



**NCASS**  
**NATIONWIDE**  
**CATERERS**  
**ASSOCIATION**

The Mobile & Outside

# Caterer

Issue 13 2010

## Times are changing

- if you use marquees, tents or pop ups that is

For those that don't know, and that includes almost all of us, the gas equipment and installation in commercial kitchens comes under a piece of legislation called The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (GSIUR) for short.

These regulations have been in existence since 1998, but seem to have been missed when it comes to installations at outdoor events.

But we now have the opinion of several leading industry bodies that catering equipment and installations used within trailers and marquees, tents stalls and pop ups come under the GUISR.

We have been aware of this for a long time with trailers and as you will have noticed pretty much all event organisers and employers now demand a Gas Safe certificate before they will let you trade, so this came as no surprise.

But the grey area has always been caterers that use any of the other types of structures that we see around today at events and festivals in particular.

This has come to light this season as many organisers are asking for gas certificates for all types of installations and gas engineers have not got any guidance documents to tell them what to check and how to check it, by mid season we were even getting calls from fire officers and environmental health officers asking what the rules were.

As it happens this coincided with a rewrite of UKLPG ( the trade Association for the LPG industry) Code of Practice 24



which is one of the documents along with the NCASS Code of Practices that sets out the requirements for our industry.

If like me by now you are feeling confused don't feel bad, I thought that it was CORGI that looked after all this kind of stuff, and it was, that is until they changed last year to GAS Safe and now no longer set standards but simply maintain the register for GAS Safe engineers.

So where does this all leave us, the humble caterer trying to make a living?.

The Facts:

## Catering Trailers / Vehicles

1) It is a legal requirement to have all mobile catering vehicles and trailers that have gas equipment installed, inspected by a Gas Safe registered engineer at least every 12 months.

2) Unless made before 1996 all gas equipment must be of a proprietary manufacture and be CE marked, which means that it has been tested by an approved test house, and conforms to a European standard. To have none CE equipment installed means that the Gas Safe Engineer should not issue a certificate.

The fact is that some Gas Safe engineers are issuing certificates to trailers that have none CE marked equipment for whatever reason. This has now come to the attention of both Gas safe and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) who are taking action against these engineers. Even more worrying is that this could easily render the caterers insurance void as most policies have a clause in them to say that the insured must be operating within the law to be covered under the policy



3) It is illegal to remove or replace any piece of gas equipment, the only exception to this is if the equipment has been fitted with 'snap connector' type hoses unless you are a Gas Safe registered engineer

4) It is illegal to service a piece of Gas equipment unless you are a Gas Safe registered engineer ( see below)

A Gas Safe engineer has to have additional

qualifications to work on LPG catering equipment so make sure that the engineer working in your business is suitably qualified.

## Marquees, tents, stalls and gazebos

The difference between catering trailers and marquees, tents etc is that each time you set up the kitchen in legal terms you create an installation.

Under the GSIUR as it stands, if the installation is anything more than a single appliance connected to a cylinder via the hose and regulator, it requires the services of a Gas Safe engineer to certify:

- a) that the appliances are up to standard
- b) to install the appliances and the supply pipework
- c) test the installation, make sure it's safe, and issue a certificate
- d) to dismantle the installation.

Before you think that's OK I'll just have a bottle for each appliance, that isn't allowed either because that would lead to a massive amount of 'open or live' cylinders on a site.

OK now you have got up off the floor, were do we go from here?

At the moment we cant be sure of anything except what we have already said, this whole outdoor catering scenario seems to have slipped under the

radar of the enforcement teams but has now come into view and it has to be sorted.

To that end NCASS recently hosted a meeting involving all the parties concerned to try to get the issues resolved and Bob is spending hours each day in email discussions and phone calls with Gas Safe, UKLPG, Gas Safe Engineers, EU Skills and several others to try to find a way

forward.

The plain fact is that we have to find a solution to the problem, otherwise anyone who caterers out of one of these structures with more than one bottle one appliance is going to have to employ the services of a Gas safe Engineer to check all the equipment, do the installation, issue a certificate, and then take it apart after the event.

Apart from the cost there aren't enough gas engineers in the country to cover anything more than

a small percentage of the installations that take place throughout the summer.

