



Disclosure &
Barring Service

Business Plan

1 December 2012 - 31 March 2013



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Chief Executive's Foreword



It was my absolute pleasure to take the reins of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) on 1 December. In our first few months of operations, our absolute priority is, and will continue to be, to deliver a high quality and timely service for our customers.

The DBS was formed to create a central and cohesive disclosure and barring service for customers and stakeholders, by merging the functions of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The DBS works to a Board, expertly chaired by Bill Griffiths.

One of my first priorities was to establish a transitional Senior Management Team (SMT), which comprises four functional directors and me. The SMT runs our business and is supported by a Change Forum which deals specifically with our multiple change projects. The composition of the SMT is based on an interim model pending a permanent structure to be in place by the end of March 2013. I have also established two key governance structures to deliver our executive functions, and to support our Board and its committees.

I appreciate how our staff have responded to this new, single leadership team and to our new Board members. Because of their continued commitment and professionalism, we have enjoyed a successful transition from the legacy bodies of CRB and ISA to DBS in this first period of operation.

While this Business Plan reflects only a short period of operation for the DBS, this early period of operation will set the tone, pace and standard for our future years. These foundations will enable the DBS to provide a superb service for customers now and in the future, while recognising the different needs and expectations of our wide customer base.

In my early discussions with stakeholders, they have impressed three needs upon me: to maintain our attention to quality and timeliness, to engage with them to develop new services that meet emerging safeguarding needs, and to modernise DBS operations to more closely mirror how people manage their lives.

This plan concentrates on:

- maintaining service excellence;
- preparation to introduce a new service of updating criminal record certificates;
- managing a change in our main business process partners to Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) later in 2013; and
- developing new technology for 2014.

The next year will be very challenging for the fledgling DBS, given the level and complexity of change. I recognise these challenges as opportunities, and offer my thanks for the continued cooperation and support of our Home Office sponsor department and other key stakeholders.

I look forward to working with our Chair and Board to ensure that the DBS helps protect the most vulnerable people in our society. That is our mission, and the measure by which I invite you to judge our success.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A Kelbie".

Adrienne Kelbie
DBS Chief Executive

Chair's Foreword



I welcome and endorse the comments made by the Chief Executive in her foreword. This is the first full period of operation for the DBS, and one where the Board will be called upon to assess and challenge many priority issues. We have a sound governance structure in place, and a competent and confident SMT to lead the DBS through this period of change.

We need to ensure that we continue to work closely with Home Office and colleagues from other government departments in ensuring that we effectively and sensibly fulfil the policy objectives of ministers.

This will be a challenging period of operation for the DBS with the impact of the recent Court of Appeal judgment¹ concerning the filtering of certain convictions and cautions and the progression of the final developments for the introduction of the Update Service and transition to new commercial suppliers, there is no doubt about this. The Board will continue to guide and steer the DBS through this period of change, ensuring that the DBS is in a fit and ready state for its first full year of operation and consolidation in 2013-14.

2012-13 Operational Objectives

This is the first period of operation for the DBS, with this plan covering the four month period from 1 December 2012 to 31 March 2013.

In assuming our functions, our key priority is to continue to deliver a high quality and timely service to our customers. Alongside this, we will be developing new services and changing business process partner to TCS later in 2013.

We will strive to provide a coherent service ensuring that our customers are not impacted negatively in any way, by any aspect of the merger.

During this period the DBS will focus on:

- continuing to meet published performance standards;
- developing a common vision and drive for our organisation, and working as one across our two sites;
- establishing new Board and Executive governance arrangements;
- transferring governance and project delivery for the DBS Programme from Home Office to DBS;
- developing an Update Service and Single Certificate;
- developing a Barred List check;
- preparing to change commercial supplier and exiting our current commercial supplier;
- introducing a permanent SMT structure;
- developing proposals for the shape of a consolidated Corporate Services function; and
- beginning a programme of work to create new organisational policies and procedures.

2012-13 Operational Objectives

This reflects the clear direction agreed by the Board, supported by the strategic direction set by ministers who guided on the governmental priorities of development and implementation, reflecting the outcomes of the governmental reviews of the criminal records and vetting and barring regimes. An overview of the outcomes of the reviews has been provided in the Appendix.

Introducing a new Update Service will allow greater portability of certificates by offering customers (for an annual fee) to have their DBS certificate(s) available online, and updated regularly. This will enable employers and other recruiters (who have been given permission and are legally eligible to check certificate information) to be confident that a certificate is up to date. If new information is recorded, the system will advise the employer or recruiter to apply for a new certificate.

As a brand new body, established without any prior 'shadow' board, the DBS has not yet developed its vision and strategic objectives. We look forward to doing so in 2013-14. For DBS to reach its full potential, and enhance safeguarding outcomes, our Board will depend on the full support and guidance from the Home Office and ministers, to define and develop our strategic direction.

This will take a little time, and must be cognisant of the significant commercial changes to be undertaken in 2013-14. We will therefore publish a three year Strategic Plan for 2014-17 to explain how we will use our knowledge, customer insight and emerging capabilities to deliver the policy intent of ministers.



About us

The DBS was launched on 1 December 2012, with the functions of the ISA and the CRB transferred to the DBS by way of a Transfer Order. We operate as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by the Home Office.

The DBS was established under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and provides information to help employers in England and Wales make informed recruitment decisions, especially for those posts involving work with vulnerable groups, including children.

We do this by undertaking the functions contained within Part V of the Police Act 1997, functions contained within the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007.

The DBS is led by a Board, comprising a Chair and executive and non-executive Board members, responsible for the strategic leadership of the DBS. The Board operates four committees:

- Audit and Risk;
- Finance and Performance;
- Quality and Standards; and
- Remuneration and Nominations.

We deliver policy for the Home Office (with policy responsibility for public protection), the Department for Education (DfE) (with policy responsibility for children) and the Department of Health (DH) (with policy responsibility for vulnerable adults).

We work closely with these three departments to ensure that our services meet their policy requirements. We also work with a very wide range of other stakeholders, including other government departments, public bodies, professional bodies, the police and employers.

We are highly dependent on co-operation by the police, and benefit from a constructive and professional working relationship with partners in individual police forces and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO).

The operation of the DBS is led by the Chief Executive who also acts as Accounting Officer. We operate from two sites; our Darlington base undertakes barring functions, whilst our Liverpool base delivers disclosure functions. Corporate Services and the personnel for our Change Programme are based in both locations.

Our Role

What we do

We help prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable groups by:

- maintaining a list of people barred from engaging in regulated activity with children (the children's barred list);
- maintaining a list of people barred from engaging in regulated activity with vulnerable groups (the adults' barred list);
- reaching decisions as to whether persons should be included in one or both barred lists;
- reaching decisions as to whether to remove persons from a barred list;
- issuing two levels of criminal record certificates: Standard and Enhanced;
- maintaining a register of organisations permitted to submit applications for certificates; and
- sharing our learning with policy makers and practitioners.

Service excellence

We serve over four million applicants a year, and thousands of employers. We want our service to be reliable, consistent, high quality and cost effective, and to be delivered in a way which meets customer needs. We will develop an approach to benchmarking our standards for future years.



Contribution to Government Objectives

The work of the DBS contributes to the delivery of the objectives of the Home Office, DfE and DH.

These objectives are:

Home Office

PROTECT PEOPLE'S FREEDOMS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

Implementation of Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Merge CRB and ISA and replace with the DBS, a single NDPB, responsible for delivering new disclosure and barring services.

Create a universally portable criminal records check, through a new instant online check.

Department for Education

Improve Arrangements for Protecting Children from Harm

Publish radically reduced statutory guidance on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to clarify statutory responsibilities, remove prescriptive practice guidance and allow professionals to exercise their judgement.

Department of Health

Better Care for All

We will work to improve the quality of care for all people using services, including reforming social care, working with the NHS to strengthen people's ability to make meaningful choices about their care and treating people with dignity and respect.

Performance Management

Our legacy bodies operated to a set of Public Service Standards (PSSs) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) respectively, to measure and publish service performance to the public, demonstrating accountability and transparency. Performances against these targets were published in relevant forms of communication, and were reported to ministers via written submissions.

The DBS Board and ministers have endorsed retention of these legacy PSS and KPI indicators (shown below) for 2012-13 to provide service continuity in the final four months of this financial year.

These will be reviewed for our next Business Plan (2013-14), with a view to introducing common standards across the organisation.

Disclosure

Public Service Standard	Target
Standard certificates	95% to be issued in 10 days
Enhanced certificates	90% to be issued in 28 days
Enhanced certificates	99% issued in 60 days
Disputed DBS certificates	90% resolved within 21 days
Certificate accuracy	99.996% accuracy rating
All complaints	95% resolved in 10 days



Performance Management

Barring

Key Performance Indicators	Target
Automatic barring	95% cases approved within 25 days
Independent decision-making	80% cases closed within 110 working days
Independent decision-making	60% cases closed within 55 working days
Complaints – Stage 1	85% responded to within 15 days
Casework accuracy	100% accuracy rating

The DBS also pays heed to other statutory and organisational targets, such as accreditation for security standards and in responding to Freedom of Information requests. These ensure that the organisation, as a whole, is performing well and drives improvement. These will also be reviewed for next year.

Our Values

For the period of this plan, we will adopt the Home Office values to underpin all that we do:

Values			
We deliver for the public	We are professional and innovative;	We work openly and collaboratively	We treat everyone with respect.

We will review these for our future years.

Our Team

The success of the organisation can be achieved only through the professionalism and commitment of our staff. This ensures that positive safeguarding outcomes are achieved. We want everyone to be proud to work for the DBS and to appreciate how their role contributes to our overall aims and performance.

We will seek to engage openly and effectively with our staff, providing timely and relevant information, driven by;

- implementing effective core briefings, internal communications channels, and demonstrating our responses to feedback;
- working constructively with the PCS (our recognised Trade Union) to develop a professional and responsive partnership; and
- developing a common workforce planning strategy and model to focus on short and long term business needs, supported by an agreed Learning and Development (L&D) approach.

Learning and development

We will develop a common approach to L&D, and generally use the Civil Service Learning and Development Shared Expert Service, building bespoke modules only where necessary (primarily for Operations teams).

Our priorities will focus on business need, and include:

- enhancing leadership capabilities;
- improving performance management;
- preparing managers to engage in and lead significant change;
- creating much closer and immediate training support where lessons can be widely shared from team reviews;
- addressing succession planning gaps;
- strengthening the capability of our project and programme managers;
- responding to legislative and mandatory learning initiatives such as Diversity Awareness and Information Assurance Awareness; and
- ensuring understanding of new corporate policies and practices.

A new approach to evaluating business impact and return on investment from our L&D activity will also be developed.

Maximising attendance

We will respect the legacy targets in this area, whilst common policies and targets are developed for the future. These targets differed, and so our target for staff transferring from CRB (Liverpool) is 9 average working days sickness absence per year, and for those transferring from ISA (Darlington), 8 days. For staff that join the DBS after 1 December, the local target will apply.

We will continue to ensure managers have the necessary skills, abilities and resources to support staff effectively and appropriately. Our Human Resources (HR) and occupational health support will be reviewed.

Our Team

Workforce planning

We have set resourcing targets supported by workforce plans. We will adopt a new executive governance structure to manage vacancies and selection. This will provide a transparent and consistent approach across our organisation.

However, we must strike a careful balance between having sufficient staff to deliver an operation where volumes are not certain, with either over or under staffing, against being unable to deliver consistently and cost-effectively. This is an absolutely critical area of our business, which will be thoroughly reviewed in 2013-14.

Equality and Diversity

The DBS will ensure that all equality duties are met, that we actively promote and encourage equality, and we eliminate discrimination both within the organisation and throughout wider society through the provision of our services in line with current equalities legislation.

This work will be championed by an executive Equality Forum, chaired by an executive member of the Board. It will regularly monitor compliance with statutory obligations and consider opportunities arising from wider good practice.



Financial

The DBS is a self-funding NDPB, dependent on income from applications for DBS checks to fund the whole business. Volunteers do not pay for these checks. No income is derived from barring referrals.

We are expected to make neither a surplus nor a loss, so intelligence on business volumes is a critical element of our business planning, and we must ensure full cost-recovery. We want to keep costs low so as to provide good value for money to ensure a low cost for our fee paying customers.

Accountability of financial management to the Board will be through the Finance and Performance and the Audit and Risk committees. The DBS will also work closely with the National Audit Office (NAO) to allow them full and effective scrutiny of all aspects of financial management and control, which may also be through regular audits, further supported by an internal audit programme.

In accordance with its statutory requirements under the Protection of Freedoms Act, the DBS will for each financial year produce an Annual Report and Accounts.

Our forecast certificate application volumes for 1 December 2012 to 31 March 2013 are 1.3 million, of which approximately 78% is expected to be from paying customers. The DBS Board has approved the budget for 2012-13, with no fee increase.

Budget 2012-13

	£'m
Income	(44.5)
DBS costs	12.5
Capita costs	20.6 (direct costs)
Police	9.3
Total	(2.1)

The DBS publishes a full set of accounts in its Annual Report and Accounts for each financial year.²



Corporate Governance

Accountability

The Minister for Criminal Information will account for DBS business in Parliament. The Minister has power of direction over the DBS and will discharge this via an annual letter of direction. In the event of substantial changes in policy or the operating environment of the DBS, this power can be used in-year.

Our clear governance structure is a pre-requisite to ensure that we undertake our statutory functions effectively and appropriately. The Board is responsible for strategic leadership of the organisation and comprises a Chair and appointed members.

The Board has collective responsibility for the proper conduct of DBS affairs. This role can be summarised as direction, monitoring and control, assurance and propriety. The Board also has responsibility for the functions of the DBS, and in particular takes full and ultimate responsibilities for barring decisions.

As an NDPB the DBS has accountability to Parliament and ministers, facilitated through the sponsorship by the Home Office. This is led through the responsibilities of the Chief Executive as the DBS Accounting Officer whose duties are set out in the DBS Framework Document.

In particular, the Chief Executive is personally responsible for safeguarding the public funds for which she has charge; for ensuring propriety and regularity in the handling of those public funds; and for the day-to-day operations and management of the DBS. In addition, the Chief Executive ensures that the DBS adheres to the standards, in terms of governance, decision-making and financial management set out in Treasury's 'Managing Public Money' guidance.

Business Integrity

Risk management and continuity planning

The DBS has a robust Risk Management Framework. Our major corporate risks, owned by members of the SMT are regularly reviewed and refined by the collective SMT and Board. Reports on Risk Management, Information Assurance, Fraud and Business Continuity Planning are regularly considered by the Audit and Risk committee. Lower level risks are identified at functional level and are recorded, reviewed and updated at monthly management meetings.



Business Integrity

These arrangements are compliant with Level 4 of the Home Office's Risk Management Maturity Model. We recognise a need to embed new and common arrangements so as to underpin continuing effective risk management.

Business Continuity Plans are in place for both sites and have previously been tested by the legacy organisations. Revised Incident Management arrangements were implemented for the 1 December to ensure any disruptions to the business, irrespective of location, could be managed in line with the new organisational governance structure. Over the next twelve months a DBS continuity plan will be developed to underpin the new system that will be delivered by TCS.

Information security and management

Our business centres on using and managing sensitive information. Therefore, our approach to information security is of prime importance. Information management is directed and overseen by our Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO).

