



Gangmasters &
Labour Abuse Authority

Chief Executive's Report to Board

25 July 2019

Introduction

The start of the summer saw the 100th company sign up to the GLAA's Construction Protocol. Some of the biggest names in the building industry are now committed to working with us to protect vulnerable workers.

As part of our Prevention agenda, we have also produced a range of practical tools designed to prevent modern slavery and labour exploitation on building sites. The package includes a presentation for new starters which will be shown at the end of Health and Safety inductions, along with posters on spotting the signs of exploitation and a toolbox talk aimed at raising awareness of workers' rights on site.

This education-led approach to tackling labour exploitation has also been mirrored in an innovative partnership with Boston College. As a result of that, training providers from across the UK will soon be able to access ready-made tutorials and innovative visual resources aimed at raising awareness among those soon to be entering the workplace.

We were thrilled to learn labour providers believe conditions for workers have been improved by the GLAA. A survey of licence holders, carried out by the Association of Labour Providers (ALP) saw 200 people provide feedback. The results revealed almost 90% agree that we've improved conditions for workers, 84% of people think the GLAA is doing a good job and 97% said the service they'd received from the GLAA was professional. These figures are testament to the commitment and professionalism of my GLAA colleagues.

Enforcement

Two men who admitted helping an illegal gangmaster are due to be sentenced this month. Josh Beesley and Christopher Beech both pleaded guilty to aiding and abetting an unlicensed gangmaster when they appeared at Liverpool Crown Court.

Another two men who ran a recruitment agency in the north-west of England were fined for acting as unlicensed gangmasters. Raja Mudassar Javed and Wayne Critchley supplied between 30-40 workers to a food factory in Greater Manchester between February and October 2017.

And a 38-year-old man has been prevented from supplying workers without a licence following a GLAA investigation in Devon. He was served with a Labour Market Enforcement Undertaking (LMEU) after providing labour to food processing factories through a recruitment agency.

Further details of our enforcement activity is captured in our Performance report.

Licensing and compliance

A company's licence was revoked after an investigation revealed it was being managed by three people considered to be not fit and proper by the agency. An inspection of Sunrise

East Ltd by GLAA officers in May 2019 found principal authority Tracey Doughty had no control over the company or any idea how it was run.

And a recruitment agency which was refused a licence lost its appeal against the decision after a judge said workers at the company were left open to potential exploitation. Boston-based Grand Labour Agency Ltd was refused a licence in September 2018, with the GLAA's decision upheld in court last month.

Organisational update

Work to finalise our Annual Report and Accounts for the year 2017/18 has been completed with the report due to be laid before Parliament in mid July.

We have continued to play an active part in discussions around creating a Single Enforcement Body, with the consultation commencing on 16th July. All GLAA colleagues have been kept updated with regard to the proposals through Morecambe, with further briefing provided as the consultation began. The consultation will be used to engage with people right across the organisation in order to shape the GLAA's position.

In June I met the Romanian Ambassador to the UK at an event held at the Romanian Consulate, convened jointly by the GLAA and the Embassy. It enabled us to engage with members of the Romanian community and talk specifically about issues that affect them, with examples of exploitation brought to life by one of our investigating officers who attended.

Our Nature and Scale of Threat Report, which analyses the current position around labour exploitation, has been completed and will help inform our thinking, especially in the prevention arena. Copies of this have been sent to Board members.

And we are taking steps to strengthen internal engagement across the UK with a series of Let's Talk events held across the country. These have allowed me to meet and share views with around 85 colleagues, which I have found extremely valuable. Around half of those attending completed a post-event survey that showed 76% felt more informed and engaged following the meeting.

Freedom of Information Requests

Reporting Period: Q.1 (1 April – 30 June 2019)

Freedom of Information Requests

10 FOIs received, of which:

- 3 are ongoing
- 6 answered within 20 days
- 1 late response (24 days)

Complaints

2 complaints received and currently being progressed:

- Late payment for interpretation service
- Application Inspection

Parliamentary Questions (PQs)

11 PQs received which required a GLAA and/or HO response and which are published on the GLAA website.