



Gangmasters &
Labour Abuse Authority

GLAA69/11b Liaison Group update

22 July 2020

Board Paper Reference – GLAA69/11b – Liaison Group update

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To update the Board on the work of the liaison groups.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Board is invited to note

- the draft minutes of the Worker/NGO Liaison group meeting held on 23 June 2020 at Annex A.
- the notes from the joint Labour User/Labour Provider NGO liaison group meeting held on 3 March at Annex B.

Report Author: Jennifer Clarke

Senior Responsible Officer: Darryl Dixon

Minutes

Title of meeting

Date	23 June 2020	Time	11:00
Venue	Via Zoom		
Chair	Linda Dickens	Secretary	Jennifer Clarke

Attendees

Margaret Beels (MB) GLAA Chair
 Linda Dickens (LD) GLAA Board member
 Darryl Dixon (DD) GLAA Head of Single Enforcement Body Programme
 Helen Hall (HH) GLAA Campaigns and Engagement Officer
 Frank Hanson (FH) GLAA Head of Prevent & Partnerships
 Suzanne McCarthy (SM) GLAA Board member
 Julia Mulligan (JM) GLAA Board member (part)
 Suzanne McCarthy (SM) GLAA Board member
 Ian Waterfield (IW) GLAA Head of Enforcement

Ake Achi (AA) Right to Work Ltd
 Sarah Brown (SB) Stop the Traffik
 Irina Do Camp (IDC) Unite
 Emma Crates (EC) Office of Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner
 Emily Eisenstein (EE) Office of Director of Labour Market Enforcement
 Lucila Granada (LG) Flex
 Bridget Henderson (BH) Unite the Union
 Ellie-May Leigh (EML) BEIS
 Dolores Modern (DM) Latin Women's Rights
 Natasha Owusu (NO) TUC
 Klara Skriviakova (KS) Trust for London
 Ian Walker (ISW) GLAA Head of Intelligence
 Andrew Wallis (AW) Unseen

Apologies

Dan Scully GLAA
 Narmada Thiranagama Unison
 Patrick Burland International Organisation for Migration

1	Welcome and introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linda Dickens opened the meeting by welcoming group members and new members to the meeting.
2	Apologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted as above.

3	Minutes of the previous meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as being an accurate record.
4	Actions arising from the previous meeting held on 07 January 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The group noted the report. The action points from 07 January have all be completed• AP13.8 – remains open.

5	Updates
	<p>a) COVID-19</p> <p>Ian Waterfield updated the group on the GLAA response to COVID-19. All of the office functions were quickly moved to home based after the building was closed. This included Intelligence, worker confidential helpline, licensing lines. The IT infrastructure stood up well and the GLAA has remained operational throughout this period.</p> <p>The organisation has retained its face to face capability, all of these scenarios are risk assessed.</p> <p>More desk-based assessments in relation to licensing have taken place, for example the fit and proper test for licensing has been completed from accrued documents.</p> <p>The GLAA is focused on the safety of workers, recognises the significant strains on agriculture, food processing and packaging and saw its role as assisting the food chain to become operational during the pandemic.</p> <p>Temporary licensing scheme – a temporary licensing scheme to ensure critical food supply sectors were able to run as smoothly as possible during the COVID-19 outbreak was introduced by the GLAA on 31 March. The scheme allowed temporary licences for food production to be granted to businesses operating within the wider labour supply industry and who wished to support labour providers who currently hold GLAA licences.</p> <p>Applications had to be sponsored by an existing GLAA licence holder who were expected to carry out due diligence checks in line with the authority’s licensing standards.</p> <p>The scheme closed on 1 June. The small number of current temporary licence holders have received advice setting out how to proceed in seeking a substantive licence.</p> <p>Investigations – all investigations are subject to a risk assessment. Controlled deployments have led to arrests and prosecutions. There has been joint working with UK policing and the NCA, although some agencies have ceased face-to-face activities.</p> <p>The GLAA expected to see a displacement of workers (e.g. from car washes as they had to close) but that has not been evident. Ongoing efforts to plug the intelligence gaps are being made.</p> <p>Operational activity in south east – the GLAA contacted all agricultural labour sites in the south east and Wales to provide farmers with ongoing support during the COVID-19 pandemic. Jointly on a farm visit this week with Cambridgeshire the Police’s Rural Crime Action team, the GLAA interviewed over 200 workers to check that they were being treated correctly.</p> <p>As car washes are now reopening joint working with police neighbourhood teams is taking place to ensure workers are being fairly treated and are working within the social distancing restrictions.</p>

