

Loveday Ryder appointed as DVSA's new Chief Executive

News story

Loveday Ryder will become the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency's Chief Executive on 1 January 2021.



Loveday Ryder has been appointed as the new Chief Executive of the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and will be starting her new role on 1 January 2021.

DVSA's purpose is to help everyone stay safe on Britain's roads. The agency carries out driving tests, approves people to be driving instructors and MOT testers carries out tests to make sure lorries and buses are safe to drive, carries out roadside checks on drivers and vehicles, and monitors vehicle recalls.

Department for Transport Permanent Secretary Bernadette Kelly said:

I'm delighted to welcome Loveday Ryder to the department in her role as Chief Executive of the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency.

DVSA's work affects everyone in the country, and Loveday's wide range of business change and performance improvement experience will be invaluable in helping DVSA overcome the operational challenges created by the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

I would like to express my thanks to Gareth Llewellyn for his immense contribution as Chief Executive, and wish him every success for the future.

Loveday Ryder was appointed as BPDTS Ltd's Chief Executive Officer on 22 January 2018. BPDTS provides specialist digital technology services to the Department for Work and Pensions.

Previously, Loveday spent 12 years in the Ministry of Justice, where she successfully served in several senior roles in organisation design, change management and programme delivery,

Before joining the Civil Service in 2006, Loveday worked within a specialist management consultancy.

Loveday Ryder said:

I'm thrilled and excited to be joining DVSA, whose people are so passionate about helping everyone stay safe on Britain's roads.

I want to help build on the successes already achieved through DVSA's 5-year strategy. DVSA will continue to change, improve and modernise services for customers, embrace smarter ways of working and make the most of new technology while making sure road safety remains at the heart of everything we do.

I'm looking forward to supporting DVSA colleagues in the vital work they do to help achieve the vision we all share – safer drivers, safer vehicles and safer journeys for all.

Published 26 November 2020

[Marketing boss banned after thousands of nuisance calls](#)

Elia Bols (32) now living in Australia, was director of AMS Marketing Limited, a telephone marketing company incorporated in January 2016.

The Telephone Preference Service (TPS), however, received 71 complaints between October 2016 and October 2017 about AMS Marketing's unsolicited calls. A further 32 complaints were received by the Information Commissioners Office (ICO), who informed Elia Bols that a fine of £100,000 would be issued.

In April 2019, AMS Marketing was wound-up in the courts, with the fine outstanding. Further enquiries by the Official Receiver established that for just over a year between October 2016 and December 2017, Elia Bols' had caused AMS Marketing to make more than 75,000 unsolicited direct marketing calls to numbers around the UK.

AMS Marketing Limited should have used the TPS list before making such calls to remove the numbers of individuals who had elected not to receive unsolicited contact.

On 28 October 2020, the Secretary of State accepted a disqualification undertaking from Elia Bols after he did not dispute that he had caused his company to breach Regulation 21 of the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations in making the marketing calls.

Effective from 18 November 2020, Elia Bols is disqualified for 6 years from acting as a director or directly or indirectly becoming involved, without the permission of the court, in the promotion, formation or management of a company.

Andy Curry, Head of Investigations at the ICO said:

Our work with the Insolvency Service has seen the successful disqualification of 17 directors who have shut their business down to try and avoid paying a fine for illegal marketing activity.

Nuisance calls, emails and texts can be a huge problem and often cause people real distress. By taking unscrupulous directors out of action, we can help protect the public and their privacy.

Robert Clarke, Chief Investigator at the Insolvency Service, said:

Elia Bols had a complete disregard of protective regulations and thanks to the joint work with the ICO, we have secured a ban which reflects the seriousness of this offence.

When directors of a company do not comply with regulations that are designed to protect the public, we will fully investigate the circumstances and take action where appropriate.

Elia Bols is from Perth, Australia and his date of birth is April 1988.

He was the director of AMS Marketing Limited (Company number 09967423)

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of restrictions](#).

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct.](#)

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

COVID-19 refunds: CMA warns wedding firms over unfair practices

News story

The CMA has issued new warnings to firms over concerns that couples are still not receiving fair refunds for weddings that could not go ahead during the pandemic.



Following the [publication of its statement on wedding cancellations and refunds](#), the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) [took action against Bijou Weddings Group](#) to secure fair refunds for its customers. However, the CMA has continued to receive new complaints from couples who had their big day booked with other wedding party providers, prompting the CMA to write directly to several firms which may have broken consumer law. Couples have complained about being misled about the level of refund they are entitled to or being offered the opportunity to rebook but only at a higher price.

These businesses are being asked to review their practices to ensure they comply with the law, or risk enforcement action if they fail to do so – including being required to provide refunds.

