



Companies Act 2006

2006 CHAPTER 46

PART 16

AUDIT

CHAPTER 4

REMOVAL, RESIGNATION, ETC OF AUDITORS

Statement by auditor on ceasing to hold office

519 Statement by auditor to be deposited with company

- (1) Where an auditor of an unquoted company ceases for any reason to hold office, he must deposit at the company's registered office a statement of the circumstances connected with his ceasing to hold office, unless he considers that there are no circumstances in connection with his ceasing to hold office that need to be brought to the attention of members or creditors of the company.
- (2) If he considers that there are no circumstances in connection with his ceasing to hold office that need to be brought to the attention of members or creditors of the company, he must deposit at the company's registered office a statement to that effect.
- (3) Where an auditor of a quoted company ceases for any reason to hold office, he must deposit at the company's registered office a statement of the circumstances connected with his ceasing to hold office.
- (4) The statement required by this section must be deposited—
 - (a) in the case of resignation, along with the notice of resignation;
 - (b) in the case of failure to seek re-appointment, not less than 14 days before the end of the time allowed for next appointing an auditor;
 - (c) in any other case, not later than the end of the period of 14 days beginning with the date on which he ceases to hold office.

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).

- (5) A person ceasing to hold office as auditor who fails to comply with this section commits an offence.
- (6) In proceedings for such an offence it is a defence for the person charged to show that he took all reasonable steps and exercised all due diligence to avoid the commission of the offence.
- (7) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable—
 - (a) on conviction on indictment, to a fine;
 - (b) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum.

520 Company's duties in relation to statement

- (1) This section applies where the statement deposited under section 519 states the circumstances connected with the auditor's ceasing to hold office.
- (2) The company must within 14 days of the deposit of the statement either—
 - (a) send a copy of it to every person who under section 423 is entitled to be sent copies of the accounts, or
 - (b) apply to the court.
- (3) If it applies to the court, the company must notify the auditor of the application.
- (4) If the court is satisfied that the auditor is using the provisions of section 519 to secure needless publicity for defamatory matter—
 - (a) it shall direct that copies of the statement need not be sent out, and
 - (b) it may further order the company's costs (in Scotland, expenses) on the application to be paid in whole or in part by the auditor, even if he is not a party to the application.

The company must within 14 days of the court's decision send to the persons mentioned in subsection (2)(a) a statement setting out the effect of the order.

- (5) If no such direction is made the company must send copies of the statement to the persons mentioned in subsection (2)(a) within 14 days of the court's decision or, as the case may be, of the discontinuance of the proceedings.
- (6) In the event of default in complying with this section an offence is committed by every officer of the company who is in default.
- (7) In proceedings for such an offence it is a defence for the person charged to show that he took all reasonable steps and exercised all due diligence to avoid the commission of the offence.
- (8) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable—
 - (a) on conviction on indictment, to a fine;
 - (b) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum.

521 Copy of statement to be sent to registrar

- (1) Unless within 21 days beginning with the day on which he deposited the statement under section 519 the auditor receives notice of an application to the court under section 520, he must within a further seven days send a copy of the statement to the registrar.

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).

- (2) If an application to the court is made under section 520 and the auditor subsequently receives notice under subsection (5) of that section, he must within seven days of receiving the notice send a copy of the statement to the registrar.
- (3) An auditor who fails to comply with subsection (1) or (2) commits an offence.
- (4) In proceedings for such an offence it is a defence for the person charged to show that he took all reasonable steps and exercised all due diligence to avoid the commission of the offence.
- (5) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable—
 - (a) on conviction on indictment, to a fine;
 - (b) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum.

