

## [News story: Crime news: digital form for Proceeds of Crime Act claims](#)

Starting 11 September 2017 all Fastrak and non-Fastrak Proceeds of Crime Act bills should be submitted using a digital claim form.

Electronic claim forms are being introduced on 11 September 2017 for all Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) bills.

This change will allow POCA claims to be assessed faster. It follows on from the introduction of email submissions for POCA work in January 2017.

The introduction of the electronic claim forms will reduce the number of supporting documents required with your claim and improve the quality of determination notes you receive from us.

Email addresses will remain the same:

- [poca@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:poca@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk)
- [pocafastrak@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:pocafastrak@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk)

### **Fastrak and non-Fastrak forms**

There are separate claim forms for Fastrak and non-Fastrak claims. Copies of the claim forms and guidance on their completion will be sent to all providers who have previously made claims by email.

Copies of the claim forms may also be obtained by emailing:  
[poca@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:poca@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk)

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## [Press release: New and revised permits for Horse Hill oil and gas site](#)

The Environment Agency has issued a variation and new permit for Horse Hill Developments Ltd, for use on their site near Gatwick Airport in Surrey.

The company already held a permit to drill the exploratory borehole and manage wastes arising from that process. This variation allows them to drill a new borehole, drill a side track from the original borehole and carry out flow testing to understand the long term economic viability of the oil and gas reserves. No hydraulic fracturing will take place as part of this activity.

The company has also been issued with an environmental permit to allow them to store oil on site following production.

The company will need to adhere strictly to the conditions set out in these permits, which will ensure the local community and environment are protected.

The Environment Agency considered the opinions raised by local people during the 4 week consultation with communities, interested groups and other professional organisations before reaching this decision.

A spokesperson for the Environment Agency said:

We would like to thank all those people who responded to the consultation. Since the consultation period closed, Horse Hill Developments Limited has provided additional information to clarify some of the aspects of their application for flow testing.

After considering all of the information available and completing our assessment we are confident that the environment and people will be protected. Environment Agency officers will now ensure compliance with these operating conditions during the next phase of works.

For all media enquiries please contact 0800 141 2743 or email [Southeastpressofficel@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Southeastpressofficel@environment-agency.gov.uk).

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## **Press release: Visitors and wildlife to benefit from East Farleigh lock improvements**

The Environment Agency project has refurbished the lock, in East Farleigh near Maidstone, Kent, stabilised the weir, and installed a new fish pass. The previous lock was last refurbished over a century ago, and these improvements enhance and protect the River Medway for local residents and river users.

The refurbished lock was constructed within the existing lock and not only secures the future of the structure but improves the safety and convenience for boaters using it. New features include improved mooring systems, new access steps, and new rubbing timbers and fendering to reduce the risk of damage to visiting vessels.

Wildlife on the River Medway will also benefit from the works at East Farleigh. A new fish pass has been installed alongside the weir, providing climbable slopes for fish wanting to travel upstream, meaning freshwater fish, such as barbel, roach, perch, dace, chub and pike, will be able to pass the site freely.

Julie Foley, Environment Agency Area Manager, said:

The lock refurbishment is a £3.65 million investment in the River Medway that will be a great asset to visitors, river users, and wildlife for many years to come.

With a newly refurbished lock and weir we will be able to continue to maintain the upstream water levels for boaters, anglers, cyclists and walkers to enjoy, and the lock is essential for a number of commercial river operators.

It's great for the river that 9 of the 10 locks on the River Medway now have fish passes in place. Allowing free movement of fish will ensure that it becomes a healthier river than it has been in at least the last 250 years, offering better access to spawning grounds for fish.

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## **News story: SMEs gear up to supply to government through new £3bn tech deal**

One hundred SMEs have signed up for the chance to secure a share of an estimated £3bn of IT investment over the next four years – giving them the chance to grow their businesses by helping the government to deliver more efficient, effective public services.

Crown Commercial Service (CCS) has today awarded its new Technology Services 2 framework, with small and medium-sized enterprises representing more than 60% of the total number of suppliers signed up.

CCS is estimating that the framework will help public bodies to save more than £180 million over four years – money that can be spent on delivering frontline services.

Niall Quinn, Director, Technology Strategic Category for CCS says:

This framework delivers significant commercial benefits and gives more SMEs than ever the chance to deliver specialist technology support to the UK public sector.

Up to £3bn is expected to be spent through the agreement, which links public sector bodies with suppliers that can provide specialist IT services – from the management of a small desktop computer estate to the replacement of critical government systems.

160 suppliers have been awarded places on the framework, with 100 of them SMEs. There are twice as many suppliers on the new agreement compared to its previous iteration – Technology Services – giving more businesses than ever a

chance to supply to government and increasing competition to drive down prices.

The agreement initially runs for two years, with the option to extend by two further years.

## **The agency innovation**

For the first time, the new agreement includes an 'agency' element.

This gives public sector organisations buying services the option to employ a supplier as an 'agent' for their needs – buying in further goods or services through other CCS frameworks including Technology Products 2.

This gives customers a 'one stop shop' option to fully satisfy their requirements.

CCS will also be supporting small businesses who are new to working with government with regular introductory webinars and self-help videos on CCS systems and processes.

## **Lotting structure**

- Lot 1 – Technology Strategy & Service Design
- Lot 2 – Transition and Transformation
- Lot 3 – Operational Services
- Lot 4 – Programmes and Large Projects (2 sub Lots)
- 4a: Government Official security classification
- 4b: Above government Official classification (government Secret and Top Secret classifications)

To find out more, visit [the Crown Commercial Service procurement pipeline](#).