As it stands it will either be up to the HSE or UKLPG and or both working with NCASS, Gas Safe and E U Skills to come up with an answer, but as all things of this nature the wheels don't move as quickly as we would like.

The first problem comes with the equipment, by definition this is moved regularly in and out of vehicles, bumped and banged over fields and into storage and out again many times a year, this in itself creates a problem as it was never designed with that in mind. The bigger types of equipment such as cooking ranges etc were made to be put in a fixed location where it would stay usually for many years. Domestic cookers were the same, boiling rings were only ever made for out door use and so on.

The first thing we are likely to see is some stricter controls on the type of appliances that are used in these 'temporary kitchens' and by the way there is no such thing as a temporary gas installation.

We can easily see certain types of equipment been outlawed, in particular domestic cookers, and boiling rings without flame failure devices.

I can foresee the requirement to have each piece of equipment having to have an annual check just like a PAT test on an electrical appliance, which in my mind doesn't seem unreasonable.

The main problem is the connecting up of the equipment and the cylinders.

We are suggesting to the powers to be that allowing for the fact that it is perfectly safe for a user to connect the regulator to the bottle and that it is currently acceptable to plug in appliances that have flexible hoses with snap connectors a 'mechano kit



A distribution point like the one suggested

type construction should be possible. The kit would be as follows

1) A distribution point to be set up a min of 1 metre from the marquee wall, something like the one in the picture but of a more robust nature so that it could be used for a number of years and stand the wear and tear it is most likely going to be subjected to. These could have automatic changeover valve to help eliminate the constant changing of bottles, and should cost around £200 to buy.

There are many advantages to this idea, one of which is being able to isolate all bottles with one emergency shut off valve should something go wrong, the second is that once all the rig is connected than by watching the gauge even an inexperienced eye can tell if there is a gas leak in the system.

At the bottom of the rig is a snap connector to which you attach a flexible gas hose which takes the gas into the kitchen area where it again connects via a snap connector to the second part of the rig which consists of a galvanised steel pipe mounted on a board or any other rigid base with snap connectors along its length that allow the appliances to be connected via flexible hoses.

Each distribution rig would have an annual test by a Gas Safe engineer and would be rated for a certain gas requirement of the appliances.

To go with this we are suggesting a very simple training course which could be done online to train the person setting up these rigs and enable them to be 'competent' to do so.

Another alternative is that several companies are manufacturing gas appliances that are installed in a framework that is all piped up and gas tight and just needs to be snap connected together to make a whole kitchen set up, including tables sinks boilers, fryers etc.

The beauty of this system is that the appliances are protected whilst they are being transported and can be very quickly assembled into a very impressive kitchen.

If you were starting from scratch with a decent budget this is without doubt the way to go, but there are a high percentage of caterers out there with a lot of equipment and we need to find (or be given) an acceptable safe solution.

### Where do we go from here?,

Good question, NCASS is playing it's part and have put forward 2 workable solutions (at least we and several gas engineers think they are workable). It's now down to the powers that be to make some decisions.

One things for sure, things will have to change and hopefully well before next season.

# Love the Farm, Leave no Trace

## (The Green Trader Awards 2010)

NCASS were invited to help out at Glastonbury Festivals' Green Trader Awards this year. The awards are designed to reward the efforts being made by traders and caterers to reduce the effect they have on the environment. This was the sixth year of the awards which seem to go from strength to strength.

Perhaps one of the most refreshing parts of the awards was seeing how keen many caterers were to do their bit, and how they had already begun to introduce new methods or equipment to this end. Glastonbury can be infectious it seems and many of the caterers on site are willing to change their practices in order to work at the festival. This is no bad thing, as Glastonbury and its friends are determined to continue to improve environmental standards across the events industry.

What the organisers have to say:

### Greenpeace

The Green Traders Awards aim to further incentivise and inspire traders to improve their eco-credentials. Each spring every Glastonbury Festival trader is emailed a questionnaire asking them about the efforts they are taking to source local, organic or Fairtrade materials and produce, travel to and from the festival, minimise their energy and water use on site, manage their waste, and so on.

Once the festival starts, this information is consolidated by a team of Greenpeace volunteers who traverse the festival come rain or shine, to check their details.