b) Impact and Implications for labour market

Participants were invited to report on developments and also their observations on the impact of the pandemic in relation to the areas they covered. Generally, it was felt that it was too early to ascertain the longer-term impact of COVID-19 on the labour market.

- Andrew Wallis

Reported that calls to the Modern Slavery Helpline from the public had dropped by a third and calls from workers had increased by 65%

No evidence held as to where the workers have disappeared to during the pandemic.

Since the car washes have become operational again more calls are being received relating to that sector.

The Unseen Annual Helpline Assessment 2019 to be shared with the group.

- Bridget Henderson

BH is responsible for food and agriculture sector within the union. There has been very little furlough/shut down of workers in the food and agriculture sectors because of the demand for food production during COVID-19.

Concerns have been raised that employers in the meat industry are not providing adequate PPE for workers in relation to COVID-19.

Outbreaks of COVID-19 in abattoirs and meat processing factories have been identified in three sites in the UK closing factories operated by Kober, Rowan Foods, and 2 Sisters.

These are happening in unionised workplaces it is therefore anticipated that in non-unionised workplaces further down the spectrum, workers will be more vulnerable.

Similar outbreaks have been identified in the USA and Germany abattoirs and meat processing factories.

- Irina Do Camp

Irina covers hospitality, warehouse and logistics, passenger transport. Currently compiling evidence for the low pay commission.

IDC will circulate evidence within this group once published.

- Dolores Modern

Raised issues about cleaners not being paid Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) when ill and not being paid for extra work when being asked to work additional hours to cover demands of COVID-19, furlough & sickness. The workers have been threatened with dismissal if they did not comply.

Furloughed drop in hours means the workers do not have enough money to survive on.

There are gaps in information and they are not hearing from this sector.

The workers have not been supplied with PPE for the work being carried out.

- Klara Skriviakova

Trust for London Fund has been set up to address issues of low pay and use of rights, working with agencies providing advocacy and legal advice. The organisation is networked into 50 employment advice organisations who are feeding back examples of worker exploitation in London.

Reports received from cleaners who are required to clean closed facilities and reports have received from NHS cleaners. Raised issue of lack of knowledge of the GLAA and how to refer issues.

- Natasha Owusu

The TUC is undertaking work to assess how employers are undertaking Risk Assessments and protection of workers and how they are adhering to H&S obligation.

NO enquired about H&S obligations and how the GLAA are working with HSE to establish whether and how Risk Assessments are being undertaken.

Further reference was made to the three meat processing and packaging sites in the UK shut down by COVID-19, the nature of the employment conditions and environment.

The GLAA is keen to support research with the TUC. Contact to be made by FH. IW confirmed that HSE & GLAA work closely together and exchange information. If appropriate joint site visits are made.

- Sarah Brown

Stop the Traffik are launching two campaigns focusing on Latin American cleaners in collaboration with FLEX & LARS and Filipino domestic workers. It was agreed that the information will be shared.

- Ake Achis

Rights are being exploited by employers who don't understand the employment immigration status of the employees. Although they had a right to work, immigrant workers whose right to work was challenged were being suspended or sacked. These workers are turning to work in Chinese & Indian restaurants and take-aways but not being paid NMW.

- Lucila Granada

LG added to comments already made regarding the concerns of lack of PPE and the vulnerability of workers in the cleaning sectors and the concerns over SSP which doesn't cover basic living expenses and the fear of becoming sick, the risk of demise and falling into destitution.

