



## **Section 172(1) Statement for GKN Freight Services Limited (the “Company”) for the year ended 31 December 2021**

This statement is made pursuant to sections 414CZA and 426B of The Companies (Miscellaneous Reporting) Regulations 2018, and summarises how the directors of the Company have had regard to the matters set out in section 172(1)(a) to (f) of the Companies Act 2006 when performing their duties during the year ended 31 December 2021. This statement also contains the information required by paragraphs 11B and 11C, Part 4, Schedule 7, Large and Medium-sized Companies Regulations 2008 (which requires the directors to summarise how the Company’s actions taken during 2021 have encouraged engagement with suppliers, customers and others in a business relationship with the Company).

### **Background & Purpose of the Company**

The Company is part of the wider GKN Automotive business, a global tier 1 supplier to the automotive industry. GKN Automotive manufactures and supplies conventional and electrified drivetrain components for the world’s leading vehicle manufacturers. GKN Automotive is owned by Melrose Industries Plc (“**Melrose**”), an investor in manufacturing businesses, which is headquartered in the UK.

The Company carries out freight management services for the wider GKN Automotive business and for some external customers. The Company principally operates from offices in Uxbridge, UK.

### **How the directors have had regard to the matters set out in section 172(1)(a) to (f) when performing their duty under section 172 of the Companies Act 2006**

Section 172 of the Companies Act 2006 requires that the directors act in a way that they consider, in good faith, would be most likely to promote the success of the Company for the benefit of its members as a whole, and in doing so have regard (amongst other matters) to (a) the likely consequences of any decision in the long term, (b) the interests of the company’s employees, (c) the need to foster the company’s business relationships with suppliers, customers and others, (d) the impact of the company’s operations on the community and the environment, (e) the desirability of the company maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct, and (f) the need to act fairly as between members of the company. This statement considers the matter set out in section 172(1)(a) to (f) in turn.

#### **(a) The likely consequences of any decision in the long term**

The Company operates within the wider management structure of the GKN Automotive business. The GKN Automotive Executive Committee is responsible for the strategic management and oversight of the GKN Automotive business as a whole and for the taking of decisions which are material to the GKN Automotive business in the short, medium and long term. During 2021, the GKN Automotive Executive Committee and the Company’s directors: (a) continually reviewed the performance of the GKN Automotive business against its competitors and the automotive market generally; (b) continually assessed the likely future development of the automotive market, including in particular the impact of electrification and technological disruption; (c) monitored progress against their medium and long term plans for the GKN Automotive business; and (d) approved a number of significant investments to ensure that the GKN Automotive business remains commercially competitive and operationally effective in the future.

The directors’ primary focus is on the creation of long term value for its ultimate shareholder, Melrose. Melrose’s stated strategy is to invest in and manage its businesses as if it intends to own them forever, whilst acting with integrity, honesty, transparency and decisiveness, and it is this culture and approach which the GKN Automotive Executive Committee and the directors of the company take in all their decision making. For example, all major business decisions are made on the basis of approved business plans, which set out the anticipated financial consequences and benefits of the decision in the long term.

#### **(b) The interests of the company’s employees**



The Company employs approximately 40 employees, most of whom work from its offices in Uxbridge, UK. They are a small but crucial part of the wider global GKN Automotive workforce. GKN Automotive places the interests of its employees at the heart of its decision making and is committed to creating an equitable employee experience that will enable high engagement, performance, retention and reputation. Reflecting this, in 2021, GKN Automotive undertook a full census employee survey which was a key enabler for the Company to continually engage with its employees and with the employees of the wider GKN Automotive business, ensuring that their voice was heard. In addition, to reinforce the sense of belonging and to create transparency in the way the Company operates, a new set of values were launched in February 2021. Those values provide a frame of reference from which to build on to support business performance and reinforce employee engagement for GKN Automotive and the Company.

During 2021, the activities of the Company continued to be affected by the impact of the global Coronavirus pandemic. GKN Automotive's priorities throughout the pandemic have continued to be its employees, its customers and its financial stability. During 2021, extensive measures continued to be taken to protect the Company's employees from the health risks of the pandemic, including: (a) the provision of PPE and additional sanitisation; (b) changes in working practices; (c) the extensive use of home-working and offices closures; and (d) travel restrictions. GKN Automotive and the Company also focussed extensively on communicating with the Company's employees in order to keep them informed about the impact of the pandemic, the performance of the business and to keep connected. This included regular 'town hall' calls with employees, at which a range of information was communicated. In addition, and in accordance with GKN Automotive's normal practice, during 2021, the GKN Automotive Executive Team held monthly calls with approximately 100 of the most senior employees from across the GKN Automotive business, including senior employees of the Company. The purpose of these calls was to cascade information to these employees which was then further cascaded to their teams, and to provide an opportunity for questions and feedback to the GKN Automotive Executive Team. This is a key way in which the directors regards the interests of GKN Automotive employees in its decision making.

GKN Automotive has a central HR function, responsible for managing interactions with GKN Automotive employees, including the employees of the Company. In 2021, the function commenced a transformation project in respect of its HR service delivery model to balance cost efficiency with effective, high-quality support to our business and employees.

