

News story: Government takes action on county line drug gangs

Drug gangs using mobiles and couriers to deal remotely in rural areas, including coastal and market towns, will have phones shut down, under new plans announced by the Home Secretary.

The so-called county lines operations involve urban dealers expanding their crack and heroin business into small town markets, operating remotely through the use of specific mobile phone numbers.

The gangs then exploiting children and vulnerable people as couriers to move drugs and money between the new market and their urban hub. The model means dealers can peddle class A drugs without having to visit their markets – cutting the risk of being picked up and arrested by local police.

Now the gangs face having their so-called ‘deal lines’ shut down by the police under new laws being proposed by Home Secretary Amber Rudd.

The use of dedicated mobile phone lines has been identified by the National Crime Agency (NCA) as a key tactic by the drug gangs.

To counter this, the government will table an amendment to the Digital Economy Bill tomorrow (Monday 23 January). If passed, the law will compel the relevant communications provider to disconnect a mobile, SIM card or phone number where it can be proved they are being used in connection with drug offences.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd said:

Gang violence, drug dealing and exploitation have a devastating impact on vulnerable young people, their families and local communities. And they have no place in a Britain that works for everyone.

Taking action to shut down these phone lines demonstrates this government’s determination to crack down on gangs and sends a very clear message that we will not tolerate this despicable criminal activity.

The National Crime Agency published their second report into the county lines drug distribution in November last year. It found that over 70% of police forces in England and Wales are now reporting activity within their area.

Tony Siggers, NCA Head of Drugs Threat and Intelligence, and co-author of the county lines report, said:

Urban street gangs operating under the county lines model have become a nationwide problem that relies heavily upon anonymously acquired mobile phones, used as deal lines, branded to particular gangs and their reputation. The numbers have a high value in their own right to crime groups, who can't simply replace them quickly and start over, so taking them out of service is a powerful disruptive tool.

These lines are at the very heart of high volume drug supply, which in turn leads to the daily exploitation of young and vulnerable people. A typical line will likely generate in the region of £2,000 to £3,000 per day. Due to the high number of lines, this has the potential to aggregate to over £2 million per week in illicit revenue.

We welcome the proposal to table an addition to the Digital Economy Bill to disrupt these lines. The proposed legislation will add significant value to law enforcement initiatives to combat gang activity and remove confidence in their operating model.

The government is working with key partners, including law enforcement, local authorities and the voluntary sector to bring a new focus to tackling county lines gangs and to produce a coordinated response.

Last July, the government launched a new partnership with the Institute for Community Safety (ICS), providing funding to support communities facing new gang-related threats.

It brings together frontline professionals such as teachers, police officers and youth workers to identify problems in their local areas, then use this information to develop tailor-made plans to tackle gang violence and exploitation.

[Certification Officer: forthcoming hearings](#)

Published 18 November 2016

Last updated 27 September 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 27 September 2022

Dawes v Royal College of Nursing of the United Kingdom: hearing adjourned

2. 2 September 2022

Hearing listed: Dawes v RCN

3. 24 September 2021

Hearing listed: Watkins v British Medical Association

4. 12 July 2021

Date for a new hearing

5. 7 December 2020

Certification Officer Hearing in the case of Hussain v CWU to be held on 15 December 2020

6. 3 December 2020

Simpson v Unite the Union: rescheduled hearing date

7. 13 November 2020

Kidd v MU -Adjourned

8. 18 September 2020

new hearing dates

9. 15 September 2020

update of page

10. 24 August 2020

new hearing date

11. 16 March 2020

new hearing date

12. 12 March 2020

C0 hearing – Hussain v CWU

13. 20 January 2020

postponement of hearing

14. 23 December 2019

Two new Certification Officer hearings listed: St John v Unite the Union on 7 January 2020; Hussain v CWU on 29 January 2020.