A key concern is the lack of contact with enforcement or support bodies made by domestic workers.

FLEX has started two outreach projects with farms in Scotland with Fife Migrants Forum. The other project is looking at hospitality and security guards.

LD noted the valuable research being undertaken by participants' organisations. She reminded the group of an earlier discussion on the potential for questions relating to the GLAA, or in areas of interest to it, being included in surveys involving workers. The GLAA would welcome this. Contact FH

Action

AP15/1 Share with the group Unseen Helpline Annual Assessment 2019 Report
JC

AP15/2 BH to forward low pay commission evidence for circulation to the group.
IDC/FH

AP15/3 GLAA to support gathering of research with TUC. **NO/FH**

AP15/4 Stop the Traffik to share information with the group **SB/FH**

6	Performance
	a) Performance Report The group noted the report circulated ahead of the meeting and available on the website.
	b) Outlook for 2020-2021 MR reported that The Business Plan is with ministers for sign off. For continuity the GLAA 6 strategic objectives remain the same. The plan was produced pre COVID-19 which will impact on how the GLAA delivers against the plan.
	c) Current initiatives The GLAA is working on how to contribute to the Government Spending review taking place over the Summer. The GLAA remains fluid in the response to the threat of exploited workers. A new Control Strategy has been introduced. The organisation is faced with further cost pressures. Medium term it is looking to do more and anticipating that more resources will be required. In relation to the development of SEB a case has been made for more resources.
7	Worker Exploitation
	a) Current data and trends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IW gave an overview of Intelligence Reporting and Handling for Q1 2020 (January – March 2020). • Most of this reporting period was pre lockdown and therefore the findings were not impacted by COVID-19 • Top sectors; construction, agriculture and food service • Exploiters where a nationality or ethnic background was suggested 40% of the potential exploiters were of apparent Asian extraction (either Middle East, South East. East or South-East Asia). May or may not be British • Main age range for the exploiters and victims is 23-34 years old • Locations vary across the country • GLAA/Crimestoppers online awareness campaign targeting Romanian jobseekers in the construction sector which ran between 28 February – 12 March was considered a success • There was an uptake in calls in COVID-19 related matters where workers were not understanding their rights - referred to ACAS • There has been very limited reporting from the cleaning sector • More recently reports have been received relating to shellfish gathering on the south coast • Excessive hours worked is prevalent in reporting Action AP15 /5 Circulate PowerPoint slides. JC
	b) Ascertaining Workers' views <i>covered in agenda item 5b</i>

8	<p>Single Market Enforcement Body (SEB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DD reported that whilst the consultation has closed in October 2019 there had been numerous delays brought about by the General Election, Cabinet reshuffle. • The timing of the Employment Bill, which would effectively be the vehicle to bring in primary legislation to establish the SEB, has also been delayed. • Whilst the work post consultation has been delayed acceleration is likely later and is being viewed by the GLAA positively.
9	<p>Office of Director of Labour Market Enforcement (ODLME)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emily Eisenstein updated the group. • The DLME 2020/21 Strategy was submitted to Ministers at the end of March. It focuses primarily on non-compliance and enforcement in four sectors hand car washes, agriculture, social care and construction. Key recommendations included building knowledge and effective use of data and better partnership working. • EE will next be reviewing the strategy in view of COVID-19. • It was noted that the Annual report is being publishing next week. • EE confirmed there was as yet no stated timetable for publication of the strategy.
10	<p>Office of Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (OIASC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emma Crates updated the group on Operation Fort which resulted in convictions for slavery, trafficking and money laundering offences with sentences ranging from 3 - 1 years. • A subsequent report launched last week by the IASC challenges what businesses should learn from the UK's largest anti-slavery prosecution. The report also introduced a maturity matrix to assist business to self-assess and benchmark their performance in tackling modern slavery. • Banking and Financial - Operation Fort identified multiple failures of the banking system to recognise the signs of modern slavery and report them to the relevant authorities. Work is commencing with large financial and investment organisations to raise the profile and importance of modern slavery within the sector. • Construction - work is to commence exploring risks and labour exploitation issues within the construction sector and the complex supply chains linking with key partners including the GLAA.

