



Disclosure &
Barring Service

DBS News

MET Police update
Working together to reduce backlogs

01

Release 1 (R1)
New plan, new dates

02

Improving Customer Service
Delivering excellence

03

Web guidance
Better content – anytime, anywhere

04

Making the most of the update service

05

DBS checks and right to work checks

06

by **Ian Johnston**

Director for Operations (Disclosure)

MET Police update

Working together to reduce backlogs

DBS is working with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to reduce a backlog of applications causing delays for customers – mainly in the London area. Director for Operations (Disclosure) Ian Johnston explains what steps DBS is taking to address this

Many applicants are experiencing delays if their background has to be checked by MPS. We recognise that delays in issuing certificates can lead to real difficulties for customers, so we're helping MPS work towards their recovery plan to increase staff and process all applications within the shortest time possible.

We continue to be open and transparent with our network of registered bodies and the public about the delays within MPS, and continue to provide updates on the situation via our website. Currently some applicants have to wait around 130 days. Although this is an operational matter for MPS to resolve, we are working closely, at a senior level, to help them deliver on their recovery plan

We understand the impact for customers and this issue is a main priority for DBS.

and achieve their target turnaround times as quickly as possible.

We've taken a number of steps to support MPS in their recovery, including offering our own staff to support training, as well as initiating and monitoring a Gold Control Group – which provides consistent focus.

As part of that work, we've also

encouraged MPS to carry out peer reviews with high-performing forces and have helped them plan for additional shifts and weekend working to reduce their backlog.

We understand the impact for customers and this issue is a main priority for DBS. We're

working very closely with MPS to help them improve

performance and support their recovery.

Nationally, DBS process more than four million disclosure applications a year – with around 95% of these being returned to customers within eight weeks. The vast majority of applicants do receive their certificates in a timely manner.

You can track the progress of DBS applications using [online tracking](#).



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by **Peter Evans**,
R1 Delivery Manager



Release 1 (R1)

New plan,
new dates

Release 1 (R1)

New plan, new dates

If you work closely with DBS, whether you're part of a registered body, local police force, keeper of register or supervisory authority, you're likely to have heard us talk about Release 1 (R1). Peter Evans, R1 Delivery Manager, explains the changes the project will bring

Delivered in collaboration with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), R1 is a service modernisation project that will help us adapt to meet customer needs and a step on the way for us to become fully digital. Through R1, we'll:

- bring together our internal systems, replace some of our paper-based processes and introduce new products and services online
- improve accessibility by offering our customers alternative application and referral routes
- work on a digital system, which will give us better matching capabilities and lead to faster turnaround times

We'll be launching the R1 service improvement over 3 phases, starting with the barring elements in September 2016, followed by disclosure in November 2016. The final stage is the transition of Basics checks from Disclosure Scotland to DBS in January 2017. This will be a new DBS product, which will allow individuals, employers, and responsible organisations from England and Wales to apply for a basic disclosure online.

R1 will help us to work more effectively, using the digital channels our customers and stakeholders prefer. The programme is a major milestone in our mission to be a government's centre of excellence for suitability information

We'll be getting in touch with you in the near future to tell you exactly how R1 will affect you and how you can get the most out of our improved products and services.

“Our new online referral form will be an easy way to share information quickly and securely, helping us to be more efficient and improve turnaround times.”

Dawn Wayman, Head of Transition (Barring)

R1 Service improvement over 3 phases: barring elements in September 2016, followed by disclosure by November 2016. The final stage is the transition of Basic checks from Disclosure Scotland to DBS in January 2017

Meet our partner

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is DBS's delivery partner for the R1 project. Sharon Wagner, R1 Programme Director at TCS, talks about the importance of a collaborative approach on a venture of this scale



We've worked with DBS since 2013 to plan and deliver the R1 project. We believe our collaborative relationship has enabled us to better understand the challenges government organisations face when implementing a change programme of this scale, and helps to plan for mutual long-term success.