522 Duty of auditor to notify appropriate audit authority

- (1) Where—
 - (a) in the case of a major audit, an auditor ceases for any reason to hold office, or
 - (b) in the case of an audit that is not a major audit, an auditor ceases to hold office before the end of his term of office,the auditor ceasing to hold office must notify the appropriate audit authority.
- (2) The notice must—
 - (a) inform the appropriate audit authority that he has ceased to hold office, and
 - (b) be accompanied by a copy of the statement deposited by him at the company's registered office in accordance with section 519.
- (3) If the statement so deposited is to the effect that he considers that there are no circumstances in connection with his ceasing to hold office that need to be brought to the attention of members or creditors of the company, the notice must also be accompanied by a statement of the reasons for his ceasing to hold office.
- (4) The auditor must comply with this section—
 - (a) in the case of a major audit, at the same time as he deposits a statement at the company's registered office in accordance with section 519;
 - (b) in the case of an audit that is not a major audit, at such time (not being earlier than the time mentioned in paragraph (a)) as the appropriate audit authority may require.
- (5) A person ceasing to hold office as auditor who fails to comply with this section commits an offence.
- (6) If that person is a firm an offence is committed by—
 - (a) the firm, and
 - (b) every officer of the firm who is in default.
- (7) In proceedings for an offence under this section it is a defence for the person charged to show that he took all reasonable steps and exercised all due diligence to avoid the commission of the offence.
- (8) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable—
 - (a) on conviction on indictment, to a fine;
 - (b) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum.

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).

523 Duty of company to notify appropriate audit authority

- (1) Where an auditor ceases to hold office before the end of his term of office, the company must notify the appropriate audit authority.
- (2) The notice must—
 - (a) inform the appropriate audit authority that the auditor has ceased to hold office, and
 - (b) be accompanied by—
 - (i) a statement by the company of the reasons for his ceasing to hold office, or
 - (ii) if the copy of the statement deposited by the auditor at the company's registered office in accordance with section 519 contains a statement of circumstances in connection with his ceasing to hold office that need to be brought to the attention of members or creditors of the company, a copy of that statement.
- (3) The company must give notice under this section not later than 14 days after the date on which the auditor's statement is deposited at the company's registered office in accordance with section 519.
- (4) If a company fails to comply with this section, an offence is committed by—
 - (a) the company, and
 - (b) every officer of the company who is in default.
- (5) In proceedings for such an offence it is a defence for the person charged to show that he took all reasonable steps and exercised all due diligence to avoid the commission of the offence.
- (6) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable—
 - (a) on conviction on indictment, to a fine;
 - (b) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum.

524 Information to be given to accounting authorities

- (1) The appropriate audit authority on receiving notice under section 522 or 523 of an auditor's ceasing to hold office—
 - (a) must inform the accounting authorities, and
 - (b) may if it thinks fit forward to those authorities a copy of the statement or statements accompanying the notice.
- (2) The accounting authorities are—
 - (a) the Secretary of State, and
 - (b) any person authorised by the Secretary of State for the purposes of section 456 (revision of defective accounts: persons authorised to apply to court).
- (3) If either of the accounting authorities is also the appropriate audit authority it is only necessary to comply with this section as regards any other accounting authority.
- (4) If the court has made an order under section 520(4) directing that copies of the statement need not be sent out by the company, sections 460 and 461 (restriction on further disclosure) apply in relation to the copies sent to the accounting authorities as they apply to information obtained under section 459 (power to require documents etc).

525 Meaning of “appropriate audit authority” and “major audit”

- (1) In sections 522, 523 and 524 “appropriate audit authority” means—
 - (a) in the case of a major audit—
 - (i) the Secretary of State, or
 - (ii) if the Secretary of State has delegated functions under section 1252 to a body whose functions include receiving the notice in question, that body;
 - (b) in the case of an audit that is not a major audit, the relevant supervisory body.
“Supervisory body” has the same meaning as in Part 42 (statutory auditors) (see section 1217).
- (2) In sections 522 and this section “major audit” means a statutory audit conducted in respect of—
 - (a) a company any of whose securities have been admitted to the official list (within the meaning of Part 6 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (c. 8)), or
 - (b) any other person in whose financial condition there is a major public interest.
- (3) In determining whether an audit is a major audit within subsection (2)(b), regard shall be had to any guidance issued by any of the authorities mentioned in subsection (1).