

# SIA launches new counter-terrorism e-learning today

Press release

Today, Friday 10 September, the Security Industry Authority (SIA) is launching Action Counters Terrorism (ACT) Security e-learning for security professionals.



Security Industry Authority

The SIA developed the new training in partnership with the National Counter Terrorism Security Office and the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure.

ACT Security is free, specialised training for front line security operatives. The custom-built training provides up-to-date counter-terrorism knowledge to help operatives prepare for and respond to terrorist incidents whilst on duty.

The course will take around 1 hour 15 mins and its flexible delivery will allow the user to pause and save progress. This new ACT Security e-learning course follows a successful pilot in August 2021 that included security businesses and operatives.

Paul Fullwood, Director of Inspections and Enforcement, SIA said:

The security industry plays a vital role in public protection. We've been working closely with counter-terrorism experts within the National Counter Terrorism Security Office and the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure to develop specialised e-learning for the security industry. ACT Security will provide operatives with greater knowledge and confidence to detect, deter, or disrupt potential terrorist activity. We urge all security operatives to take this free specialised training to enhance their skills to combat the threat of terrorism.

When taken with ACT Awareness e-learning, the new training covers the entire

counter-terrorism content for the licence-linked qualifications and top-up training. There are five modules that cover:

- the role of a security operative in counter terrorism
- current terrorist attack methods
- identifying and responding to suspicious activity
- incident response planning
- responding to a terrorist incident

Security professionals can take the training as follows:

1. Send an email to [CTcode@sia.gov.uk](mailto:CTcode@sia.gov.uk) with the subject "PIN request for ACT e-learning". The SIA will reply with a PIN.
2. Go to the [ACT e-learning site](#).
3. Enter the PIN sent by the SIA when asked for an access/PIN code.

More information is available on [GOV.UK](#).

Further information:

- The Security Industry Authority is the organisation responsible for regulating the private security industry in the United Kingdom, reporting to the Home Secretary under the terms of the Private Security Industry Act 2001. Our main duties are: the compulsory licensing of individuals undertaking designated activities; and managing the voluntary Approved Contractor Scheme.
- For further information about the Security Industry Authority visit [www.gov.uk/sia](http://www.gov.uk/sia). The SIA is also on [Facebook](#) (Security Industry Authority) and [Twitter](#) (SIAuk).

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## [Engineering excellence in the community](#)

An exciting new development in Cleator Moor, West Cumbria was unveiled by Sellafeld Ltd and Copeland Borough Council this week, as the Engineering Centre of Excellence officially – and somewhat dramatically – opened its doors to visitors.

The centre, which relocates engineering and maintenance specialists from Sellafeld site into a refurbished unit at the Leconfield industrial estate in Cleator Moor, is the latest in a suite of planned investments in the community.

It was officially opened by Spot the dog, a robotic canine developed by

Boston Dynamics in the USA, which is currently being trialled for a number of uses at Sellafield and in the wider nuclear industry.

The centre hosts a range of teams working on key engineering and support systems for Sellafield Ltd, including civil engineering, radiometrics, control systems and robotics.

It is divided into 7 distinct but flexible work spaces used to test equipment and solve problems without the constraints of a nuclear licensed site.

The off-site location also makes it easier for the teams to work more closely with the supply chain.

Martin Chown, CEO Sellafield Ltd said:

This is a fantastic example of how we are changing how we do things at Sellafield; moving work that doesn't need to be done on the site out into the community for mutual benefit.

Engineering solutions play a key part in delivering our purpose of creating a clean, safe environment for future generations, and developments like this give us the space for more innovation and collaboration with our supply chain partners.

This helps us to make the most of different skills and teams, allowing us to progress with pace and deliver greater value for the taxpayer, whilst helping to grow and diversify the local economy.

Pat Graham, Copeland Borough Council's CEO added:

This is an important milestone for the Industrial Solutions Hub and demonstrates to the community in Cleator Moor that we are serious about bringing opportunities to the town.