15. 8 November 2019

New hearing added (Crew v Aegis the Union) and new date for Dinsdale v

GMB (2)

16. 15 October 2019

new hearing date

17. 4 September 2019

Three new hearings added, Watkins v British Medical Association, Parlour v NASWUT and Dunham v Society of Radiographers

18. 6 June 2019

new CO hearing

19. 24 May 2019

Cancellation of hearing – Dosanjh v POA

20. 4 April 2019

New Certification Officer hearings listed: – Dosanjh v POA and Oley & Others v Unite the Union

21. 4 March 2019

new hearing date

22. 11 January 2019

Hearing for McFadden v Unite the Union on 16 January 2019 cancelled

23. 3 January 2019

McFadden v Unite the Union – hearing added

24. 3 January 2019

Kelly v Musicians' Union – hearing added

25. 26 November 2018

Robinson v GMB – hearing added

26. 12 November 2018

A new Certification Officer hearing has been listed – Lascelles v Prospect

27. 9 November 2018

Blackledge v UCU – hearing listed

28. 6 November 2018

Hussain v CWU – remedy hearing listed

29. 24 July 2018

New Certification Officer Hearing

30. 15 June 2018

Start time for Coyne & Brooks v Unite the Union (25 June) changed to 2:00pm and Thursday 28 June as an afternoon only hearing

31. 15 June 2018

Gates v Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists – hearing listed for 4 July 2018

32. 7 June 2018

Coyne & Brooks v Unite the Union – 5 day hearing listed for 25-29 June.

33. 7 June 2018

cancellation of hearing – Dawson v UCU

34. 23 April 2018

new hearing date added

35. 28 March 2018

Added hearing in the case of Dinsdale v GMB on 19 April 2018

36. 2 March 2018

Added preliminary hearing in the case of Coyne & Brooks v Unite the Union

37. 22 February 2018

Rolfe v POA: hearing listed for Friday 2 March 2018

38. 14 February 2018

Pollock v Accord: the hearing set for 15 February 2018 is cancelled

39. 19 January 2018

The hearing set for Wednesday 24 January 2018 has been cancelled

40. 17 January 2018

Added directions hearing for Coyne & Brooks v Unite the Union on 26/01/18

41. 10 January 2018

New hearings announced for Markham v GMB and for Pollock v Accord.

42. 29 November 2017

1. The hearing for Pollock v Accord set for 30 November 2017 has been cancelled 2. Hearing listed for Chisholm v Unite the Union on 18 December 2017

43. 8 November 2017

Pollock v Accord hearing

44. 7 October 2017

McFadden v Unite the Union: the hearing set for Monday 9 October and Tuesday 10 October 2017 has been cancelled

45. 18 August 2017

Announcement of forthcoming hearings.

46. 6 February 2017

hearing date

47. 12 December 2016

Details of restricted seating at venue.

48. 18 November 2016

hearing postponed

49. 18 November 2016

First published.

50. 24 October 2016

New Certification Officer hearing dates

51. 3 October 2016

A number of cases have been listed for hearings.

52. 3 August 2016

Brough v Union of Construction, Allied Trades & Technicians (UCATT) (No. 2) has been listed for a hearing on 15 August 2016.

53. 12 May 2016

Forbes v Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association: the hearing scheduled for 25 May 2016 in Edinburgh has been postponed.

54. 17 March 2016

Three cases listed by the Certification Officer for hearings.

55. 22 February 2016

Henderson v GMB has been listed for a hearing on 1 March 2016.

56. 3 November 2015

The case of Mills v Unite the Union has been listed for a hearing on 11 November 2015 at Fleetbank House, London.

57. 30 September 2015

Forthcoming hearings

58. 25 September 2015

Forthcoming hearings

59. 24 September 2015

Forthcoming Certification Officer hearing

60. 29 April 2015

Stevens v Union of Democratic Mineworkers will be heard before the Certification Officer on 7 May 2015.

61. 17 April 2015

Beaumont (4) and Mansell v Unite the Union: venue confirmed

62. 2 April 2015

New venue for the Mills v Unite the Union hearing on 9 April 2015.

