kept its inquiry open to monitor the charity's progress and ensure its compliance.

The charity co-operated with the Commission throughout the inquiry and monitoring phase, but during the continued engagement it became clear that the charity was not able to resolve matters and comply with the order itself. As a result in October 2016, the Commission used its powers under the Charities Act 2011 to appoint Michael King as IM of the charity. At around the same time, the charity also appointed a new Chief Executive who committed to working with the IM and resolving matters. Since the Interim Manager's appointment, he has conducted a thorough governance and infrastructure review of the charity and its activities, resulting in the incorporation of MA 1985 (295224) into a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) – Muslim Aid (registered charity number 1176462).

The IM has overseen the dissolution of MA 1985 (295224) (removed from the Register of Charities 1 February 2018) ensuring the transfer of all assets and liabilities to the CIO, Muslim Aid (1176462) and setting up a new trustee board which took office from 31 January 2018.

The new board of trustees, working with the CEO Jehangir Malik OBE and his senior team, will be responsible for managing and overseeing the implementation of future improvements required to ensure that the charity moves forward in a compliant manner and on a positive footing to continue its charitable work.

The Commission will be shortly closing its investigation and issuing an action plan to the new trustees to ensure that they build on the good progress made so far and continue to improve the charity's governance and financial management, especially those relating to the management of Muslim Aid CIO's country offices. The Commission will monitor the charity's continued progress to ensure it complies with the action plan. The regulator will consider further use of its statutory powers if the charity does not continue to make timely and sufficient progress or fails to comply with the action plan.

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, which will happen in due course.

Ends

Notes to editors

1. The Charity Commission is the regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see the [about us](#) page on GOV.UK.
2. Search for charities on our [check charity tool](#).

News story: A service to remember

Becky Dykes

Rebecca provided the means for life for people she cared for – water to the people of Babliyah, the means to grow produce for those in Adousiyeh, and peace and resilience for Syrian and Palestinian refugees.

Her joy in her work was evident throughout her career, whether it was her elation on learning she was to be part of the stabilisation unit or her happiness just hours before her death knowing that she had secured the future of a project providing social stability to young people across Lebanon.

Rebecca changed thousands of lives for the better, and if we judge her life on those achievements, she achieved a lifetime's worth.

Through the foundation her family have set up, which will focus on continuing Rebecca's important humanitarian work with refugees, as well as empowering women and preventing violence against them, her impression on this world will be a lasting one.

In the weeks and months since Rebecca's death, we have been deluged with supportive messages from her friends and colleagues, which have brought us a great deal of comfort.

The incredible attendance at her memorial service today is testament to Rebecca's passion, energy and enthusiasm, which touched everyone she encountered.

Rebecca loved her work, and we want to ensure that it continues in her name.

We are raising funds to establish the Rebecca Dykes Foundation, which will focus on humanitarian and stabilisation work for refugees and other vulnerable communities, with a particular emphasis on female empowerment and the prevention of violence against women.

We are planning a series of fundraising events, and have secured a large number of places at the Great North Run, in September, for people to run for Rebecca. She loved running, and had completed two marathons in under four hours, with very little training.

Help us to ensure that Rebecca's legacy lives on. Please donate at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/rebecca-j-dykes

Press release: Prime Minister and Dr Liam Fox's China visit boosts trade and jobs

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox led a 50-strong business delegation on his visit to China with the Prime Minister.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox, said:

I am delighted to have joined the Prime Minister on this crucial and incredibly fruitful visit.

The agreements signed this week, valued at more than £9 billion, demonstrate a clear demand for British goods and services.

As an international economic department, we will continue to develop this valuable trading relationship, which is now worth more than £59 billion, with UK exports to China increasing by over 25% last year.

During the visit deals worth over £9.8 billion have been agreed, representing commercial signings, market access agreements and future contract commitments within a variety of sectors, creating more than 2,600 jobs across the UK.

Further information:

Deals valued at £9.89 billion have been agreed, creating 2,666 UK jobs.