To have an Engineering Centre of Excellence at the hub, on their doorstep, along with the £20 million investment that's coming in from the Town's Deal is a real turning point.

Plans are underway for the next phase which will see a number of community-based initiatives take shape.

Trudy Harrison, MP for Copeland, said:

I'm absolutely delighted to welcome this fantastic investment in Cleator Moor.

Taking complex challenges off the Sellafield site and enabling young people to be trained by established engineers is exactly what we need to grow our economy and skills base.

By bringing these developments into our towns we can further encourage the economic regeneration of Copeland.

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## CMA publishes recommendations to improve PCR testing market

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has found there are features of the PCR testing market which mean competition alone will not deliver the right outcomes for consumers. There is a risk of a 'race to the bottom', in which providers compete on grounds other than high clinical quality and travellers end up losing out.

Consumers' complaints include that they are paying over the odds and receiving poor service, with test kits and results arriving late or not at all. They also say that, when things do go wrong, they are unable even to contact some providers, let alone get refunds when they are due.

In addition to providing advice to the UK Government, the CMA is already using its powers to act where it can. On 25 August, it published an [open letter to all PCR test providers](#) warning them to stay on the right side of consumer law. On 3 September, the CMA launched an [investigation into Expert Medicals](#), one of the largest providers in the market, and investigations into other companies are being considered. Meanwhile, a further 19 test providers have also been told directly by the CMA to improve their pricing information or risk further action.

But the CMA's review has found that, even with the enforcement of consumer protection law, competition cannot be guaranteed to deliver the right outcomes for consumers in the PCR testing market. A combination of up-front regulation, monitoring and wider sanctions is needed.

The CMA's consumer research also found that being listed on GOV.UK was the most commonly cited factor in why consumers had chosen a particular provider.

Building on previous advice provided to the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), the advice published today makes a number of recommendations, including:

- Creating a one-stop shop list of quality, approved test providers by significantly improving the basic standards to qualify for inclusion and remaining on the GOV.UK list.
- Introducing a comprehensive monitoring and enforcement programme to ensure providers on the GOV.UK list meet these basic standards and rules, and swiftly removing and sanctioning those firms that don't.
- Improving the provider listings on GOV.UK so consumers get the

information they need to compare providers properly and find the best deals for them.

- Developing the NHS Test and Trace travel test as a benchmark for quality and price to drive higher standards and more competition across the sector.
- Monitoring prices and costs on an ongoing basis, in case price reductions are not seen on the back of other measures.

Although this advice has been provided at the request of the UK Government, it has the potential to improve the market for consumers across the UK nations where private testing for international travel is allowed.

Andrea Coscelli, Chief Executive of the CMA, said:

Buying a PCR travel test is a lottery. From complaints about dodgy pricing practices, to unfair terms, to failure to provide tests on time or at all, to problems with getting refunds, the experience for some is just not good enough.

Recent weeks have underlined that we will not hesitate to take action against any PCR test provider we suspect is breaking the law and exploiting their customers.

However, competition alone will not do the job, even when backed by enforcement of consumer law. The PCR testing market is unusual because its key features are dictated by Government policy decisions to fight the pandemic.

This means a more interventionist approach to shape behaviour in the market from the outset, backed up by monitoring and enforcement, is needed.

We stand ready to keep working with the Government to make this market work better for everyone.

To produce this final advice, the CMA conducted a high-level review of the market for PCR travel tests. This included in-depth analysis of internal complaints data and reviewing evidence from a range of stakeholders, such as Citizens Advice and Which?, as well as airlines, laboratories and providers themselves.

## Notes to editors

1. The [full report and consumer survey the CMA commissioned](#) can be found here.
2. CMA Chief Executive [Andrea Coscelli's covering letter to the Health Secretary](#) is available here.
3. Further information can be found on the [CMA rapid review of PCR testing for travel web page](#).
4. During the course of this review there were over 400 providers offering Day 2 or Day 2 & 8 test packages listed on GOV.UK and over 900 providers

of PCR testing services.