Our approach to creating this dynamic solution with DBS is built on the principles and practices of a shared commitment to deliver service excellence. Like in any successful partnership, we've been working together to share knowledge and experience to overcome the often complex nature of technical implementation, remaining committed to trust and achieving the best results.

by **Suzanne Gordon**,
Head of Customer Services & Investigations



**Improving
Customer
Service**
Delivering
excellence

Improving Customer Service Delivering excellence

Our Head of Customer Service & Investigations, Suzanne Gordon, was invited to speak and share best practice at the fourth annual Complaints Handling in Local Government Conference in January. Suzanne tells us more

Over the last couple of years DBS has been on an exciting journey towards Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation, which has always been high on the agenda – one of our corporate objectives is, after all, “delivering excellent customer service”. As a relatively new organisation (the Criminal Records Bureau and the Independent Safeguarding Authority came together in 2012 to form DBS), we had a lot of work to do – in some ways starting from scratch – to get us to where we wanted to be, quickly.

Much of this was about having the right processes in place across operational and support areas of the organisation. But a large part was also about reaching out to gain customer insight and then building a culture that embraces service delivery and puts the customer first. We’ve done a huge amount of work in building and embedding this, from engaging with our staff to define our values, to dedicating time to celebrate National Customer Service Week, and recognising the great work we do for customers through our very

own Pride of DBS Awards.

We’ve been really fortunate to work alongside the Institute of Customer Service, who has put us in touch with many high performing organisations across the UK - from British Gas right through to local housing associations – from whom we’ve learnt so much.

So, in January, DBS’s Independent Complaints Reviewer, Gillian Fleming and I were delighted to talk to a number of local government representatives about what we’ve learnt on this journey and share the best practice we’ve developed over time. And we’ve also picked up some great ideas that will help us go even further.

If you’d like to find out more about DBS’s approach to CSE or complaints handling, please email customerexperienceteam@dbgs.gsi.gov.uk

“It was great to meet people from different organisations and different sectors and have the opportunity to share what we’ve done at DBS to improve complaints handling, as well as hearing best practice from other organisations.”

Gillian Fleming, DBS’s Independent Complaints Reviewer

DBS Customer Satisfaction Survey, April 2016

Last year, we ran our first Customer Satisfaction Survey, in association with Ipsos MORI. Over the last 12 months, we’ve used your feedback to improve our service and make your customer journey with us even better. For example, we’ve:

- improved our communications strategy to be more transparent about our work with forces
- made our barring letters user-friendly by simplifying the legal language
- introduced an investigation team to help customers who need support with DBS checks that have been in progress for some time
- reviewed and made changes to our recruitment and coaching of customer service staff
- adopted new training for customer-facing teams, and made changes to our technical services, to improve your experience

This is a great starting point, but we want to do better, so we’ll be coming to you in April for the second wave of the survey. We really value your feedback about our service – and we do act on what you tell us.

Taking the time to share your views is really worthwhile, so if you’re one of the randomly selected customers in April, please do take 10 minutes to tell us about your experience.

If you’d like to find out more or have any questions, please email customerexperienceteam@dbgs.gsi.gov.uk

By **Amanda McMahon**,
Digital Content Manager



Web guidance

Better content –
anytime,
anywhere

Web guidance

Better content – anytime, anywhere

We've been doing a lot of work recently to make sure GOV.UK content is continually improved to meet your needs. Our Digital Content Manager Amanda McMahon explains

You may have noticed that our web guidance is gradually being converted from PDFs to web pages. This is part of a wider initiative across government to make our content easier to read across different devices. So, whether you're using a smart-phone or a desktop computer, you'll be able to access our content in an easily digestible, standard format, without having to download PDF documents. Converting content to web pages will also help search engines find the type of content you are looking for, which means you'll get the information you're looking for quicker.

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As well as changing the format of the content, we are also improving our site layout. You can now find all DBS check and barring referral guidance from the one link on the [homepage](#):

- [guidance about DBS checks](#)
- [guidance about barring referrals](#)

The guidance has been separated by topic and user type to make it clearer and more relevant to your needs.

Have your say

Each GOV.UK web page has a link at the bottom called 'Is there anything wrong with this page?' You can use this feature to provide feedback anonymously about GOV.UK content. We'll use your suggestions to continue our web improvement work.

Making a barring referral

We receive a high volume of barring referrals without appropriate documentation or evidence in relation to the allegations made. Ruth Williamson, Barring Team Leader, explains why it's important to make sure you provide the right information promptly



DBS relies on information received from referring organisations and third parties. Without this, we may not have sufficient evidence to make a barring decision.

When we receive a barring referral without all the information we need to progress the case, we have to write to the referring party to request the relevant documents. This process can take a long time and has a big impact on the

turnaround times for making a barring decision - potentially putting vulnerable people at risk.

If you're making a barring referral, please make sure you're familiar with our [form and guidance](#), which contain all the documentation that you're **legally required** to provide.

If you have any questions, please call our helpline on 01325 953795 and we'll guide you through the process.

By **Linda Hackett**,
Policy Advisor



Making the most of the update service

Making the most of the update service

Registered bodies (RBs) have a part to play in making sure individuals and employers are able to use the [update service](#) to its full potential. Linda Hackett, Policy Advisor, talks about RBs duties and responsibilities

All RBs must comply with the [code of practice](#) by only submitting eligible applications to DBS. Section X of the DBS application form determines what workforce and level of check the applicant is eligible for, in accordance with the role they're applying for. We are unable to amend

application forms that have an inappropriate level of check or incorrect requests for barred list information. This section must be completed on all application forms, and it's the RBs responsibility to get it right - not the applicant's.

Remember, even if the applicant gives consent to make a status check, it's not the applicant's decision to "allow" the employer to make a status check on the update service, if the level of check that is eligible for the role is different from the level of checks requested on the original certificate.

"The update service is proving to be extremely useful for temporary workers who move between employers and agencies. On the whole we've found the various DBS guidance documents and information to be very helpful and anything that can be done to enhance the information available will be of a huge benefit to both applicants and employers, especially in relation to applicants who have joint child and adult workforce certificates."

Lorraine Laryea, on behalf of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation

Update service guidance

Making it easier for you to keep your status in check

We know from your feedback that certain elements of the update service guidance can be complex, especially where applicants have joint child and adult workforce certificates. We've been working on this to clarify some of the information and make it easier for you to refer to. This will also help you to explain to potential employees why you may not be able to make a status request on the update service, even when they've given you consent to do so.

We've recently reviewed the update service guidance for employers, to clarify where and why you can use the update service to check certificate information. Some of the changes we've made include:

- examples that show how you can use the update service more effectively

- changes to the format [from PDF to web page](#), to make it easier for you to read it on a variety of devices
- changes to the applicant guidance, to clarify what information is shown to those who make a status check

We understand that it can be difficult to read through legislation, so we're also developing a flow chart to help you with this, which will be launched soon.

Do take some time to read our [new guidance](#), and if you think there's anything else we can improve, please let us know. You can use the link at the bottom of each of our web pages to provide feedback anonymously about any GOV.UK content, including guidance.

By **Helen Chandler**,
Acting Head of Policy Development



DBS checks
and right to
work checks

DBS checks and right to work checks

Home Office Immigration Enforcement recently undertook an operation to investigate illegal working across the care sector. Helen Chandler, Acting Head of Policy Development at DBS, explains the findings and why it's important for registered bodies (RBs) to carry out 'right to work' checks

The investigation uncovered evidence that some employers had accepted fraudulent documents for 'right to work' checks. These fraudulent documents were subsequently used to obtain DBS checks. This raises safeguarding issues and should act as a reminder to RBs to be vigilant.

As employers, we all have a duty to prevent illegal working in the UK. By conducting effective document checks, we can make it harder for people who are in the UK unlawfully and attempting to work illegally. This also allows us to have greater confidence on the identity of people applying for work.

