

# The Planning Inspectorate is improving the application process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure and Common Land Projects. Help us get things right by taking part in a research session!

News story

As part of our continuing work to improve the service we offer to customers we are looking for people to take part in research with us.



We are conducting a discovery phase on our applications service – which covers National Infrastructure and Common Land. This is a great opportunity to influence how the service should be delivered in the future.

A discovery is the first phase in a Government Digital Service (GDS) defined process to create user-centred public services.

In a discovery, we focus on understanding the problem that needs to be solved from a customer perspective. One way we are doing this is running user research with the various users of our applications service.

We are looking for people to take part in user research over January and February 2021 who are either:

- National Infrastructure Project applicants (or their advisers)
- Common Land Project applicants (or their advisers)
- Anyone involved as an Interested Party in either a National Infrastructure or Common Land application(s) – or their advisers. Ideally the application you've been involved with should have been decided up to 5 years ago, and be closed.

[You can register your interest if you'd like to take part in our research.](#)

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## Mal Singh is to step down as BPDTS Ltd's Chief Finance Officer

Press release

Mal Singh is to step down as Chief Finance Officer, and Executive Board director, from 31 March 2021 to take up a new role in the wider DWP family.



Mal Singh, BPDTS CFO

Mal Singh is to step down as our Chief Finance Officer, and Executive Board director, from 31 March 2021 to take up a new role in the wider DWP family.

The process to appoint Mal's replacement as Chief Finance Officer is now underway.

Jeremy Moore, Chair of the BPDTS Board, when talking about the appointment said:

I'm sure I speak on behalf of the Board, and our employees, in thanking Mal for the huge role he's played in the company's success since taking over as Chief Finance Officer back in April 2019. I, and we, wish him the very best for the future as he takes up a new role.

Mal, talking about his time with BPDTS said:

It has been a privilege and an honour to serve as the BPDTS CFO. I've worked with an outstanding Board, Executive Team and amazingly

talented colleagues. The company has gone from strength to strength and I have seen first-hand how a creating a superb culture has contributed to our success

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## [SIA publishes response to consultation on code of conduct](#)

Press release

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) today publishes a summary of the analysis of responses to its consultation on a proposed code of conduct.



Security Industry Authority

The proposal is that the code would set out the behaviour that is expected of licence holders and applicants.

The consultation was held between 09 January and 23 February 2020. It sought views of licence holders and other interested parties on the content of the draft, and on the potential impacts of introducing it.

The SIA received 3,853 responses to the online consultation, with over 4,200 comments made in response to the free text (i.e., open) questions. A vast majority of responses (98%) were made by existing SIA licence holders.

The responses provided a wide range of views and comments about the draft code of conduct and the form it might take if introduced.

The SIA would like to thank everyone who took the time to participate in this consultation. Introducing a code of conduct would be a significant step for both the industry and the SIA. The publication of the analysis has taken the SIA longer than it would have liked due to the volume of responses and the impact resulting from the ongoing situation with Covid-19.

The SIA will now consider in more detail whether a code of conduct is a proportionate regulatory approach, and what impact it might have on the private security industry. It will also consider how, if introduced it would work in practice. Ongoing dialogue with the industry will be critical to the thinking on these issues and the SIA will provide an update on its progress in due course.

[View the summary.](#)

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. Its main duties are: the compulsory licensing of individuals undertaking designated activities; 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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## [Home Secretary to introduce 'Kay's Law' reform to better protect victims](#)

New laws to reform pre-charge bail will provide better protection for victims and witnesses in cases of violent and sexual offences, Home Secretary Priti Patel announced today (Thursday 14th January).

The Home Office has published its [response to a consultation on pre-charge bail](#), which allows police to release a suspect from custody subject to conditions, while they gather evidence or await a charging decision.

The new measures will ensure a system where individuals are not held on bail for unreasonable lengths of time, whilst enabling police to impose strict conditions on more suspects in high-harm cases, including most cases of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The full package of reforms will be named 'Kay's Law' in memory of Kay Richardson, who was murdered by her ex-partner following his release under investigation, despite evidence of previous domestic abuse.

The name 'Kay's Law' also intends to help raise awareness of the new reforms amongst police and the public, and encourage greater use of pre-charge bail where necessary and proportionate, as well as increased engagement with

victims.

The measures will be brought before Parliament in a major criminal justice bill, which will be introduced as soon as parliamentary time allows. The Bill will provide better support and protection to police, create safer communities, and make sure those guilty of heinous crimes spend longer behind bars.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

I can't imagine the pain and suffering of the families of victims like Kay Richardson, and I want them to know their voices have been heard.

Victims and witnesses of the most distressing crimes – including domestic abuse and sexual violence – must be protected while allegations are investigated.

It is my priority to deliver justice for victims and Kay's Law will put victims at the heart of the bail system, empower police to ensure that suspects are closely monitored, and protect the public.

Ellie Butt, Head of Policy at Refuge says:

Refuge is pleased to see the government making changes to pre-charge bail. Far too many survivors of domestic and sexual abuse who bravely report crimes to the police see alleged perpetrators released under investigation, meaning there are no restrictions on contacting the survivor.

This puts many women and children at real risk of harm and is a huge disincentive to reporting. Due to the dynamics of domestic abuse and sexual violence it is vital that bail is used in all cases, we hope these changes will achieve this and will be swiftly passed into law.

The pre-charge bail consultation ran between February and May last year, and received a total of 844 responses from groups including law enforcement, charities and legal bodies.

More than four in five respondents agreed with removing the presumption against pre-charge bail. This presumption has led to large numbers of suspects being released under investigation for lengthy periods, where they are not required to report to police at regular intervals.

Reforms to pre-charge bail timescales will also be introduced, with the initial pre-charge bail period increased from 28 days to three months (90 days), with further extensions requiring sign-off from an inspector or above.

The new timescales will cut red tape for police while also ensuring that individuals are not held on bail for unreasonable lengths of time.

National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Bail Management, Chief Constable Darren Martland said:

We are committed to doing everything we can to protect victims and witnesses as investigations progress.

It's important to ensure bail is properly used to best effect, which includes respecting the rights of suspects and balancing the impact on victims and witnesses.

We will continue to work with the Home Office and College of Policing so that we are striking that balance between protecting vulnerable victims and witnesses while upholding the rights of suspects. Our first priority will always be to keep people safe.

The new measures also come as the Home Office today launches its domestic abuse codeword scheme, to help domestic abuse victims get immediate help from police or other support services. Working with independent pharmacies and Boots pharmacy chains during the new lockdown, the scheme helps ensure victims receive easier access to much needed support from thousands of pharmacies across the UK.

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## [COVID-19: January Update to Contact Centre opening hours](#)

News story

Due to COVID-19, DBS Contact Centre hours have temporarily changed.



The opening hours for the DBS Contact Centre have temporarily changed, as

detailed below, in response to coronavirus-related measures:

Our call centre is currently closed on a Saturday.

You may also experience some delays or longer waiting times. Our peak times are between 9am to 10am and 4pm to 5pm, and you will likely experience more significant delays during these periods.

We will also be offering a reduced telephone service on our Disputes team which is currently only available 9am – 3pm

Services across GOV.UK remain unaffected.

You can track your application online:

- Online tracking for basic DBS checks, [here](#)
- Online tracking for standard and enhanced DBS checks, [here](#)

If you have a general enquiry, you can still contact DBS via:

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