63. 26 March 2015

New venue for the Street and Street (2) v UNISON hearing on 1 April 2015.

64. 5 March 2015

Forthcoming hearings before the Certification Officer.

65. 12 February 2015

The hearing date of 25 February 2015 for the case Stevens v Union of Democratic Mineworkers has been postponed. A new hearing date will be announced shortly.

66. 23 January 2015

The hearing scheduled for 28 January 2015 in the case Barton v UNISON will not now go ahead. A decision will be placed on the website in due course.

67. 15 January 2015

The hearing date of 19 January 2015 for Street and Street (2) v UNISON has been postponed. A new hearing date will be announced shortly.

68. 9 January 2015

Details of forthcoming hearings published on the Certification Officer's website.

69. 1 December 2014

Notice of three new public hearings.

[Intellectual property clinics](#)



The intellectual property clinics which we hold in Newport are currently postponed. Please see [Other IP clinics](#) below for more information about other clinics which run.

The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) is holding free regular IP legal clinics in Newport. The IP clinics are hosted by an IP Attorney who is a member of the Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys (CIPA) and the Chartered Institute of Trade Mark Attorneys (CITMA).

The IP clinics are for individuals and businesses seeking legal advice on patents, trade marks and designs. If you require more general help and support with intellectual property please visit our [IP for Business tools](#).

What will you get?

You can discuss your ideas or problems in confidence with an IP Attorney for 30 minutes at no cost. An Examiner from the IPO will also take part in the clinic to help give an understanding of the IPO's requirements.

How to register

For help and information on IP matters or to make an appointment, please call our Information Centre on 0300 300 2000 or [email us](#) to discuss your requirements.

Venue

Intellectual Property Office
Concept House
Cardiff Road
Newport
South Wales
NP10 8QQ
United Kingdom

Date

Please see our [events calendar](#) for other dates.

Other IP clinics

Please note that this clinic is based in Newport, South Wales.

Other IP clinics are held regularly across the UK which may be more convenient. For more information please see [CIPA](#) and [CITMA](#).

For further non legal IP support in your area, locate your nearest [Patlib](#) or [Business and IP Centre](#).

Published 2 November 2016

Last updated 21 January 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 21 January 2022

Information about our IP clinics held in Newport are currently postponed.

2. 11 January 2019

Date removed due to being out of date and the next clinic is to be confirmed.

3. 16 August 2018

IP clinic added for 30 October 2018.

4. 19 December 2017

New Intellectual property clinic date (20 February 2018) added.

5. 13 November 2017

IP clinic for 12 December 2017, 20 February, 24 April and 26 June 2018 added.

6. 17 October 2017

Date added for October 2017.

7. 2 May 2017

New intellectual property clinic date added.

8. 24 February 2017

New Intellectual Property clinic date added.

9. 12 January 2017

New clinic date added.

10. 2 November 2016

First published.

[30 September filing deadline for accounts](#)



It's easier to [file your accounts online](#).

Find out [how to get your company authentication code](#), which you'll need to

file online. It's sent by post to the company's registered office and can take up to 5 days to arrive.

[What are annual accounts?](#)

You can [watch our annual accounts video with captions](#) on YouTube (1m 45s).

File early and file online

File online before your deadline and we'll send you an email to confirm we've received your accounts. We'll send you another email when we've registered your accounts.

It can take as little as 15 minutes from start to finish and you'll know your accounts have been delivered on time.

If you're a small company, you cannot file abbreviated accounts any more. Find out your [accounts filing options for small companies](#).

You'll still need to file accounts if your company is dormant.

Avoid rejections

Our online filing service has inbuilt checks to help you avoid mistakes.

Accounts filed on paper need to be manually checked. We can only check them during [office opening hours](#), and they can take over a week to process.

If you have to file paper accounts, you may want to use a guaranteed next day delivery service. Send your accounts well before the deadline in case you need time to resubmit them. If your accounts are rejected and you need to resend them, you could be too late to avoid a penalty.