Whilst the company does not operate a share-incentive scheme, employees are encouraged to be involved in GKN Automotive's performance through reward and incentive initiatives, from long-term incentive plans designed to incentivise long term value creation, to bonus schemes linked to GKN Automotive's annual financial performance. The HR function also supports a talent review process to ensure that GKN Automotive has the right people in the right roles, with the right development opportunities, for now and for the future.

GKN Automotive operates a confidential external whistleblowing hotline where employees can report any concerns anonymously. Feedback from this hotline was reviewed by the Executive Committee (including most of the directors) during 2021.

GKN Automotive and the Company employ a number of measures for providing employees systematically with information on matters of concern to them as employees. These include: (a) CEO and management conference calls; (b) intranet and e-mail announcements; (c) information placed on notice boards; and (d) line-manager communication and team meetings. Although the Company, does not have a unionized workforce or recognise any trade union, the Company is represented at the GKN Automotive European Works Council by an elected representative for the UK.

**(c) The need to foster the company's business relationships with suppliers, customers and others**

*Customers*

The majority of the Company's customers are other companies within GKN Automotive, for whom the Company provides freight management services. The Company does however have a number of external provide services to suppliers of materials to GKN Automotive's manufacturing facilities. The directors view the



Company's relationship with its customers as crucial to its business success, and during the year the Company continued to place significant emphasis on growing its customer base and strengthening its relationship with external customers.

#### *Suppliers*

The Company's suppliers are principally transportation providers, who are managed by the global GKN Automotive procurement function. Maintaining strong relationships with our suppliers is vital to the future success of GKN Automotive. We build our relationships with our suppliers based on: (a) open dialogue and transparent decision-making; (b) setting clear expectations; (c) continuous supplier relationship management through dedicated Commodity Purchasing Managers; (d) regular information exchange through SOP processes; and (e) supplier quality reviews and audits.

#### *Other Stakeholders*

In addition to the stakeholders considered elsewhere in this statement, the directors also have regard to the impact of their decisions on other stakeholders, including government and regulators, third parties with whom the Company deals, and potential future employees and students. The relationship with all major stakeholders is considered as part of each potential decision.

#### **(d) The impact of the company's operations on the community and the environment**

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) is a key strategic focus for GKN Automotive. Our focus derives from the fact that not only is it the right thing to do, but also because it is important to our people, and increasingly a consideration for GKN Automotive's customers when they are awarding business. Both our customer scorecards, and our customer sourcing decisions, increasingly include environmental and social considerations in their assessment. That continues to inform decision making throughout GKN Automotive and within the Company.

During 2021, GKN Automotive began developing a new ESG strategy. The key principles of this strategy were finalised during 2021. The strategy comprises 4 strategic pillars. Our People (inspiring our people to reach their full potential in a safe and inclusive environment, developing talent for the next generation); Climate Action (decarbonising our products and operations through innovation, resource efficiency and waste management); Responsible Sourcing (working with our suppliers to uphold our values and adhere to the social and environmental standards required of them, collectively driving positive change); and Our Impact (delivering a positive impact upon society through our products and services and positively contributing to our local communities around the world). These pillars are underpinned by a strong focus on Ethics, Compliance, Safety and Security. This ESG strategy is focused, amongst other things, on ensuring that the activities of GKN Automotive impact positively on the community and the environment. Planning of a range of activities in support of this ESG strategy commenced during 2021.

During 2021, the Company began implementation of an electronic tool that allows the carbon impact of its transportation management to be assessed. This tool was subsequently launched in 2022 and will assist the Company in continuing to support GKN Automotive's ESG strategy.

#### **(e) The desirability of the company maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct**

GKN Automotive's reputation as an honest and ethical supplier is crucial to our future success. Our customers' policies require that they only source from suppliers which have the highest ethical standards, and failing to meet those standards could severely damage our business. The directors therefore continually have regard to this in their decision making. Specifically, it informs decisions as to how we manage and train our employees, whether to enter into new markets, deal with customers or suppliers, or employ (or retain the employment of) certain individuals.



During 2021, GKN Automotive operated under a code of conduct known as the GKN Automotive Code. The code was a key part of GKN Automotive's compliance and governance arrangements and set out the standards of behaviour expected of the Company and its employees. We summarise this behaviour as 'Doing the Right Thing', which includes treating people with dignity, respecting the rights of others, speaking up when we see behaviour which is wrong, and promoting honest and proper conduct. We also cascade our ethical standards to our suppliers, via our Supplier Code of Conduct, which sets out the minimum ethical standards expected from all GKN Automotive suppliers. The Supplier Code of Conduct forms part of our terms and conditions with our suppliers and requires that they maintain high ethical standards, refrain from engaging in any bribery and corruption, engaging in forced or bonded labour, comply with health and safety laws and all laws and regulations in the countries in which they operate. The Company ensures that the GKN Automotive requirements are adhered to by way of training and ongoing compliance awareness.

GKN Automotive engages external audit firms to monitor and verify both financial and non-financial performance and controls. This includes a range of audits, including health and safety audits, to which the Company is subject.

**(f) The need to act fairly between members of the company**

The Company has only one member, GKN Industries Limited, which is indirectly 100% owned by Melrose Industries plc. During the year there was therefore no actual or potential conflict between the interests of any members of the Company.