As a result of concerns highlighted by the most recent complaints, the CMA is also making its views clear to all wedding firms:

- businesses should not make deductions from the refund unless they can prove those costs were incurred directly for the wedding in question and have provided a breakdown of those costs. Where a contract is for venue hire only, the CMA would generally not expect there to be any deductions. The CMA has not set a 'benchmark' amount when it comes to providing refunds and each case must be assessed on an individual basis
- businesses need to meet their legal obligations promptly and should not unreasonably delay or refuse to provide refunds to couples when they are due
- couples should not face additional charges when they voluntarily agree to reschedule their wedding to a comparable date and service, instead of seeking a refund

All wedding firms are being urged to look at their policies on refunds and cancellations and make changes where needed.

Andrea Coscelli, CEO of the CMA, said:

It's not right that couples are facing an uphill battle over costs for weddings which couldn't go ahead due to the pandemic. We know that businesses are continuing to face the impact of coronavirus, but consumers cannot be expected to lose out as a result.

Many couples will be entitled to a full refund, but in the cases where they are not, we are absolutely clear there is no 'one size fits all' approach to retaining costs. Any proposed deduction should only cover costs already incurred in relation to the particular wedding in question, and those costs should be proven by the firm and clearly broken down. All wedding firms need to take note of the CMA's action in this area and provide refunds where they are due, without unnecessary delay. Those who refuse to do so risk enforcement action.

This update on the wedding sector is part of a wider programme of CMA investigations into businesses that have reportedly failed to respect refund rights during the pandemic.

All updates on the CMA's work on refunds can be found on the [COVID-19 response page](#).

Notes to editors

1. The key pieces of consumer protection legislation relevant to the CMA's investigation are the Consumer Rights Act 2015 (CRA) and the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (CPRs). The CRA prohibits the use of unfair terms in contracts between businesses and consumers. The CPRs prohibit unfair commercial practices by businesses towards consumers.
2. In some cases, where lockdown laws prevent a business from providing a service or the consumer from receiving it, the business may be able to deduct a contribution to the costs it has already incurred in relation to servicing the specific contract in question (where it cannot recover them elsewhere). Read more in [the CMA's statement on weddings](#).
3. When calculating the amount Bijou Weddings must refund, the CMA calculated that 37.2% of the contract price was the maximum amount Bijou could deduct from its refunds to any customer. However, this amount was dependant on how close the wedding date was to the start of lockdown. As it turned out, there were no cases in which Bijou was entitled to retain 37.2%. The average amount that Bijou was able to deduct was 28% – just over a quarter. The CMA has at no point advised or implied that this calculation is a standard to be used across the sector. On the contrary, the CMA has made clear that each case must be considered individually. The CMA considers that any sums retained by a wedding business must have

already been incurred in relation to that particular wedding, and this must be proven.

4. For more information about the CMA's work on weddings, [visit the inquiry page](#).
5. For media enquiries, contact the CMA press office on 020 3738 6460 or press@cma.gov.uk.

Published 26 November 2020

World-class autonomous minehunters to protect Royal Navy

Speaking at the Franco-British Council Defence Conference, the Defence Secretary announced a £184 million investment in the joint Maritime Mine Counter Measure (MMCM) programme, which will create new systems to combat sea mines and keep ships and personnel away from danger.

The contract will support 215 jobs across the UK at Thales sites in Somerset and Plymouth, as well as in the wider supply chain, including L3 Harris in Portsmouth, Stonehaven in Aberdeenshire and Alba Ultrasound in Glasgow.

This investment follows the substantial £16.5 billion settlement in the Spending Review for Defence over four years that will modernise the armed forces, reinvigorate the shipbuilding industry and bring jobs and prosperity to every part of the UK.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

This £184 million contract offers a huge leap forward for the Royal Navy's autonomous capabilities in the detection and defeat of sea mines. As the Armed Forces puts modernisation at the heart of its future strategy, these systems will protect vital shipping lanes, commercial traffic and our brave personnel from these deadly devices.

The programme also underpins a deep and ever-strengthening relationship with France and marks the tenth anniversary of the Lancaster House treaties between our two nations.

UK-France defence cooperation

The Defence Secretary was speaking at this year's virtual Franco-British Council Defence Conference, which also featured French defence minister Florence Parly, Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir Nick Carter and his

French counterpart Chef d'État-Major des Armées François Lecointre.

This month marks the 10th anniversary of the historic Lancaster House treaties on defence, security and nuclear cooperation between the UK and France. The historic commitment has established a long-term partnership between the two countries and includes the fully operational Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF) – a force able to rapidly deploy over 10,000 personnel in response to a crisis.

Both nations are deployed around the world together in places such as the Middle East combating Daesh and in Estonia as part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence. In Mali, three RAF Chinooks and 100 UK personnel are deployed in a non-combat role in support of French counter-extremist operations.

Royal Navy minehunting

The Royal Navy is world leader in mine countermeasures, having been regularly called upon to deal with mines and other historic ordnance, left over from the Second World War, around the United Kingdom. In recent times, the UK has been involved in minehunting operations across the world, including the Gulf and off Libya.