Postal delays will not be accepted as an excuse for late filing.

Our online services

Our online services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Check your company is registered for online filing and you're able to file your accounts on the service.

Filing accounts at our offices

Our Cardiff office is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can receive documents during the holiday period. Our London and Edinburgh offices have a letterbox for out of hours deliveries. Our Belfast office can only accept documents during opening hours.

Further information

Find out more about our [WebFiling service](#) and the [company authentication code](#) you'll need to file online.

GOV.UK has information about [how to prepare your accounts](#).

We have [further guidance on accounts](#) and [late filing penalties](#).

If you cannot file your accounts on time, email enquiries@companieshouse.gov.uk as soon as possible. Include your company name, number and the reasons you need an extension.

Published 6 September 2016

Last updated 30 August 2019 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 30 August 2019 Updated for September 2019.
2. 5 September 2018 Latest video about accounts added.
3. 22 September 2017 Further information updated.
4. 6 September 2016 Added translation

[News story: IP and BREXIT: The facts](#)

This guide offers information on the future of intellectual property (IP) laws following the decision that the UK will leave the European Union (EU).

The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) continues to contribute fully to the government's work towards exiting the EU. It has a clear goal of ensuring an effective IP regime that supports UK innovation and creativity. The UK will remain one of the best places in the world to obtain and protect your IP.

In March 2017 the Prime Minister formally started the process of the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

The government has published the Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration on the future relationship between the UK and the EU. This has been endorsed by leaders at a special meeting of the European Council on 25 November 2018. As set out in the Withdrawal Agreement, we will continue to protect all existing registered European Union Trade Marks, Registered Community Designs, and Unregistered Community Designs as we leave the EU. We will do so by creating over 1.7 million comparable UK rights, which will be granted automatically and free-of-charge.

The European Union (Withdrawal) Act received Royal assent on 26 June 2018 and is now law. The Withdrawal Act will ensure that the UK exits the EU with certainty, continuity, and control. It is in no one's interests for there to be a cliff edge, and so the laws and rules that we have now will, so far as

possible, continue to apply. The government has been clear that the Withdrawal Act and any further secondary legislation made under the Act will not aim to make major changes to policy or legislation beyond those which are necessary to ensure the law continues to work properly on day one.

The government published a White Paper on the Future Relationship Between the United Kingdom and the European Union on 12 July 2018, setting out an important vision for elements of the future relationship between the UK and EU on intellectual property. In particular, the White Paper proposes that the UK should continue to participate in the unitary patent system and the Unified Patent Court that underpins it.

Furthermore, the UK looks forward to exploring other arrangements on IP cooperation that will provide mutual benefits to UK and EU rights holders. This will all require negotiation with the EU and we look forward to discussing the possibilities with our European partners.

A scenario in which the UK leaves the EU without an agreement (a 'no deal' scenario) is highly unlikely. However, in the event of a 'no deal' scenario, the government has published a series of technical notices. This information helps businesses and citizens understand what they need to do, so they can make informed plans and preparations.

The technical notices on intellectual property were published on 24 September 2018:

The notices cover the government's plans for continued recognition of existing rights in the UK by recreating protections in UK law. This applies both to registered and unregistered rights. They also cover wider mechanisms and arrangements relating to IP, such as cross-border copyright and exhaustion.

For these mechanisms and arrangements, the government intends to provide continuity where possible. However, businesses and other stakeholders might need to consider whether and how the changes required will affect them.

Statutory legislation and business guidance

To prepare the UK's statute book for its exit from the EU the UK government will be passing technical changes through statutory legislation in Parliament over the coming months, using powers under the EU Withdrawal Act 2018.

Where appropriate, the government may publish detailed guidance alongside these legislative changes and will work closely with business representatives, trade associations and stakeholders on the implications.

To ensure UK copyright law functions properly if the UK leaves the EU without a deal, we have introduced [The Intellectual Property \(Copyright and Related Rights\) \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2018](#). This legislation was laid in Parliament on 26 October 2018.