The Award judging process is carried out by Greenpeace, the Soil Association, the Fairtrade Foundation and our new partners at the Nationwide Caterers Association (NCASS).

It involves much debate and a little mystery shopping, before the winners and runners up are finally chosen. Each winner receives a free pitch at the following year's festival and a coveted award banner for their stall to display throughout the rest of the festival season – which according to previous winners does increase trade.

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Bob Wilson of Greenpeace, who spearheaded the scheme, comments 'We're delighted to be working on this fantastic initiative with our friends at

Glastonbury Festival and thrilled that the Awards have become so popular – we are already seeing huge advances in the way traders are operating on site – but there is still a lot more to do'.



Green Trader Gold Award Winners - Fresh Organic

### Ethical Trading

Fairtrade is all about a different way of doing business that puts the poorest of the world first. It tackles poverty and injustice through fairer trade, putting developing country producers in control of their own lives.

The FAIRTRADE Mark that you see on products from tea, coffee, sugar, chocolate and bananas to nuts, wine, flowers, olive oil and cotton wool is a guarantee that those producers are getting a better deal. It means that they get a minimum price that covers the cost of production and that they get a little bit extra – the Fairtrade premium – to invest in their communities and businesses. There are also environmental standards to ensure they are caring for the planet and their communities.

Fairtrade has really grown in the last few years, as consumers prioritise ethical considerations when they shop. This means that more and more products are available in more outlets. Some major brand

switches to Fairtrade including Cadbury Dairy Milk, Starbucks espresso coffee and the four-finger KitKat mean that ever more farmers are benefitting from being part of the Fairtrade system.

You can read more about how producers are changing their lives here: [www.fairtrade.org.uk/producers](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/producers). Over 70% of the UK population recognize the FAIRTRADE Mark and 95% of consumers feel it is important companies treat producers and suppliers fairly and practice fair trade, so it makes sense to offer Fairtrade products – to respond to demand and demonstrate your ethical credentials.

Fairtrade is a peoples' movement uniting producers, businesses, communities and individuals – together we are working towards a fairer trading system. Become part of that movement by offering Fairtrade products.

Veronica Pasteur is Head of Campaigns at the Fair Trade Foundation



Alan & Mark from NCASS with Tim Spence from Greenstreet winner of the best idea for reducing energy and water use

## Glastonbury Festival

'Glastonbury Festival is renowned for its green credentials but it is important to keep raising its ethical and environmental standards. We want to reward stalls that are doing everything they can to limit their impact on the environment. We want to prioritize stalls that are running on alternative energy, using fresh seasonal ingredients, free range meats and reducing their environmental footprint. We want stall holders to work with us but if they don't then we know there are lots of other caterers out there who will. There is always more that we can do as a festival and we want everyone to keep trying harder.'

Lucy Brooking Clark is the Green Initiatives Co-ordinator for Glastonbury Festival

## NCASS

A lot of measures talked about by environmental groups also make good business sense. By increasing the efficiency of your business you are making it more profitable, likewise for reducing waste. In difficult financial times it makes sense to tighten your belts and look to see if you could be operating in a smarter manner.



No Bones Jones—winner of the Green Trader Silver Award

If you can save yourself money, increase the long term profitability of your company, increase your chance of getting good quality work, improve the reputation of your business and do your bit for the environment then this can only have a positive effect on your business and balance sheet.

It is also worth bearing in mind that there are interest free loans, grants and lots of support out there to help you be more environmentally friendly, there is also a huge amount of freely available information, making changes to your business practices has never been so easy.

Environmental issues are not going to go away. Over time, legislation is likely to force many of these changes anyway, so why not be ahead of the game, start making changes and savings today.

# Roadside Caterer News

Thank you to everyone who called or wrote in with experiences and advice for roadside caterers after the last issue. We are still awaiting a decision on the extent of the ban on road side trading in Wiltshire.

## Rogue Trader

I did speak to one caterer, (who will remain nameless) who stated that he had continued in his home county despite what seemed to be a blanket ban. He said that people power had kept him in work. He had been running a mobile fish and chip unit in several local villages until two complaints were received and acted upon by the local council.

