

The VMD remains open for business

The VMD would like to assure our stakeholders, in the light of the enhanced precautions to reduce the risk and impact of Coronavirus (Covid-19), that we continue to provide our services to regulate veterinary medicines.

However, with immediate effect we will postpone or reschedule inspections of premises due in the coming weeks. We are also making alternative arrangements for our stakeholder meetings including holding them by telephone conference.

In line with government advice we have changed our working practices so that most of our staff will be doing this working from home. Our staff will be contactable as usual and we will continue to operate our switchboard. However, if you have any difficulties contacting us by phone, please email your individual VMD contacts or our general email address at postmaster@vmd.gov.uk which is monitored throughout the day.

We will work closely with you to keep you informed and to minimise the impact on the services that we provide.

Updated data protection impact assessment template and guidance launched

The Surveillance Camera Commissioner (SCC) and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) have been working together to update the SCC surveillance camera specific data protection impact assessment (DPIA) template. The new template and associated guidance notes are jointly issued by the Commissioners to fully reflect updated data protection requirements as set out in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) as well as comply with the requirements of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

Where organisations are operating surveillance cameras in public places they are required to carry out a DPIA. Organisations who are introducing new surveillance camera systems or upgrading existing systems can use the template to help them ensure they are complying with relevant legislation.

Tony Porter, Surveillance Camera Commissioner, said:

Ensuring that surveillance camera systems protect communities rather than spy on them is essential in building public trust around the use of overt surveillance cameras. This joint effort

between my office and the Information Commissioner's Office will help ensure that where surveillance cameras are deployed tools are available to help organisations meet legal requirements around privacy and human rights.

Elizabeth Denham, Information Commissioner, added:

Surveillance systems can cause unnecessary intrusion into people's daily lives. It is therefore imperative that a Data Protection Impact Assessment is carried out so the risks to people's rights and freedoms are reduced. The work we have done with the Surveillance Camera Commissioner on this guidance will help to remind organisations of their responsibilities and help them to maintain systems that comply with the law.

The [DPIA template is available on the SCC website](#).

[UK Government sets out way forward on the legacy of the past in Northern Ireland](#)

- A new independent body focused on providing information to families and swift examinations of all unresolved deaths from the Troubles
- End to the cycle of reinvestigations that has failed victims and veterans for too long
- Ensuring that Northern Ireland veterans receive equal treatment to their counterparts who served overseas.

This new approach seeks to put victims first with information recovery and reconciliation as the overarching goal – with a way forward that delivers for all those affected by the legacy of the Troubles and enables all sides of the community to continue to reconcile and prosper.

Following careful consideration of all views in an extensive consultation, the proposals provide a framework for all communities in Northern Ireland to move towards a brighter future, fulfilling the Government's commitment to help victims of the Troubles in Northern Ireland towards reconciliation with

the pain and trauma of the past and ending vexatious claims against veterans.

Reconciliation and information recovery for victims who suffered during the Troubles form a key part of the proposals. A new independent body will conduct swift, final examinations of all the unresolved deaths. Only those cases where there is new compelling evidence and a realistic prospect of a prosecution will be investigated. Once cases have been considered there will be a legal bar on any future investigation occurring. This will end the cycle of reinvestigations for the families of victims and veterans alike.

A central resource for people from all backgrounds – and from throughout the UK and Ireland – will also be created to share experiences and narratives related to the Troubles.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Brandon Lewis said:

Victims who suffered unimaginable pain as a result of the Troubles are at the heart of our approach to help Northern Ireland move on from its past towards a brighter future.

I hope that by giving as many families as possible information on how their loved ones lost their lives, we can help ease the difficult process of reconciliation.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to our Armed Forces for their service in Northern Ireland. That's why these proposals also put an end to repeated reinvestigations where there is no new compelling evidence and deliver on our promise to protect veterans from vexatious claims.

As set out in the New Decade, New Approach agreement, the UK Government will now begin an intensive period of engagement with the Northern Ireland political parties, and the Irish government, to discuss these proposals in detail.

