



Transport Committee

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

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Peter Hebblethwaite
Chief Executive, P&O Ferries
By e-mail

27 May 2022

Dear Mr Hebblethwaite,

When you gave evidence to a joint meeting of our Committee with the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee on 24 March 2020, you were asked about how personal belongings of the staff that had been sacked were being handled. Nusrat Ghani MP asked whether you would ensure that employees who had been made redundant would receive their effects.

You said in your reply:

I have been assured that the team are taking personal responsibility for returning people's belongings to them. [...] The bags that people were given were on the day, so that they could have something to carry off the possessions that they could carry. The possessions they were otherwise taking, we are returning to them, and we are employing companies to do that—to box them up and return them.

We have received reports, including at our oral evidence session about the maritime sector on 25 May, that many of the sacked seafarers are still waiting—more than two months later—for their personal belongings to be returned.

I would be grateful if you could inform us what steps P&O Ferries has been taking to ensure that your former employees are reunited with their property, and confirm that the assurances you gave our Committees on this point have been completely fulfilled. If there are some who have not yet received their belongings, please inform us how many people are still in this position, when you expect to be able to rectify the situation, and how the items are being stored, secured and insured in the meantime.

I am sure you appreciate that this is potentially a further source of distress to seafarers who have lost their jobs, so we would be grateful for a reply at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

Huw Merriman
Chair of the Transport Committee

cc Darren Jones MP, Chair of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee and Nusrat Ghani MP, Member of the BEIS Committee