However, in rural areas where there isn't a great choice, if any, when it comes to restaurants and take-aways, the local residents are genuinely grateful for the 'service' he provides. With local shops, post offices and pubs closing, many of the villages of Britain lack the basic services we all take for granted. In the end he talked to the local people and discovered that the two complaints were both from persons that took no active part in the local community, they were also the same two people who seemed to complain about everything else in the village. Through talking to locals at community events and in the pub, community action invited our rogue trader to keep trading. He now has a thriving business and the support of the villagers.

## Chilling Days for Ice Cream vendors

We are receiving more and more reports from Ice Cream vendors struggling to find legal or even safe places to work.

The problem seems to be that the ice cream men and women who do what is asked to stay fully legally compliant are often the ones being punished by punitive rules or charges from local councils, even threats to impound and crush ice cream vans. Meanwhile, illegally operating traders without relevant liability insurance, licences or training are continuing to trade and cause problems for the rest. When they have tried to raise these complaints with the local authorities they have received varying responses, but more often than not, the responses have not been positive. One argument used by Councils is that they are not prepared to condone unhealthy food (ice cream vans have been banned near schools etc).

People don't get fat because they eat ice cream, they get fat because they over eat, don't exercise or due to medical conditions. Ice Cream vans are becoming scape-goats in our blame society.

Unfortunately, rather than accepting that individuals are personally responsible for their own eating habits, councils & government seem to have decided that people can't be trusted to decide what to put in their mouths when they are walking the streets. It begs the question, do the government really expect to see streets full of thin healthy people when they finally rid them of ice cream vans?. Not a word is said about banning some of our High Street retailers, which suggests that there is one rule for big business and another for the small business.

The issue of illegally trading ice cream vendors has affected the reputation of the industry as a whole. By not licensing pitches, councils are making it far harder for themselves to regulate street traders, those who try to stay compliant are being penalised while illegal traders continue to pose a threat to public health if nothing else.

NCASS supports a constructive dialogue between legitimate street traders and councils as the only way to regulate the industry and protect public health.

## Ice Cream and Confectionary Vendors

We recently received a call from a concerned ice cream vendor with a pitch outside a sports centre, she had noticed a man selling ice cream from the front of a bike around the centre, she had also seen him kicking a ball around with some of the local children. Before long she received a visit from the police for further information after the man had been arrested for making inappropriate comments to some of the kids.

The police had asked her if she had a CRB check done and she said she didn't realise that she had to. In fact she didn't have to, but we did recommend that in order to protect her pitch, the reputation of her business and most importantly, to protect her young customers, it would be worth considering getting CRB checks on her staff.

This may seem like another load of beurocracy but, if anything happened to a child as the result of one of your staff doing what they shouldn't the repercussions to your business could be serious.

# Motor Fleet Insurance

*NCASS Insurance have teamed up with Aviva to produce a specifically designed policy for all catering businesses which run more than one vehicle.*

Offering highly competitive rates the policy is designed for all catering trades with fleets of 2 vehicles or more and provides flexibility to cater for all vehicles up to 7.5 tons with mixed covers all under one policy.

## Key Benefits:-

- Include full fire cover for hot food vans as standard
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# So you fancy trading at Glastonbury 2011!

One of the first questions on the lips of new event caterers when they call us up is 'How do i get onto Glastonbury', whether it's because they love the festival, want to do the most prestigious work, or see it as a potential gold mine, Glastonbury festival catches the imagination like no other.

This year NCASS were given the opportunity to help out at the festival on the Green Trader Awards, however, it was also a great opportunity to catch up with some existing members and to get a better idea of how the festival organisers deal with the catering on site. Then hopefully pass on some gems of knowledge to you guys.

To give you an idea of the scale of the festival, there are 190,000 people on site, including about 150,000 paying customers with around 450 catering units.

The festival opens on Wednesday morning with the majority of the punters leaving on the Monday, so that's five /six days work.

The pitch fees do vary depending on size of pitch, location, food type etc. However £7,000 would probably describe an average price. This may seem a lot but with similar fees charged at events such as V and Reading for less punters and fewer days trade, it should be seen as pretty reasonable, you just have to see how many caterers go back year on year to know that there must be money in it!

This year was a bit of a strange year for many caterers, 8 days of continuous sunshine (unheard of at Glastonbury) caused some problems for caterers selling hot food, while the ice cream vans and smoothie units had the time of their lives.