5. DHSC has estimated that the average prices consumers pay are £59 for 'Green' (Day 2) PCR tests and £103 for an 'Amber' package (Day 2 & 8) tests. The CMA found that, depending on method of collection, the median advertised price was between £90–£120 for a Day 2 test and between £180–£210 for a Day 2 & 8 package.
6. Following an assessment by DHSC conducted during the course of this review, on 23 August DHSC issued warnings to 82 companies over potentially misleading prices and removed 57 companies from the GOV.UK list.
7. Expert Medicals is a private PCR testing firm whose address is 12 New John Street, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD1 2QY, and whose website is at [www.expert-medicals.co.uk](http://www.expert-medicals.co.uk). The CMA is investigating possible breaches of consumer law by Expert Medicals and no decision has yet been made on whether Expert Medicals is breaking the law.
8. For media queries, please contact the press office via [press@cma.gov.uk](mailto:press@cma.gov.uk) or on 020 3738 6460.

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## [Mental health in the workplace](#)

Dear colleague,

COVID-19 has affected all our lives and our livelihoods in profound ways over the last year. The nation has come together to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe, but there has been a cost. The virus itself, and the necessary measures to contain its spread, have triggered feelings of worry, distress, or loneliness for many of us. In response to these challenges, you may have seen that the government has recently published our [COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Recovery Action Plan](#). This sets out our ambitious, cross-government approach to promoting positive mental health and supporting people living with mental illness to recover and live well.

I care greatly about the health of our businesses, and the impact of the past year on the wellbeing of businesses and individuals; from workers and employees to business leaders and those running their own companies. Through my ongoing engagement with businesses and representative organisations, I have been acutely aware of the impact on those facing financial insecurity, for example. This is of particular concern as we know there is a clear and well-established relationship between financial insecurity and poor mental health.

We also know more broadly that poor mental health costs employers between £33 billion and £42 billion a year, and the UK economy between £74 billion and £99 billion per year. Supporting mental health in the workplace has never been more important, and I fully recognise and value the role that employers play when they take positive action to provide workplace mental health and wellbeing support to their staff.

I wanted to therefore ask for your support. I know many of you have specific tools and programmes in place to promote positive mental health and support individuals, and I would encourage you to take this opportunity to promote this to your membership.

For those organisations that do not have their own resources, we would encourage you to promote some of the existing resources available, such as those being signposted through GOV.UK. These include:

Thank you for your efforts so far on this important issue. Through promoting these resources and guidance for businesses and employers, as well as your own resources, we can improve workplace support, support those individuals who need it, and better tackle the impacts of mental ill-health moving forward.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Scully MP

Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets  
Minister for London

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## [New Chief Executive appointed to lead Valuation Office Agency](#)

News story

Jonathan Russell appointed as VOA's Chief Executive.



Following an external recruitment process and approval from the Prime Minister, Jonathan Russell CB has been appointed Chief Executive of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA).

The Valuation Office Agency, an executive agency of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), is responsible for providing the government with the valuations and

property advice needed to support taxation and benefits.

Chief Executive and First Permanent Secretary at HMRC, Jim Harra, said:

I'd like to congratulate Jonathan on his permanent appointment as Chief Executive of the Valuation Office Agency. He has led the agency through the challenges of the pandemic, and I am delighted that he will continue to be part of the HMRC Executive Committee.

Jonathan Russell said:

I am delighted to be confirmed as the VOA's permanent Chief Executive after leading the agency on an interim basis over the last 18 months. I've seen first-hand colleagues' commitment and professionalism and what we can achieve together, even in the most difficult of circumstances. Looking ahead, I'm excited by the opportunities to make a positive difference for customers and colleagues at a pivotal period for the agency.

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