Following a successful demonstration phase and trials completed in October 2020, the new contract will produce three sets of minehunting equipment, consisting of:

Autonomous vessel – a boat controlled and operated from a “mother ship/base.”
Towed sonar – a sonar which is towed/dragged behind the vessel to locate ordnance.
Mine neutralisation system – a remotely operated underwater vehicle which is used once the mine is located to neutralise the device and prevent its detonation.

When used together, these three elements are known as the Primary System. This next-generation mine hunting capability is designed to potentially replace conventional crewed mine hunting vessels, such as the Royal Navy's Hunt and Sandown class ships, with autonomous systems.

First Sea Lord Admiral Tony Radakin said:

I am enormously excited by the potential of the future minehunting capability. This will allow us to deliver minehunting more effectively, more efficiently and more safely, and to integrate even more closely with our French counterparts in this important area.

The UK element of the MMCM programme was negotiated by Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), the procurement arm of the UK Ministry of Defence.

DE&S CEO Sir Simon Bollom said:

This ground-breaking technology brings with it a step-change in capability for the Royal Navy which is a bold step into the digital and autonomous world. I'm incredibly proud of DE&S and the Royal Navy team who have worked tirelessly with our French colleagues to deliver on this contract.

Alex Cresswell, CEO of Thales in the UK, said:

Technologies such as autonomy and AI are transforming societies and warfare at an exponential rate. This contract represents the next generation for Anglo-French minehunting, delivering a world leading capability that will keep our armed forces safe and create and secure vital jobs across the UK and our supply chain. We look forward to delivering the next stage in this exciting hi-tech programme.

The first equipment sets are due to be delivered in late 2022. It will commence operational evaluation prior to entering service with the Royal Navy.

Appointments and reappointments of Youth Justice Board members

The Secretary of State for Justice has announced appointments to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) of Susannah Hancock, Jacob Sakil and Louise Shorter for a period of 3 years who will commence their tenures on 1 December 2020.

The Secretary of State for Justice has also announced the reappointments of Ben Byrne, Sharon Gray, Neal Hazel and Keith Towler who will commence their tenures on 1 January 2021 for a period of 3 years.

YJB is a non-departmental public body, responsible for overseeing the youth justice system in England and Wales. As a non-departmental public body, its primary function is to monitor the operation of the youth justice system and the provision of youth justice services.

Appointments and reappointments to YJB are made by the Secretary of State for Justice and are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. These appointments have been made in line with the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Biographies

Appointments

Susannah Hancock

Susannah has been, since 2018, Chief Executive of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners which represents PCCs and wider policing governance bodies across England and Wales. She was previously Assistant Chief Executive of the national charity Victim Support, and Chief Executive for the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner in Essex. Between 2004-2008, she served as Head of London for the YJB.

Jacob Sakil

Jacob has been, since 2019, Strategic Development Lead for Connecting Conversations Collective where he currently leads on coordinating the Lambeth Youth Council to ensure children and young people have an accessible and transparent avenue to engage in local democracy. He is also a Youth Worker, School Governor, Youth Offending Service representative and a Advisor to the Young Mayor at Lewisham Council.

Louise Shorter

Louise is founder and investigator of Inside Justice, a registered charity which investigates alleged miscarriages of justice on behalf of prisoners who maintain their innocence; a Board Member of Inside Time, a not-for-profit newspaper for prisoners and an Associate Tutor at the School of Law, University of East Anglia.

Reappointments

Ben Byrne

Ben was first appointed as a YJB Member on 1 January 2018. He is strategic lead for improvement and innovation for the London Directors of Children's Services. He was formerly responsible for Early Help, Family Services and Youth Justice at Surrey County Council. He is a qualified social worker who has been a youth justice practitioner. Ben is a trustee of the National Association for Youth Justice.

Sharon Gray

Sharon was first appointed as a YJB Member on 1 January 2018. She is an Education Consultant at Wholehearted Learning. She has worked with the SEND London Leadership Strategy and 'engage in their future' representing special schools (young people experiencing severe SEMH – social, emotional and mental health difficulties) across the country. She has been a member of the MoJ Medway Improvement Board, Ofsted inspector and a successful Head Teacher in special (SEMH) and mainstream schools for 21 years.

Neal Hazel

Neal was first appointed as a YJB Member on 1 January 2018. He is the Chair of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Salford, following posts as Director of the Salford Institute for Public Policy and Director of the Centre for Social Research at the University. Neal is also former HM Deputy Chief Inspector of Probation for England and Wales.

Keith Towler

Keith was first appointed as a YJB Member on 1 January 2018. He was previously the Children's Commissioner for Wales and has acted as an independent consultant for children and young people's rights. Keith is the Chair of the Interim Youth Work Board for Wales which is tasked with developing a sustainable delivery model for youth work services in Wales. He was a member of the International Play Association Working Group which assisted the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, as well as the Family Justice Review.