So how do we get the work?.

Well here's the catch. While there are 450 caterers on site, only 30 new units get a chance each year, albeit as the festival grows there are a few additions. This may go some way to explaining why if you have been trying for years to get on site but haven't been successful – so don't take it personally, the chances are that someone has been doing a very good job offering the same food as you already. So how do you get that golden ticket? Well this will come down to a variety of factors, some of which you can influence.

**Food type:** Every year Glastonbury festival aims to increase the choice and quality of food on offer. A good example of this is the explosion of Caribbean Food into British culinary mainstream. Last year, we only counted 2 units on site, this year we counted

twelve.

Many of the caterers we spoke to talked of their USP (unique selling proposition) being the factor that got them on site, whether it was Tim Spence (Green Street) with his rare breed gourmet sausages and burgers, our very own Chapati Man, Chris Rai or the effervescent Emini and her Raving Kebabs, offering something unique and different seems to make a difference.

**Go Green:** Glastonbury Festival rightly prides itself on its environmental credentials, and they ask the same of their caterers.

By making some basic changes to working practices, replacing inefficient equipment and reviewing the impact of where your food comes from can actually save you money, as well as getting you a leg up on the Glastonbury selection process.

The festival made it clear to us that environmental and ethical issues will play an increasingly important role in the selection process for caterers. If you can show the festival your 'green' credentials, you are already on the right footing to get onto Glastonbury, if you're really good at it, you may even win a Green Trader award.

One caterer won an award simply for sourcing fair trade rice (to be fair it may not have been that simple), but small changes can make a big difference both for the environment and for your chances of getting work. Things like selling on your used cooking oil for fuel conversion are all low cost if not free, but improve your credentials.

If you want to find out more about going green call the office and ask for Mark.

**Word of Mouth** – some NCASS caterers have been called up as little as a week before the event to see if they are available due to cancellations and the like.

Since the introduction of boutique camping and secluded VIP tipi fields, more caterers at the top end of the market are being drafted in to offer something very different to the usual catering operation.

In conclusion, there is no magic formula to getting a pitch at Glasto, but hopefully we've given you a few ideas to get you started.

If you want to trade at Glastonbury 2011, the selection process begins in October



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# NCASS Says: Save Energy = Save Money

'I'd like to be green but I can't afford it' that's what we hear all the time.

But one NCASS mobile caterer cut his gas costs by 50% at one event last year by changing one process. It cost him nothing to do and saved him £250! By continuing this practice at other events he has literally halved his energy costs!

“Although many organisations believe energy is a fixed overhead, it actually represents one of the best opportunities for saving money”. (The Carbon Trust, Practical Energy Management, page 3).

One common misconception about environmentally friendly products or methods is that they increase costs. This does not have to be the case.

There are some very simple steps that any business or individual can follow that will reduce costs and help the environment.

A great deal of thought and investment has been put into energy efficient products over the past few years, but also into quick practical ways of changing working methods to reduce

waste. By reducing waste you increase the efficiency of your business - and the profit!

## Most businesses could use a lot less energy.

Experience shows that even low and no-cost actions can usually reduce energy costs by at least 10% and produce quick returns.' (consumer direct, better business guide to energy saving, page 2).

In order to convert to more energy efficient measures effectively and cheaply you will need to assess your business, assess your processes and usage and identify ways of making them more efficient/profitable.

## Identifying waste:

In order to see where you could cut waste, you need to understand what you are currently using and why.

The Carbon Trust call this process an 'energy walk around', the idea is that you list all of the equipment and their uses, and try to identify if these processes are wasteful, or if the equipment is fit for purpose.

(We will have our own caterers energy walk-around form that you can use- although we would recommend that you tailor this to your specific business). Think of it as a Risk Assessment for waste!

By looking at each process you can identify what is

necessary and what is wasteful. Other NCASS members can cut their energy bills by 50% - so can you!

## Things to bear in mind:

### Fuel consumption :

What measures could you take to reduce wastage? Is equipment left on unnecessarily? Could you change fuel type? Does all energy need to be provided by traditional 'unclean' methods? Could you be more fuel efficient travelling to and from events, do your staff car share?