11	<p>Farm Worker Welfare App.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GLAA has been working with the Clewer Initiative to develop an app to understand the impact of the current pandemic on the agricultural industry, as well as the anticipated shortfall of seasonal labour. • The Rural App is a result of intelligence sources and anecdotal evidence from the National Crime Agency (NCA) relating to the most vulnerable workers, who had been employed in carwashes before the lockdown and were moved into low skilled labour within the agricultural sector. • The app features links to advice for vulnerable workers, including information on the GLAA website relating to their rights and conditions of work. • It'll also have information for the farmer or employer to raise awareness of modern slavery and human trafficking, and the importance of identifying vulnerabilities within their supply chains. The app also contain links to help users report any concerns to the Modern Slavery Helpline. • Work on the Clewer Car Wash app has been suspended so that the focus, time and resources have been directed to better understanding the landscape of the agriculture sector. <p>Action AP15/6 Inform group when app becomes available. FH</p>
12	<p>Communication and Engagement with stakeholders</p>
	<p>a) Project Aident</p> <p>i) FH added to the comments made by IW in agenda item 5. Currently the GLAA have identified 67 activities being run under Project Aident from 22 June – 10 July including farm welfare site visits, webinars and social media campaigns.</p> <p>ii) Letters sent to approximately 1400 Principals and Chief Executives, Chairs of Governors and Senior Managers in 240 colleges requesting their support to help promote employment rights of young people entering the labour market, particularly in high risk sectors such as agriculture, construction and hospitality. To support this a GLAA webinar is being hosted by the Skills Education Group.</p> <p>Action AP15/7 Circulate the link to webinar with Skills Education Group. FH</p>
	<p>b) FLEX Pilot proposal: Closing the Intelligence Gap</p> <p>The group noted the report circulated prior to the meeting submitted by Lucila Granada - a proposal for a GLAA-NGOs pilot partnership to enhance reports and tackling of exploitation in high-risk sectors. LD noted that GLAA welcomed the aim of the proposal which was to tackle some of the issues raised within this group concerning vulnerable workers' lack of awareness of GLAA work and remit and lack of support for them in the reporting process. Group members were invited to send any comments on the proposal.</p> <p>Action AP15/8 FH would discuss the proposal with LG and report back to the group.</p>

	<p>c) Partnership Bulletin HH outlined the objectives of the Partnership bulletin. A recent survey showed 85% of recipients had increased their knowledge and 48% had changed their working practices. The circulation of this bulletin is far reaching and any comments on it or suggested topics for inclusion should be sent to helen.hall@gla.gov.uk</p> <p>d) Other The GLAA are looking to replicate the campaign recently run via Facebook aimed at job seekers which took them to the Crimestoppers landing page providing advice on rights when seeking employment in the UK construction industry.</p> <p>To coincide with recruitment through the summer, the GLAA are joining HMRC'S National Minimum Wage (NMW) team for a webinar on 8 July, which is aimed at ensuring the NMW is paid correctly. Further details can be found at www.gla.gov.uk</p>
13	<p>Liaison Group minutes a) Joint Liaison Group meeting 3 March 2020 The minutes of the joint liaison group meeting were noted by the group. LD requested that the actions from this meeting should be reviewed in September. Action AP15/9 Review actions at September meeting.</p>
14	<p>LU/LP Liaison Group meeting 16 June 2020 update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minutes of the group will be shared once they have been completed <p>Action AP15/10 Circulate the lu/lp minutes. JC</p>
15	<p>Any other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Lottery Community Foundation - LD drew attention to The National Lottery Community Foundation which has launched a £200m fund for organisations in England who are supporting people and communities experiencing disproportionate challenges and difficulty during the pandemic, and those that provide services and support for vulnerable people and have seen an increase in demand or have lost income. Circulation of Material - LD requested that all the links to material noted in the various updates be circulated to the group by email. <p>Action AP15/11 Circulate details of the Coronavirus Community Support Fund. JC AP15/12 Co-ordinate and circulate links from the updates FH</p>
16	<p>Date of next meeting 28 September 2020, 11:00 – 13:00 Home Office, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1 4DF - tbc</p>