'Right to work' checks

To carry out a ['right to work' check](#), you must only accept a document listed in the 'right to work' guidance. You must do this before you employ a person, to make sure they're legally allowed to do the work in question. You need to carry out a follow-up check on people who have

time-limited permission to work in the UK.

GOV.UK have set up an [online tool](#) to help you find out if a potential employee has the right to work in the UK and what documents you should check. They also have useful guidance to help you recognise [fraudulent documentation](#).

Remember, a DBS check is not an acceptable document for showing permission to work and should not be used to establish if a person has the right to do so. We've recently updated some of our guidance to make it clear that carrying out a DBS check does not confirm an individual's right to work in the UK. Every DBS check carries this message.

Preventing unlawful employment

We're working with our colleagues in Home Office Immigration Enforcement to identify what other measures we can put in place to prevent people who don't have permission to work in the UK from taking up roles that need DBS checks. We'll share this information with you as soon as it's available.

In the meantime, please continue to be vigilant when checking documents and do keep in mind the need to carry out 'right to work' checks.

By conducting effective document checks, we can make it harder for people who are in the UK unlawfully and attempting to work illegally.

Keeping safe while job searching

[SAFERjobs](#) (Safe Advice for Employment and Recruitment) is a non-profit, joint industry and law enforcement organisation set up by the Metropolitan Police in 2008. It works to raise awareness of recruitment fraud and stop criminal activities carried out by fake employers. SAFERjobs have published advice for job seekers who suspect that a request for a police check is fraudulent. You can read more about this [on their website](#) and report any suspicious recruitment activity.



By **Mike Blakemore**,
Head of RB Management



Code of practice
Changes for RBs

Code of practice

Changes for RBs

The DBS Code of Practice was updated in November 2015 and is available on our website. Mike Blakemore, Head of Registered Body (RB) Management at DBS, explains what this means for registered bodies (RBs)

If you're involved in processing DBS checks you may already know that disclosure functions are set out in Part V of the Police Act 1997. This legislation states that RBs need to follow the code of practice. The code of practice applies to all RBs, including umbrella bodies of the DBS and recipients of [update service](#) information, under section 116A of the Police Act 1997.

From March 2016, we'll be visiting RBs to carry

out compliance inspections against the code of practice. Prior to our visit, you'll need to complete a self assessment and provide evidence that your policies and procedures comply with the code of practice. DBS may take steps to suspend those who are unable to comply with their obligations as set out in the code of practice.

Following the assessment, we'll issue a report to the lead signatory, documenting both compliant and non compliant areas. We'll also agree and monitor a corrective action plan, where required, and support you in getting where you need to be.

We'll be in touch with more details soon, but if you'd like to find out more in the meantime, please email rbmanagement@dbb.gsi.gov.uk

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NCVYS Engagement

Last month, the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS) ran the #StopLookListen16 campaign on National Safeguarding day. #StopLookListen is an annual event to raise awareness of the importance of safeguarding vulnerable people. It also encourages



organisations to implement safeguarding practices. Lorraine Mulholland, Acting Director for Barring Operations, said: "DBS takes an active interest in initiatives that raise awareness of safeguarding and aspire to do even more to protect children and vulnerable adults. National Safeguarding Day is a great opportunity for organisations across the UK to put

some time aside every year to share best practice and build meaningful relationships. Equally, it's a good time for organisations to reflect on their duties and obligations, as well as reviewing safeguarding guidance or policy. Together with our partners and networks such as NCVYS, we're working relentlessly to bring safeguarding to the top of the agenda – every single day". To find out more, go to the [NCVYS website](#).

Contact

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SN4 4HF

For Disclosure issues and information.
Please Phone:

DBS helpline

03000 200 190

Welsh language line

03000 200 191

Minicom

03000 200 192

Email

customerservices@
dbb.gsi.gov.uk

Website

www.gov.uk/dbb

[Use our online tracking service](#) to check the progress of DBS applications.

Don't miss out on our latest updates

Register for email alerts by joining our [mailing list](#).

Keep your registration details up-to-date

If you are a registered body, you need to keep your details updated. Take a look at our [employer's guide](#) for more information.