

Speech: Minister for Europe remarks to media in Ankara, Turkey

Minister for Europe press conference Turkey

Well Minister Omer, if I may, My good friend Omer Celik.

Thank you very much indeed for your warm welcome and I'm delighted to be back here, as you say, for the [fifth time since the coup attempt](#). I hope that illustrates not only my personal commitment to Turkey but also that of the entire United Kingdom government.

The world is a difficult and dangerous place and I think that the friendship between the United Kingdom and Turkey is an essential relationship in that difficult world. And we work together as friends and we speak to each other as friends, sometimes directly on issues that matter, some difficult issues. But always on the basis of trust.

I went just now to the Parliament building, which I went to straight from the airport when I visited just a couple of days after the coup attempt last year. And on that occasion a year ago I saw the bombed out bits of the Parliament building and I went back just now to the very same place in order once again to reaffirm the United Kingdom's understanding of what you went through during the coup attempt and indeed the steps that need to be taken following the coup attempt to restore civility, order and secure a government in the country.

We of course are clear in our view that we want to see proportionate and sensible responses to the challenges you faced within the context of a properly working judicial and democratic system. And that is what we have said from the start and will of course continue to say.

News story: Rules around removal of lost fishing gear clarified

The MMO is reviewing the marine licensing process to ensure that it is as efficient as possible, offers value for money and proportionately manages risks to the marine environment.

As part of this it has become aware that marine licensing guidance for recreational divers, in particular around removal of marine litter and fishing equipment, could be made clearer. The guidance provides interpretation on the relevant sections of the Marine and Coastal Access Act

2009.

The MMO has committed to working with relevant organisations and representative groups to review and improve the guidance.

In the meantime the MMO has confirmed that a lifting bag can be used to remove an object (including marine litter) up to 100kg provided the object has been there for less than 12 months. Beyond that a marine licence is required. It has also clarified that marine litter does not include abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear (ALDFG).

Projects to remove ALDFG should be submitted to the MMO as a marine licensing application, which will allow appropriate consideration of the risks to the historic environment and nature conservation features.

In July 2017 the MMO [introduced a self-service approach](#) for marine licensing which may be relevant in these circumstances. This is making it quicker and easier for applicants in low-risk circumstances, while also enabling the MMO to reduce the licensing fee by more than half to £50. This process has already [been used in relation to fishing gear removal activities](#).

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[News story: Civil news: HPCDS market engagement](#)

On 16 August LAA announced that the procurement process for new civil legal aid contracts from 2018 will begin from mid-September 2017.

To inform the procurement approach for new Housing Possession Court Duty Scheme (HPCDS) contracts, organisations that may be interested in tendering for these are invited to attend market engagement events.

How do I attend?

Organisations interested in attending must register online. Links for online registration are detailed in the table below.

Places at market engagement events are limited to a maximum of 2 representatives per organisation.

Where events are overbooked, we may subsequently require that only 1 representative attends to ensure that the maximum number of organisations have the opportunity to participate. Representatives from prospective bidding organisations will be prioritised over third party consultants.

Organisations are encouraged to register for a single session, where possible, and to attend the event(s) in the geographic region(s) relevant to where they are interested in delivering services under a HPCDS contract.

When will events be held and how do I register?

There will be 14 market engagement events in total. The time allowed for each event is up to 2 hours but they may last less than this depending on the level of questions:

[Birmingham – 29 August – am and pm](#)

[Manchester – 30 August – am and pm](#)

[Leeds – 4 September – am and pm](#)

[London – 5 and 7 September – am and pm](#)

[Liverpool – 6 September – am and pm](#)

[Bristol – 8 September – am and pm](#)

What will happen at the market engagement events

At each event LAA will provide information on the proposed tender approach for HPCDS contracts and will welcome feedback on this from attendees.

At some events we intend to discuss specific HPCDS Scheme Areas arising from HPCDS consultation feedback as follows:

- Birmingham – HPCDS in the Midlands, including an in depth focus on the proposed Birmingham, Herefordshire and Worcestershire HPCDS area
- Manchester – HPCDS in the North West, including in depth focus on the proposed City of Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire and Shropshire HPCDS area
- London – HPCDS in London and the South East
- Leeds – HPCDS in the North East
- Liverpool – HPCDS in the North West, including in depth focus on the proposed Liverpool, Wirral and Cheshire HPCDS Scheme Area and North West Wales, North East Wales and Central Wales HPCDS Scheme Area
- Bristol – HPCDS in the South West and Wales, including in depth focus on the proposed North West Wales, North East Wales and Central Wales HPCDS area

What if I can't attend on the session in my area?

For those unable to attend an event in person, LAA will also be holding a [WebEx at 10am on 11 September 2017](#).

Is attendance mandatory if I want to submit a tender for an HPCDS Contract?

No. Attendance at a market engagement event is not required in order to submit a HPCDS Tender. However, it provides an opportunity for organisations thinking of bidding for an HPCDS contract to feed into the procurement approach.

[News story: More Application Enquiry updates for Business e-services customers](#)

We are improving the Contact Us form in Application Enquiry.

Used by thousands of Business e-services customers, Application Enquiry is a free, user-friendly way for customers to track the progress and status of any application. It is accessed via the [HM Land Registry portal](#).

The improvements to the Contact Us form build on the [updates we made on 14 August](#). We continue to prioritise updates according to customer needs and feedback, and prioritise those that help us become a digital and data-driven organisation.

During week commencing 21 August, the changes to the current contact us form will include the addition of:

*Customers will need to specify the reason they want an update, allowing us to handle their query as quickly as possible and better understand their needs.

We are also removing the option for customers to request a call-back when they are enquiring about the progress of their application. This option is rarely used and in most cases we can only give an indication of when a customer's application will be completed. This often mirrors the [average completion times](#) that are already shown as part of the service.

Business customers can find out: