

# Crime and Courts Bill

## Fact Sheet: The Crime and Courts Bill

The provisions in the Crime and Courts Bill will help protect the public by enhancing the national response to serious, organised and complex crime and strengthening border security. In addition, the Bill will deliver a swifter, more open and effective courts and tribunals system, while also reforming the judicial appointments process.

The key provisions in the Bill are as follows:

### **Part 1: The National Crime Agency**

Part 1 of the Bill will establish the National Crime Agency (NCA) to prevent and investigate serious, organised and complex crime, enhance border security, and tackle the sexual abuse and exploitation of children, and cyber crime. The Bill makes provision for the constitution and governance of the NCA; sets out its functions and powers, including the powers of NCA officers; makes provision for the NCA and other law enforcement agencies to share information and cooperate, including through the provision of assistance or by tasking; and abolishes the Serious Organised Crime Agency and the National Policing Improvement Agency.

### **Part 2: Courts and Justice**

Part 2 of the Bill includes a number of provisions to improve the efficiency and transparency of courts and tribunals and to enhance judicial diversity. In particular, this Part contains measures which:

- Establish a **single county court and single family court** in England and Wales to allow greater flexibility for the handling of cases and to increase the efficiency of the civil and family court systems.
- Reform the **judicial appointments** process to introduce greater transparency and improve judicial diversity.
- Introduce **flexible judicial deployment** to allow judges to move between courts and tribunals.
- Increase the efficiency of **finances collection** by providing incentives for compliance, so that offenders incur the cost for delaying payment, not taxpayers.
- Allow **data to be shared between the courts and tribunals service and other agencies** to enable fee exemption applications to be checked electronically.
- Enable the introduction, in limited circumstances, of **court broadcasting** to help demystify the justice system.

In addition, this Part includes a place-holder clause on adult community and other non-custodial sentencing to enable the Government to come forward with substantive proposals in this area in the light of the responses to the consultation '*Punishment and Reform: Effective Community Sentences*' which closes on 22 June 2012.

### **Part 3: Miscellaneous and General**

Part 3 of the Bill introduces a number of reforms to create a more effective and proportionate immigration appeals system, while improving road safety. This Part includes provisions to:

- Remove the **full right of appeal in family visa visit cases** and **remove in-country appeal rights** from individuals excluded from the UK by the Home Secretary.
- Strengthen the **powers of immigration officers** to tackle serious and organised immigration-related crime.
- Introduce a new **drug driving** offence of driving, or being in a charge of a motor vehicle, with concentrations of specified controlled substances in excess of specified levels.

For more information on the Bill, and to view supporting documentation, please see the Home Office web page:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/legislation/crime-courts-bill/>

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