These proposals build on our work to establish a victims' payment scheme to provide acknowledgement and a measure of financial support to those seriously injured in the Troubles.

[Coronavirus: if your company cannot](#)

file accounts with Companies House on time



All companies must send their accounts, reports and confirmation statements to Companies House every year. If a company's accounts are filed late, the law imposes an automatic penalty.

Your company should take appropriate measures to ensure accounts are filed on time. You should also [file your accounts online](#) if you're able to.

If, immediately before the filing deadline, it becomes apparent that accounts will not be filed on time due to your company being affected by Coronavirus (COVID-19), you may make an application to extend the period allowed for filing.

Late filing penalties

If you do not apply for an extension and your accounts have been filed late, an automatic penalty will be imposed. The registrar has very limited discretion not to collect a penalty.

Each appeal is treated on a case-by-case basis, and we already have policies in place to deal with appeals based upon unforeseen poor health. Appeals based upon COVID-19 will be considered under these policies.

More information

[Guidance: Filing your company's accounts](#)

[Guidance: Online filing and email reminders for companies](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): UK government response](#)

[COVID-19: guidance for employers and businesses](#)

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Last updated 18 March 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 18 March 2020

Link to latest Coronavirus guidance added.

2. 11 March 2020

First published.

[Commission finds misconduct by charity who loaned half a million pounds to company of former trustee](#)

The Commission has found the decision to loan half a million pounds to the company of a former trustee was misconduct and/or mismanagement, in an inquiry into the [Jewish Seminary for Girls \(JSG\)](#). Two former trustees have been disqualified.

JSG aims to promote the Jewish faith amongst Jewish girls and women between the ages of 15 and 25 by providing religious education and instruction to help students enter the workplace.

The charity was previously under inquiry for late submission of their accounts for 2013 and 2014. Then their accounts submitted for 2015 revealed concerns about whether they were accurate. The Commission opened an inquiry to examine further.

Analysis of the accounts showed a loan agreement between the charity and former trustee Yonathan Kahn's company for £472,394. Further inquiries revealed, that at the time the loan was issued, the:

- charity was left with only £816 in cash after the loan was paid to Mr Kahn's company
- decision to grant the loan was authorised by only one trustee, Avrohom Modechai Royde
- assets for Mr Kahn's company were less than £6,000
- terms of the loan were not favourable to the charity
- trustees did not adequately document their decision-making for agreeing the loan

Until the Commission opened an inquiry, the charity was not receiving any repayments for the loan. These are now received monthly, but the Commission has issued an order to the current trustees to take legal advice in relation to calling in the loan and/or pursuing potential restitution for the loan.

Another concern, identified by the Commission, is that the charity paid two rabbis to deliver weekly lectures and:

- one rabbi was receiving £2,500 per month, despite being related to one of the trustees at the time, which amounted to an unauthorised benefit
- another rabbi was paid £1,000 per month to deliver lectures
- the recruitment process was not open or competitive, and the trustees could not show that this was in the best interest of the charity
- the trustees could not provide any receipts or invoices to satisfactorily evidence that work had been undertaken by the rabbis

Despite assuring the Commission that it had implemented several new policies and procedures from June 2018, payments to one rabbi continued in breach of trust and without any records to verify their use. This was misconduct and/or mismanagement.

Amy Spiller, Head of Investigations Team at the Charity Commission, said:

Charities should be distinct from other types of organisations in their attitude and behaviour, in their motivations and methods. It's clear that the former trustees of this charity did not act in the best interests of their charity or its beneficiaries. They were reckless with charitable funds and could have cost the charity its future via an ill-advised loan to someone they knew and payments to others without sufficient oversight. It's therefore right that the trustees responsible have been disqualified.

The Commission disqualified Mr Kahn and Mr Royde from acting as trustees and/or holding an office or employment with senior management functions in charities for 12 years on 20 December 2019.

The charity now has a completely new trustee board who have been directed to improve the charity's governance and financial management. The Commission will continue to monitor its progress.

The [full report is available on GOV.UK](#)

Ends