### Lighting

What type of lighting do you use, energy efficient lighting uses less energy and lasts longer, could you phase out inefficient lighting? Are you lighting your unit after you have closed unnecessarily? Are you 'over-lighting' the unit, do you need all of the lighting that you use?

### Heating

Is the heat distribution efficient? Are you heating or cooling the unit effectively? Is the insulation fit for purpose?

### Refrigeration

How efficient is your refrigeration? When do you plan to replace it? How much could you save on efficiencies. Is the Insulation sufficient – poorly working insulation on fridges could be costing you a fortune

### Equipment

Is your equipment fit for purpose? When you replace equipment- are you considering energy efficient equipment or just price? More efficient equipment could save you much more than the initial price saving. Is it CE approved, if not it could be illegal. For the most efficient equipment see (link) Regular servicing of equipment can improve efficiency and the life of the equipment.

If you develop any great new ideas or top tips please let us know. You may even win a prize!

NCASS will be adding to these pages over the coming months with new contact details and advice on how to save money by reducing waste.

We hope to develop a walk-around form specific for mobile caterers, restaurants, cafe's and takeaways.

You may also want to look at the top tips for traders provided by Veronica Pasteur of the Fair Trade Association

*A 20% CUT IN ENERGY COSTS REPRESENTS THE SAME BOTTOM LINE BENEFIT AS A 5% INCREASE IN SALES (consumer direct, better business guide to energy saving, page 2).*

\*For impartial advice on 'carbon reduction' NCASS would always recommend calling the Carbon Trust. They are a government funded, independent body, who can give you free advice. They are extremely helpful and may even be able to provide you with an interest free loan or a grant to improve the efficiency of your equipment.

(This information has been developed using information made available by the Carbon Trust to the general public; NCASS are in no way related to or endorsed by the trust).

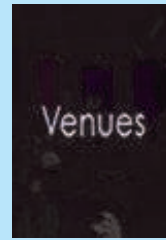
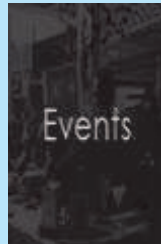
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## Challenging convictions

Employers face difficult decisions when an employee is arrested on suspicion or charged with a serious criminal offence that is unconnected with work. Furthermore, more serious disruption can occur if the employee is then convicted. So how should employers deal with such situations?

Employers should avoid treating criminal charges or convictions that occur outside the course of a person's employment as an automatic reason for dismissal. The employer must consider whether or not the offence is one that has a direct effect on the employee's employment. Employers will then need to decide, having considered all of the facts of the matter, whether or not it is reasonable to instigate the disciplinary procedure. This should not be done as a knee-jerk reaction to an employee being arrested or even remanded in custody.

### What if an employee is remanded in custody?

In these circumstances, an employer must consider, in accordance with the needs of the business, whether or not the employee's position can be kept open. In order to make this decision, the employer should try to obtain information as to how long the employee is likely to be remanded in custody.

### Disciplinary action

If the crime does affect the employee's employment — for example, a

driver charged with dangerous driving or an accountant charged with fraudulently obtaining monies — employers may consider taking disciplinary action. It is imperative that before any action is taken, the employer conducts a thorough investigation to ascertain all of the facts. Where the conduct needs prompt attention, the employer should not wait for the outcome of the criminal trial.

### Other reasons for dismissal

Where the crime is unconnected with employment, the only issue to be dealt with is where the employee is remanded in custody. In such circumstances, where it is impossible to keep the position open, it may be advisable to follow a fair procedure and terminate the employee's employment for some other substantial business reason, ie that the employee is unable to attend work, rather than going down the disciplinary route.

It may be possible to argue that the contract of employment has been frustrated, i.e. that due to the employee's incarceration continued performance of the contract is impossible. At first glance, this can appear to be the answer to the employer's dilemma, as if a contract is frustrated in law it automatically comes to an end.

However, frustration of contract is a common law doctrine not an employment law based approach and stems from a complex principle that can be difficult to rely on. If there is a different way to end the relationship, i.e. a dismissal, it is advisable that employers who find themselves in these circumstances follow one of the other routes outlined above in order to effect a potentially safe and fair dismissal from an employment law perspective.

## Catering Insurance



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### Catering Trailer



### Caterers Liability



### Catering Van



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