We have published guidance on the [changes to UK law in the event of no deal](#).

This complements the recent 'technical notice' on copyright and EU exit and covers the impacts on UK right holders, businesses, cultural heritage institutions and other organisations, and consumers. (insert hyperlink to document when available)

Please note this document is meant for guidance only. You should consider whether you need separate professional advice before making specific preparations.

Trade marks

The existing UK system for protecting trade mark rights will remain largely unaffected by the UK's decision to leave the EU. While the UK remains a full member of the EU then EU Trade Marks (EUTM) continue to be valid in the UK. When the UK leaves the EU, in any scenario, an EUTM will continue to be valid in the remaining EU Member States and UK businesses will still be able to register an EU trade mark, which will cover all remaining EU Member States.

We recognise that owners of existing EU trade marks want clarity over the coverage of those rights when the UK leaves the EU. In any scenario, including one which does not involve a deal between the UK and the EU, the government will seek to minimise disruption for business and to provide for a smooth transition. For existing EU trade marks, this means that for all scenarios, the government aims to ensure continuity of protection and avoid the loss of those rights. In doing so, our overall objective is to provide maximum clarity and legal certainty for right holders and third parties. The government is looking at various options and is discussing the best way forward with users of the system.

In addition, the UK is a member of the international trade mark system called the Madrid System. This allows users to file one application, in one language, and pay one set of fees to protect trade marks in up to 113 territories including the EU.

UK businesses will continue to have access to the Madrid System when looking to protect their trade marks.

For our future relationship with the EU, the UK looks forward to exploring arrangements on IP cooperation that will provide mutual benefits to UK and EU rights holders. Such arrangements will all require negotiation with the EU and we look forward to discussing the possibilities with them, including on trade marks.

Designs

The UK system for protecting registered and unregistered designs is not affected by the decision to leave the EU.

While the UK remains a full member of the EU, Registered Community Designs (RCD) continue to be valid in the UK. When the UK leaves the EU, an RCD will cover the remaining EU Member States.

We recognise that owners of existing RCDs want clarity over the coverage of those rights when the UK leaves the EU. In any scenario, including one which does not involve a deal between the UK and the EU, the government will seek to minimise disruption for business and to provide for a smooth transition. For existing RCDs this means that in all scenarios, the government will aim to ensure continuity of protection and avoid the loss of those rights. In doing so, our overall objective is to provide maximum clarity and legal certainty for right holders and third parties. The government is looking at various options and is discussing the best way forward with users of the system.

Once the UK leaves the EU, UK businesses will still be able to register a Community Design, which will cover all remaining EU Member States.

The government has ratified the Hague Agreement and has joined this international system in a national capacity. The Hague System for the International Registration of Industrial Designs allows for registration of up to 100 designs in over 68 territories through filing one single international application.

UK businesses will continue to have access to the Hague System when looking to protect their designs.

Unregistered designs

While the UK remains a member of the EU, designs, two- and three-dimensional designs (including, for example, clothing designs and patterns) can be automatically protected in the EU as 'unregistered Community designs'. This gives a design 3 years protection from copying.

Once the UK leaves the EU, unregistered protection for designs will continue to exist through the UK unregistered design right which provides a longer term of protection for a different scope of design features. In addition to this, where the UK does not have existing domestic legislation to protect certain types of rights, it will establish new schemes, which will preserve the full scope of the unregistered Community design right in the UK.

Rights of representation

The UK government recognises the concerns IP professionals have about their future rights to represent clients before the EU Intellectual Property Office. We welcome views on how to address these concerns and are involving stakeholders in consideration of these issues.

In the meantime, the UK and EU have agreed that UK practitioners who are representing clients before the CJEU and EUIPO in cases that are pending at the end of the implementation period will be able to continue acting in those cases until their conclusion.

As set out in our White Paper, the UK will be seeking to establish a joint practice arrangement whereby UK and EU legal representatives will be able to jointly support clients with cases before EU institutions, including before

the EUIPO and the CJEU.

For our future relationship with the EU, the UK looks forward to exploring arrangements on IP cooperation that will provide mutual benefits to UK and EU rights holders. Such arrangements will all require negotiation with the EU and we look forward to discussing the possibilities with them, including on registered and unregistered designs.

Patents

European patents

The UK's exit from the EU will not affect the current European patent system, which is governed by the (non-EU) European Patent Convention.

UK businesses can continue to apply to the European Patent Office for patent protection which will include the UK. Existing European patents covering the UK are also unaffected.

European patent attorneys based in the UK will continue to be able to represent applicants before the EPO [see EPO and CIPA: no impact of Brexit on UK membership of EPO](#) for more information.

Supplementary Protection Certificates

While the UK remains a full member of the EU, businesses can continue to apply for and be granted Supplementary Protection Certificates (SPCs) for patented pharmaceutical and plant protection products using the current SPC system. Existing UK SPCs granted under that system continue to be valid.

Once the UK leaves the EU, UK businesses will still be able to apply for SPCs in all remaining EU Member States under the existing system.

As far as the UK's own SPC regime is concerned, our intention is to provide maximum certainty and clarity for businesses operating in this important area of innovation. We will do this by maintaining the current SPC legal framework in the UK as we leave the EU.

Unified Patent Court

The UK ratified the Unified Patent Court Agreement (UPCA) on 26 April 2018. Our ratification brings the international court one step closer to reality.

The UK intends to stay in the Unified Patent Court and unitary patent system after we leave the EU. The UPC and unitary patent project are an important means of simplifying the protection of innovative products throughout Europe. This Agreement sets the bar for the level of constructive cooperation that the UK seeks with European partners in the future.

The Agreement on the Unified Patent Court (UPC) is an international treaty. The international court will have jurisdiction over patent disputes across its contracting states.

It will deliver a single judgment in cross-border disputes between private parties over patents granted under the current intergovernmental system, including the future Unitary Patent.

Copyright

While the UK remains in the EU, our copyright laws will continue to comply with the EU copyright directives, and we will continue to participate in EU negotiations.

The UK is a member of a number of international treaties and agreements protecting copyright. This means that the majority of UK copyright works (such as music, films, books and photographs) are protected around the world. This will continue to be the case following our exit from the EU. When we leave the EU, certain cross-border copyright mechanisms will no longer work in the way they are intended.

For our future relationship with the EU, the UK looks forward to exploring arrangements on IP cooperation that will provide mutual benefits to UK and EU rights holders. Such arrangements will all require negotiation with the EU and we look forward to discussing the possibilities with them, including copyright.

Enforcement

The UK is widely seen as a world leader in enforcement of IP. By working in partnership with law enforcement and industry, the government can deliver an IP environment where legitimate businesses thrive and consumers are protected.

For the time being the UK's enforcement framework remains unchanged. We are still part of the EU and we continue to play a part at the EU Observatory, and in bodies like Europol. The process for intercepting counterfeits and other infringing goods at the border remains unchanged. We also continue to play an active role in the follow up to the review of the Enforcement Directive, and the Commission's work on tackling commercial-scale infringement.

The UK is ready to engage constructively to establish an approach to enforcement cooperation that best suits the needs of the UK and EU and facilitates frictionless trade in goods to avoid a hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland. This may involve sharing information and research on IPR enforcement, working closely with the EU Observatory on the infringement of IP Rights.

Exhaustion of IP rights

While the UK remains a full member of the EU, intellectual property rights remain exhausted after the first sale of a good, with the right holders permission, within the territory of the European Economic Area (EEA).

The UK looks forward to exploring arrangements on IP cooperation that will provide mutual benefits to UK and EU rights holders and we are ready to discuss issues the EU wishes to raise in the negotiations on our future relationship, including exhaustion of IP rights.

The IPO is keen to hear your views on these issues. Please speak to your usual contact or email EUenquiries@ipo.gov.uk and we will ensure your comments are taken onboard.