

News story: A new way to pay

Instead of paying in advance, a new 'Pay on Invoice' process will streamline the way we manage a range of applications.

We are committed to reducing the regulatory burden and improving the process for licence applications.

From 1 April those making applications will no longer need to attach proof of payment making the end-to-end process simpler, easier and quicker.

The benefits of the new process include removing the need to work out complex fees and reducing the chance of applications being rejected for incorrect payment details.

Additionally the simplified payment process should result in fewer delays and make it easier for companies to reconcile financial records and accounts.

Overall the process is aimed at saving companies time and money.

Richard Humphreys, MHRA's Deputy Director of Finance said:

We have listened to our customers and launched this new project in order to make the process of payment much easier and quicker.

We hope the new process will reduce the regulatory burden and reduce unnecessary delays.

As with everything we do, we welcome your feedback.

If you have any questions please get in touch by emailing sales.invoices@mhra.gsi.gov.uk

There have been no changes to our payment terms and invoices must be settled on receipt of invoice. Penalty fees can be incurred for non-payment, details of the penalties are set out in the Fees Regulations. Non-payment may also result in suspension of any licence or authorisation, followed by legal proceedings for unpaid amounts, as a debt due to the Crown.

More information can be found [here](#)

News story: Exercise Wessex Flare pump

test being held in Somerset

A high-volume pump used during major flood events will be tested in Somerset next week (4 to 6 April 2017) as part of Exercise Wessex Flare – a 3-day training exercise run by the Environment Agency.

The 24-inch diameter steel and alloy diesel pump is capable of pumping 1,650 litres of water per second – the equivalent of filling 20 baths in a second. It will be loaded onto an 8-wheel lorry at its base in Bawdrip village, and transported to the remote North Drain pumping station several miles away.

A team of incident operatives and experienced pump specialists from across the country will then attach the 12-tonne pump to 40 metres of pipework over a period of at least 8 hours before setting it in motion.

Operations manager Robbie Williams said:

 Flooding can have a devastating impact on people's lives and homes. We care about our communities and want to do whatever we can to help prevent this type of incident. Using pumps to manage water levels and reduce the impact of flooding is one of the many ways we can do this, alongside temporary defence barriers.

 Preparing and practising pump deployment helps to ensure we act more quickly and effectively. It's also an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills so people can confidently operate this type of heavy machinery nationwide, with the help of the military and other groups.

The exercise builds on Exercise Wessex Teal where Wiltshire-based soldiers were trained to deploy temporary defence barriers. Some of those soldiers will be on hand to watch the pump in action and learn how it works. The Environment Agency's new Incident Command Unit (ICU) will also be on-site streaming live images of the exercise back to the Agency's Bridgwater incident room.

The ICU serves as a mobile incident room and temporary headquarters for staff out in the field, enabling better site management, situational awareness and visibility in flood risk communities.

It is important everybody is aware of their own flood risk. People can find out how to get ready and check their flood risk on GOV.UK or calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

[Press release: Charities in Wales benefit from Tampon Tax Fund](#)

The Tampon Tax Fund is designed to benefit charities that support women and girls, particularly those affected by violence and domestic abuse.

In 2016 / 17, the Tampon Tax Fund has awarded £15m across the UK.

The fund is equivalent to the amount HMRC estimate is raised from VAT on sanitary products. The fund was announced at Autumn Statement 2015.

The four Welsh projects to benefit from the fund are: Volunteering Matters (SAFE) in Gwent, North Wales Women's Centre, Rape and Sexual Abuse North Wales and the National Youth Advocacy Service in Wales.

Lord Nick Bourne, Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Wales, said:

This year's funding will benefit projects all over Wales and will help provide many women, girls and young children, some of them in vulnerable situations, with a better standard of living through education, support and self-help programmes.

This Government is a Government that works for everyone and this funding demonstrates its commitment to the union and supporting projects across the whole of the UK.

Rob Wilson, Minister of Civil Society said:

From Cornwall to Dundee, the Tampon Tax Fund continues to benefit organisations in every corner of the UK working to improve the lives of disadvantaged women and girls, including those who've been affected by violence.

This Fund is helping to improve lives, supporting our ambition to create a fairer, shared society for everyone. I'm glad that so many worthwhile organisations will benefit from this money.

An outline of the planned activity for each of the four Welsh charities is below:

- Volunteering Matters (SAFE) The SAFE ('Sexual Awareness for Everyone') project – This will improve the personal safety and maintain good sexual health of 300 young women (aged 16-35) with learning difficulties, from deprived areas in Gwent, South Wales through workshops, one-to-one peer

support and production and distribution of a SAFE card. Learning will be shared with the wider community by 50 of the young women, who will be trained as SAFE Champions and deliver peer support within local youth, educational and community services.

