



# R B F & R S

## news release

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Two men connected with the Newbury Indian Kitchen restaurant in Cheap Street, Newbury, have been fined for failing to provide information regarding who had responsibility for fire safety at the premises.

Newbury magistrates fined Jasim Ahmed and Abdul Mujib £300 each. The pair were not in court but, after hearing the facts in the case, magistrates directed that the case be heard in the defendants' absence. They were both found guilty and were also ordered to pay £2,095.02 costs. The maximum fine is £1,000.

The charges were brought by Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) following an inspection of the premises, which was identified as high-risk, in June 2007. Magistrates heard that this identified serious breaches of fire safety precautions and a prohibition notice was served, restricting the use of the premises until improvements were made.

The defendants were required to provide information to the Fire Authority's Fire Inspection Officers as to who was responsible for fire safety at the restaurant but failed to do so, despite repeated requests. At a previous hearing on 9 June this year, Ahmed failed to appear, whilst Mujib pleaded not guilty and the case was adjourned until 1 September.

RBFA Fire Safety Technical Support Officer, David Walden, said: "We are very pleased that the courts have acknowledged the serious nature of the need for businesses to comply with the requirements and powers of a Fire Safety Inspector.

"This prosecution was brought about under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, which came into effect in October 2006. Although fire and rescue services are no longer required to issue fire safety certificates, we continue to carry out a rigorous inspection programme of commercial premises to ensure they are meeting the standards required by the Order.

"We strongly advise that anybody who employs staff or has responsibility and control of commercial premises must ensure that the responsibilities placed upon them by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order are properly discharged. The Fire Authority has an implicit duty to enforce Fire Safety regulations and thereby protect members of the public."

For advice on fire safety responsibilities for businesses, go to [www.rbfrs.co.uk](http://www.rbfrs.co.uk)

**ENDS.**