Within advanced manufacturing, deals valued at £3.25 billion have been agreed, creating 500 new jobs. Some of these deals include:

- a new £50 million R&D centre in Birmingham by Times Electric, which will develop new technology in the area of electric vehicles and create 150 high-skilled jobs in the UK over the next 5 years
- a £20 million dealer investment and expansion programme by Aston Martin Lagonda, taking its total footprint in the Chinese market to more than 20 locations
- investment in a new design studio for all-electric London cabs in Coventry by Geely. Owners of the London Electric Vehicle Company (LEVC), the studio will create 100 new jobs
- a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by Ultra MTS with the China Railway Eryuan Engineering Group Co. Ltd (CREEC) to supply its award-winning driverless pods, as used in Heathrow Terminal 5, to the Chinese market
- Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd (SSTL) has agreed a contract worth £22 million with the Chinese company 21-AT for the provision of Earth Orbital data

- Graphene Lighting is to form a joint venture with Nanjing Economic and Technological Development Zone (NETDZ) that will enable them to export environmentally-friendly graphene lightbulbs to the EU worth £65 million in exports

During the visit, £1.27 billion of deals and market access were secured for the UK financial services industry, creating around 890 jobs:

- Shanghai Clearing House has agreed to connect London FinTech company R5FX's R5 automated currency trading platform onto their systems, providing Chinese Institutional Investors direct access to currency exchanges without needing to go through brokers
- Shanghai International Group has signed a deal to invest £340 million in South Molton Street Capital's European m&a fund – South Molton Street Capital will set up an office in Shanghai in support of this deal
- UK FinTech company Currency Cloud has signed a deal with Chinese company X-Transfer to undertake foreign currency exchange for its cross-border payments business
- the People's Bank of China has welcomed applications by Experian to undertake corporate credit rating business and World First to undertake cross border payments business
- Standard Chartered Bank (China) has received its lead underwriting licence for non-financial enterprise Panda bonds
- Shanghai Pudong Development Bank has secured a licence to open its first European branch in London – the £74 million investment will create an additional 20 UK jobs
- Innovate Finance and the National Internet Finance Association of China (NIFA) have signed an MoU to cooperate on supporting and promoting the UK and China's leading FinTech hubs and member firms

Consumer sector deals worth over £2 billion have been agreed:

- JD.com, one of China's largest B2C online retailers, has [signed an agreement with DIT](#) committing to sales of £2 billion of British retail goods and food and drink over the next 2 to 3 years – up to 50 jobs are expected to be created as a result
- JD.com has also announced a promotional 'Super Brand Day' dedicated to British products which is expected to be worth up to £25 million – this will run across JD.com's platforms including retail, FMCG and food and drink

Announcements valued at £1.36 billion within the energy and infrastructure sectors have been secured, including:

- BP has agreed a deal with the Shandong Dongming Petrochemical Group. The agreement will see over 500 petrol stations in China open over a 10 year period – this investment milestone demonstrates BP's continued commitment to growth in China's oil and gas sector through outward direct investment
- Zaha Hadid Architects has won an architectural design contract for a new iconic building in Wuhan – the project will host the headquarters of the Taikang Insurance company, alongside residential and retail areas

- an agreement by Savills Property Services with Wuhan's Jian'an District to set up Savills in Wuhan – this office will be responsible for Savills' central China business and will allow Savills to develop its wider presence in China
- China Resources to take a 30% stake in Dudgeon offshore wind farm worth up to £600 million has now received competition clearance from the Chinese authorities
- a [Belt and Road website for London](#) has been created by London & Partners and the City of London Corporation, and is a step to help create awareness about the Initiative and how UK firms can play a role

Agreements valued at over £550 million have been agreed within the education sector, creating more than 800 jobs, including:

- Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU) – a joint venture university of the University of Liverpool – is to build a new campus in Taicang – the new campus will develop strong links with industry to develop leading graduates in science and technology

Announcements valued at over £500 million have been secured within the life sciences and healthcare sectors. For example:

- Cambridge Science Park to receive a £200 million investment from world-leading science facility Tsinghua University Holdings to build a state-of-the-art biohub, providing labs and offices for UK and Chinese biotech and med-tech companies
- digital health company Medopad has signed a £36 million deal with China Resources to develop health care apps – Medopad will also collaborate with Internet retail giant Tencent to advance digital health solutions in the UK and China
- AstraZeneca and Ali Health (Alibaba) have signed an MoU to partner on Internet of Things-enabled smart healthcare provision across China, and also with Tencent to tackle medicine counterfeiting and enhance the protection of intellectual property rights in China – both MoUs support AstraZeneca's ambition to partner with the Chinese government in achieving its Healthy China 2030 plan
- Future Planet Capital and Eight Great Technologies have signed MoU's with Shenzhen Gian Hai Sunflower Financial Service and Jian Xin Tian Ran Investment Management Ltd., to invest RMB 3 billion (around £310 million) into healthcare innovation and bio-technology between the UK and China
- Eight Great Technologies and Tsinghua University's venture capital business Leaguer International Co. signed an MoU to form a joint venture called the Eight Great Technologies Sino-UK Fund -this is a RMB 5 billion (£560 million) venture capital fund to invest in UK technology companies first in the UK before scaling to China
- Eight Great Technologies and Jiangsu Industrial Technology and Research Institute (JITRI) have signed an MoU to establish the Eight Great Technologies JITRI Fund – this is a RMB 1 billion (£110 million) venture capital fund which will invest in the development and up-scaling of emerging UK technologies in China

Creative sector announcements valued at £287 million have been secured leading to the creation of 376 new jobs. Amongst others, these include:

- Silvergate Media and CCTV Animation will jointly produce the fifth season of the award-winning British children's animation Octonauts – the new British-Chinese co-production will be broadcast globally, including by the BBC in the UK and by CCTV in China, with a further 2 seasons planned
- UK technology company Improbable and leading Chinese internet technology company NetEase have signed an agreement to begin a broad partnership to make and publish games built on SpatialOS, Improbable's cloud-based platform for game development
- leading UK design company PriestmanGoode has signed an MoU with Hainan Airlines to deliver design services covering aircraft, cabins, airport and ground services on an ongoing basis

Food and drink, and agri-food announcements worth £137 million have been secured, creating 30 new jobs. These include:

- Bulkpowders, a leading UK producer of sports nutrition products, has secured an exclusive import and distribution agreement with Shanghai Happydo International for its range of nutrition powder and snack products
- Freshways (Dairy) UHT Division, the UK's largest independent processing dairy company, has signed a variety of import and partnership agreements with companies including Youle Trading Shanghai, Appy Foods and Yeo Valley for the production and sale of various dairy products in China
- Moma Cereal, made with wholegrain British jumbo oats, has signed several distribution agreements with numerous high profile national China retailers including OLE Stores, City Super Stores, City Shop and online platforms JD.Com and VIP.com through their China partners Sticksology

In addition, market access deals have been secured with the potential to open up markets upwards of £530 million:

- a commitment of lifting BSE restrictions by summer 2018, supporting our beef market access negotiations, valued at £250 million in the first 5 years
- approval of market entry for dairy products, valued at £280 million in first 5 years

For further information:

- contact the DIT Media Team on 020 7008 3333 or 020 7215 2000 (out of hours)
- follow us: [@tradegovuk](https://twitter.com/tradegovuk), [gov.uk/dit](https://www.gov.uk/dit)

[News story: Electro Rent / Microlease merger could reduce competition](#)

Both companies rent, lease and sell equipment that tests and measures the performance of electronic devices used in certain industries such as telecommunications, defence, utilities and information technology.

The completed merger of the rival businesses was referred to a group of independent panel members at the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) for an in-depth investigation, after an initial investigation identified competition concerns.

The group has found that Electro Rent, though significantly smaller than Microlease in the UK, was the only other rental company operating in the country to have the resources and stock to compete effectively with Microlease.

It also determined that, while there is a limited number of alternatives, the merged business is now the only suitable UK supplier for a large number of customers.

It is unlikely that the merged business would be prevented from using its position to increase prices or reduce its quality of service to customers by new entrants or expansion of established companies.

The group has therefore provisionally concluded that it is likely the merger will lead to a substantial lessening of competition in the sector, and a worse deal for UK customers.

The CMA is now inviting comments on both its provisional findings and its possible remedies, which include selling part or all of one of the merged companies. See the [case page](#) for more information.

The CMA's final report will be published by the statutory deadline of 4 April 2018.