Managing and using information correctly, protecting it appropriately and making it appropriately available to stakeholders and the public will enable the DBS to fulfil its objectives and protect its reputation.

We have full regard to appropriate government standards and guidance, and in particular the Cabinet Office Information Assurance Maturity Model. We adhere to the Principles of Data Protection, set out in the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) which has particular regard to DPA Principles of Information Management. These require the management of information as a corporate asset, improving the quality and value of our information, thus preventing unauthorised disclosure and destruction. All corporate information is treated as a shared business resource, with access limited only when necessary.

The SIRO is a member of the SMT and Board, with responsibility for ensuring that information risks are managed appropriately, balancing this with the requirement to make public data open and re-usable.

The SIRO, acting on behalf of the Chief Executive, is accountable to the Home Office SIRO and is required to submit an annual report providing an assessment of information risks in the DBS.

Transparency

The DBS is committed to releasing information, enabling members of the public to hold public bodies to account and to make assessments on performance. The DBS Board will actively release Board agenda, minutes and Board papers, where appropriate. Details of expenses claimed by all Board members and members of the SMT will be published quarterly, in addition to details of senior pay and all items of expenditure over £25K.

DBS data is made available, free of charge, on the DBS website and is regularly reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of the public. The DBS also fully adheres to its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

Glossary

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DfE	Department for Education
DH	Department of Health
DPA	Data Protection Act 1998
HR	Human Resources
ISA	Independent Safeguarding Authority
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
NAO	National Audit Office
NDPB	Non-Departmental Public Body
PCS	Public and Commercial Services Union
PSS	Public Service Standards
SIRO	Senior Information Risk Owner
SMT	Senior Management Team
TCS	Tata Consultancy Services

Contacts

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Further published documents for the DBS can be found at:
www.gov.uk/dbs



Reviews of disclosure and barring

Following the general election in May 2010, the government published 'The Coalition: our programme for government', which committed to review the criminal records and barring regime.

The government made clear its intention to scale the planned scheme back to common sense levels. It appointed Mrs Sunita Mason, the Home Office Advisor for Criminality Information Management, to lead the review of the criminal records regime. A separate review of the then vetting and barring scheme was carried out.

The reviews reported in February 2011 making a series of recommendations, many of which have been implemented through the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (the Act). The Act reduces bureaucratic requirements for a central registration scheme, amends the scope for regulated activity to which barring applies, and strengthens the criteria for disclosure of local police information.

Specifically, the measures contained within the Act:

- Establish the DBS as a single body, taking over the previous work of the CRB and the ISA;
- Reduce the number of positions to which barring applies from 9.3m to around 5m — focusing on those working most closely and regularly with vulnerable groups;
- End the requirement for those working or volunteering with vulnerable groups to register and be continuously monitored;
- Reduce the need for an individual to make repeat applications for a DBS (criminal records) certificate. The DBS will introduce an 'Update Service' in spring 2013 which will allow an individual to permit employers and other recruiters to check DBS certificate information, to establish whether the existing certificate contains the most up-to-date information;
- Allow employers to use an online tracking service which will advise of the date of issue of a certificate and whether a certificate was issued;
- Enable the DBS to issue certificates to the applicant only, allowing an applicant to challenge any inaccurate or disputed information before it is seen by an employer;
- Strengthen the test for disclosure of local police information, so that the chief officer disclosing the information must reasonably believe it to be relevant to the post applied for;
- Introduce an independent element to the review process where disclosure of information is disputed or challenged;
- Reduce the overall scope of regulated activity – that is, work to which barring applies;
- Amend the definition of 'regulated activity' with children to remove some supervised activities with children. This is particularly important to encourage volunteers, allowing schools and other organisations to provide supervision to volunteers without checking barred status. All activities removed from the definition will still be eligible for an Enhanced criminal records certificate;
- Repeal the unnecessary category of 'controlled activity' altogether.



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