

O-612-16

ORDER under the Companies Act 2006

In the matter of application

No. 1273 by British American Tobacco P.L.C. and BATMark Limited

For a change of company name of registration

No. 10266661

DECISION

The company name BAT (GROUP) LTD has been registered since 7 July 2016 under number 10266661.

By an application filed on 21 September 2016, British American Tobacco P.L.C. and BATMark Limited jointly applied for a change of name of this registration under the provisions of section 69(1) of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act).

A copy of this application was sent by registered mail to the primary respondent's registered office on 3 October 2016, in accordance with rule 3(2) of the Company Names Adjudicator Rules 2008. The letter was returned marked RETURN TO SENDER so was resent by ordinary post. No reply was received.

Also on 3 October 2016, the Tribunal wrote to Tofikuddin Ovaysi (the primary respondent's director) to inform him that the applicant had requested that he be joined to the proceedings. That letter was also returned marked RETURN TO SENDER so was resent by ordinary post. No reply was received, so he was subsequently joined.

On 22 November 2016, the parties were advised that no defence had been received to the application and so the adjudicator may treat the application as not being opposed. The parties were granted a period of 14 days to request a hearing in relation to this matter, if they so wished. No request for a hearing was made.

The primary respondent did not file a defence within the one month period specified by the adjudicator under rule 3(3). Rule 3(4) states

“The primary respondent, before the end of that period, shall file a counter-statement on the appropriate form, otherwise the adjudicator may treat it as not opposing the application and may make an order under section 73(1).”

Under the provisions of this rule, the adjudicator may exercise discretion so as to treat the respondent as opposing the application. In this case I can see no reason to exercise such discretion and, therefore, decline to do so.

As the primary respondent has not responded to the allegations made, it is treated as not opposing the application. Therefore, in accordance with section 73(1) of the Act I make the following order:

(a) BAT (GROUP) LTD shall change its name **within one month** of the date of this order to one that is not an offending nameⁱ;

(b) BAT (GROUP) LTD and Tofikuddin Ovaysi shall:

- (i) take such steps as are within their power to make, or facilitate the making, of that change;
- (ii) not to cause or permit any steps to be taken calculated to result in another company being registered with a name that is an offending name.

If no such change is made within one month of the date of this order, I will determine a new company name as per section 73(4) of the Act and will give notice of that change under section 73(5) of the Act.

All respondents, including individual co-respondents, have a legal duty under Section 73(1)(b)(ii) of the Companies Act 2006 not to cause or permit any steps to be taken calculated to result in another company being registered with an offending name; this includes the current company. *Non-compliance may result in an action being brought for contempt of court and may result in a custodial sentence*

British American Tobacco P.L.C. and BATMark Limited having been successful, they are entitled to a contribution towards their costs. I order BAT (GROUP) LTD and Tofikuddin Ovaysi (being jointly and severally liable) to pay British American Tobacco P.L.C. and BATMark Limited costs on the following basis:

Fee for application: £400

Statement of case: £400


Total: £800

This sum is to be paid within seven days of the expiry of the appeal period or within seven days of the final determination of this case if any appeal against this decision is unsuccessful.

Any notice of appeal against this decision to order a change of name must be given within one month of the date of this order. Appeal is to the High Court in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and to the Court of Session in Scotland.

The company adjudicator must be advised if an appeal is lodged, so that implementation of the order is suspended.

Dated this 21st day of December 2016

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'O. Morris', written over a horizontal line.

Oliver Morris
Company Names Adjudicator

ⁱAn “offending name” means a name that, by reason of its similarity to the name associated with the applicant in which he claims goodwill, would be likely— to be the subject of a direction under section 67 (power of Secretary of State to direct change of name), or to give rise to a further application under section 69.