



Business, Innovation and Skills Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

Tel 020 7219 5469 Email biscom@parliament.uk Website www.parliament.uk

Mr Mike Ashley
Executive Deputy Chairman
Sports Direct International plc
Unit A Brook Park East
Shirebrook
NG20 8RY

Dear Mr Ashley,

13 September 2016

Correspondence between Transline and BIS Committee

I am writing to let you know about the exchange of correspondence that I have had, on behalf of the Committee Members, with Transline and the Gangmasters Licensing Authority.

As you know, Chapter 4 of the BIS Committee Report on "Employment Practices at Sports Direct" highlighted issues concerning the evidence given by Transline agency. In the Report, we on the Committee doubted the probity of Transline and the reliability of their witnesses in relation to their dealings with the Gangmasters Licensing Authority, and we stated that we believed that Transline deliberately misled the Committee in their evidence to us. We asked them to respond, within two weeks of the Report's publication, to explain how their evidence was not deliberately misleading.

Jenny Hardy, from Transline, responded on behalf of Transline to the Committee on 5 August 2016, but her letter did not address the fundamental questions that were originally asked. We still believe that Transline has not been candid over its dealings with the GLA or in its evidence to the Committee. We have therefore written again to ask, as a matter of urgency, that Transline directly address the points we originally put to them. I attach copies of both letters for your information, and our correspondence with the Gangmasters Licensing Authority.

As you know, we questioned the general need for Sports Direct to engage workers through agencies on short-term, temporary contracts. However, given the evidence that has now come to light on the GLA's decisions surrounding Transline's licence, we ask you to think seriously about continuing to use Transline, a company that treats their workers and conducts its business in a way that is inconsistent with your own aspirations for Sports Direct to be seen to be on a par with the likes of Selfridges and John Lewis. The fact that the RPC Working Practices Report highlighted the fact that there is no formal signed contract in place for either the Best Connection or Transline, could make any decision to terminate the working relationship with Transline somewhat easier.

Yours sincerely

Iain Wright
Chairman

Business, Innovation and Skills Committee