Twitter Thread by Jo Maugham



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From time to time, indeed quite a lot, I receive letters from Pestfix's lawyers who boast of acting for the world's leading tech companies (and a pest control specialist with last reported net assets of £18k but now engorged with profits from £350m of PPE contracts).

Sometimes I have to send those letters off to lawyers acting for @GoodLawProject who charge quite a lot of money (we might now be well into five figures) to advise me on the various ways to tell Pestfix's lawyers to sling their hook.

What I find especially crappy about this is that Pestfix doesn't like its actions being in the public domain. Their letters are marked "private and confidential" to try and stop me telling you they are using profits from public contracts to muzzle my work.

And if I do tell you, they complain to the court that it is my actions that lead to public opprobrium being heaped upon them. For my part, I tend to think it is mostly their actions.

Anyway. I mention this by way of precusor to observing that the NAO has quietly made some changes to their report about, inter alia, the £350m in PPE contracts won by a small pest control specialist in Littlehampton that got into the VIP channel for reasons no one can explain.

Here are some copies of changes made to the section dealing with Pestfix. The first snip is of the report as originally published. The second is of the report as rewritten.

NAO Reports are - to the best of my knowledge - always sent to people named in them before they are published to give them a chance to make corrections. But it looks as though someone managed to secure some changes to the Pestfix section post-publication.

Anyway. As I go about my life, trying to advance what I think is the public interest, on a fraction of what I earned as a tax lawyer, grumpily writing cheques to @GoodLawProject's defamation lawyers, from money contributed in chunks of £2 and up, some from pensioners...

... as I do all of that, I do sometimes think it would be nice to have had the profits on £350m to spend on lawyers to write letters full of threat to my critics.

Pestfix's 'line' is that it "stepped up to assist DHSC and the National Health Service at a time of unprecedented global crisis (https://t.co/PlgCNc3pt3) which is awfully nice of it. But can I ask this:

Will you publish your contracts so we can see how much profit you made?