Notes of LP/LU meeting 16 June 2020

1. The LP/LU was held on 16 June 2020 by Zoom Call with a less formal agenda than previous meetings to encourage discussion of the impact of COVID-19 on the Labour Market. There were 21 external attendees including reps from DLME and IASC.
- 1.1 The agenda covered: Compliance Strategy work; the Temporary Licensing Scheme, an operational update and discussion on Op Aidant, and a discussion on how businesses were adapting to the impact of COVID-19 on sourcing workers and how they will be sourcing labour with the changes to Immigration and Free Movement.

2. Summary of Key Points

2.1 In summary:

- Attendees were keen to engage with the work on compliance and supportive of the opportunity to look for improvements – an invitation was offered to meet with Nicola and Ziggy to discuss ideas or to share by email.
- Attendees were positive about the fact that operational work (compliance and enforcement) was continuing and that there were several ongoing proactive campaigns. This included Operation Bengal where the GLAA is working with the NFU and has contacted agricultural sites in the SE and SW providing guidance and making visits as appropriate. The GLAA plans to roll this out wider.
- Attendees were given details of the prevention activity that was being conducted as part of Op Aidant to raise awareness of exploitation.
- Generally, attendees felt that there weren't any shortages at present as workers were moving about and the weather had impacted on cropping. However, it was noted that workers may be accruing holiday which impacts on supply later in the year.
- There were concerns raised about exploitation going unreported because the normal avenues for spotting signs e.g. auditors visiting are not occurring due to the current restrictions. Attendees stated that this work was being conducted by phone. A different picture may emerge when inspections can resume.
- A concern was raised about how quickly gaps in worker availability are being filled, which may indicate a ready supply of (potentially) labour from unlicensed providers and the possibility of illegal workers. Additionally, some labour users were clearly not operating within the Law as when licensed supply was provided several issues were identified which indicated supply may previously have been unlicensed.
- It was noted how different British worker expectations are from those traditionally working in the sector and the continued reluctance of businesses to

take on British workers as long as there remain options for using overseas workers.

- Attendees were particularly concerned about the impact of the changes to immigration policy in terms of future risks of exploitation.
- It was commented that furloughed workers who were desperate for cash was a possible funnel for exploitation, as well as possible fraud. One possible abuse was furloughed workers being asked to work for their employer. It was likely that this form of exploitation would continue in the future.

2.2 Attendees thought the format for the meeting had worked well and that it had been a good discussion.

Report Author: Nicola Ray

Attendees – LU/LP meeting 16 June 2020

Name	Company
Clare Morris	Workshop HR Solutions
Clare Flower	REC
David Camp	Alliance HR/ ALP
David Thurley	GI Group
Douglas Amesz	A G Recruitment
Jane Bladon	Staffline
Joanne Young	Flex Consultancy
John Devine	Response Recruitment Ltd
Jon Tugwell	Fyffes
Kat Mieszkowska	Mploy Staffing Solutions
Lindsey Buckley	2 Sisters Food Group
Lorna Bramwell	Unity Resourcing
Sarah Boparan	Hops Labour Solutions
Sian Thomas	Fresh Produce Consortium
Sophie Hiorns	Primafruit/Fresca
Stephanie Maurel	Concordia
Sue Johns	Pioneer Foods
Tania Cummins	Acorn Group
Tanya Mew	Vitacress
Tom Easson	Ringlink

GLAA:

Margaret Beels
Suzanne McCarthy
Linda Dickens
Michael Rich
Dan Scully
Nicola Ray
Ian Waterfield (part)
Frank Hanson
Martin Jones

ODLME

Emily Eisenstein
Tim Harrison

IASC

Ed Bateman