- North Wales Women's Centre – The project aims to improve the lives of 300 (minimum) disadvantaged women and girls targeting those with multiple and complex needs who are at risk of offending or reoffending. Existing issues for this group of women will be addressed whilst empowering them to be more resilient. This will be achieved by provision of community based support across North Wales where referred women will be assessed to identify their needs and a care plan will be developed with them. Learning will be shared by working with a wider group of community-based organisations to plan service provision for the future.
- Rape and Sexual Abuse North Wales – The aim is to pilot and evaluate, through partnership and collaboration, a self-help programme developed for survivors of sexual violence suffering with Sexual Trauma Specific Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (STS-PTSD). The project is to be trialled in three groups of eight annually, then expanded to groups of 12 once the pilot is complete. Following the pilot, they plan to train facilitators across Wales and the UK, to offer practical help to thousands of female survivors.
- National Youth Advocacy Service – The aim of this project is to improve the lives of young women and girls leaving the care system in Wales especially those who are pregnant, those at risk of teenage pregnancy, at risk of child sexual exploitation and care experienced parents. The project will be bespoke and tailored to the needs of the young person increasing their confidence and resilience and giving them information and support on sexual health, healthy relationships, gender equality and body image. In addition to establishing a number of support networks the project aims to identify what works best for women and girls in this disadvantage cohort and having learned these lessons will look to seek funding to roll this project out to other parts of the country.

[News story: Restrictions on Schedule 6 \(Exemptions for small pet animals\) active substances](#)

Details of VMD review of the approved active substances on the exemption for

small pet animals list which may be marketed for use as anaesthetics in fish.

The VMD has recently reviewed the approved active substances list on the exemption for small pet animals (also known as the Small Animal Exemption Scheme) which may be marketed for use as anaesthetics in fish. The indications for products containing these actives are now restricted to state for mild sedation and euthanasia of diseased fish only.

The basis of the change is the VMD's reviewed position regarding interpretation of the Veterinary Surgeons Act and conclusion that anaesthesia should be considered an act of veterinary surgery.

The table listing the approved actives has been amended to include the following warning:

Products containing [approved active] may be indicated for mild sedation and also for euthanasia of diseased fish. Indications for anaesthesia are not permitted in products marketed under this exemption.

The list of all active substances approved under the exemption and further guidance on the can be found on [Guidance for Exemption from Authorisation for medicines for small pet animals](#)

[News story: HMRC launch criminal investigation into global financial institution](#)

HM Revenue and Customs is getting increasingly tougher on offshore tax evasion, collecting more than £2.7 billion since 2010. Yesterday, in partnership with authorities in the Netherlands, Australia, Germany and France, HMRC launched a criminal investigation into suspected tax evasion and money laundering by a global financial institution.

Here is our full statement:

Yesterday HMRC, working with our international partners, launched a criminal investigation into suspected tax evasion and money laundering by a global financial institution and certain of its employees. The first phase of the investigation, which will see further, targeted, activity over the coming weeks, is focused on senior employees from within the institution, along with a number

of its customers.

The international reach of this investigation sends a clear message that there is no hiding place for those seeking to evade tax. Promoters and facilitators of tax evasion schemes, and their customers, need to wake up to reality and accept that attempting to hide wealth overseas, or within institutions, doesn't work and doesn't place them out of our reach. Alongside this new investigation we are currently investigating more than 1,100 cases of offshore evasion around the world, and have brought in more than £2.7 billion from offshore tax evaders since 2010.

As this an ongoing investigation HMRC are unable to provide any further detail at this time.

The government has introduced tough new powers, increased penalties, and game-changing measures to help us tackle offshore tax evasion, and as recently as the summer Budget 2015, gave HMRC an additional £800 million to invest in compliance and tax evasion work. Additionally, the Government has also been pivotal in increasing global financial transparency among more than 100 countries, including British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, by automatically sharing offshore account data. This additional data will help identify and pursue the tiny minority of tax evaders still hiding their money offshore.

The UK is also introducing a new corporate criminal offence for corporations that fail to prevent the facilitation of tax evasion. This new power, coming in this year, will ensure that those who fail to show due diligence over the services they provide could face prosecution.

Last year HMRC collected and protected a record-breaking £26 billion in compliance yield – money that would otherwise have gone unpaid. The offshore specialists in HMRC's Customer Compliance Fraud Investigation Service are currently investigating more than 1,100 cases of offshore evasion around the world, with more than 100 individuals subject to current criminal investigation.