

Title	Minutes of the Board Meeting
Description	Minutes of the Board Meeting held 6 February 2025
Paper owner	Heather Baily
Paper author	Nicola Podd
Meeting date	20 March 2025

The Board is invited to approve these minutes.

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For completion by the author:

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Yes

If yes, please provide the reason for non-disclosure and exemption that applies:

Agenda item 4 – paras 4.3-4.9 FOI exemption applies – s36 – Information would prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.

Agenda item 8 – paras 8.1-8.5 FOI exemption applies – s22 – Information is intended for future publication.

Minutes of the Board Meeting on 6 February 2025

Date: 6 February 2025
Time: 11:00 – 16:00
Location: 10 South Colonnade, London
Chair: Heather Baily

Attendees:

Caroline Corby, NED Board member
Simon James, NED Board member
Paul Glibbery, NED Board member
Olivia Halfacre, Board Apprentice

Michelle Russell, Chief Executive and Board member
Paul Fullwood, Director of Inspections and Enforcement and Board member
Fiona Wilson, Interim Director of Corporate Services and Board member
Tim Archer, Director of Licensing and Standards and Board member
Phil Urquhart, Chief Digital and Data Officer and Board member

Nicola Podd, Head of Strategy & Governance and Chief of Staff
Preeya Sahni, Head of Legal Services & Policy
[REDACTED] Strategy and Planning Manager and Interim Governance Manager
[REDACTED] Executive Assistant (secretariat)

[REDACTED] Principal Legal Advisor (item 5)
Yasin Patel, Head of Finance and Procurement (items 4, item 7)
[REDACTED] Senior Policy Advisor (item 6)
Francesca Green, Head of Corporate Information (item 8)
[REDACTED] Senior Data Analyst (item 8)
Andrea Noble, Digital Transformation Lead (item 9)
Laura Johnson, Head of Estates and Project Executive (item 9)

Staff observers:

[REDACTED] Principal Legal Advisor
Olivia Halfacre, Board Apprentice

External observers:

Shehla Husain, Deputy Director and Head of Public Protection, Home Office
Hannah McCarthy, Head of Safeguarding Sponsorship, Home Office (deputising for Jodie Gibson, Head of Home Office Sponsorship Unit)

Apologies:

Jodie Gibson, Head of Home Office Sponsorship Unit
Duncan Worsell, NED Board member
[REDACTED] Principal Policy Advisor
Francesca Green, Head of Corporate Information
Niall Donnelly, Head of Safeguarding Sponsorship, Home Office

1. Welcome and apologies for absence, declarations of interest, minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising.

Welcome and apologies.

- 1.1 The meeting was held face to face.
- 1.2 There were apologies from Jodie Gibson, (Head of Home Office Sponsorship Unit) Duncan Worsell, (non-executive Board member), and Niall Donnelly, (Head of Safeguarding Sponsorship, Home Office)
- 1.3 The meeting was quorate.
- 1.4 The Chair welcomed Shehla Husain, Deputy Director and Head of Public Protection, Home office, Hannah McCarthy, Home Office Sponsorship Unit (deputising for the Head of Home Office Sponsorship Unit) as external observers.
- 1.5 The Chair welcomed Phil Urquhart, the new Chief Digital & Data Officer and Rachel Eyre, the new Principal Legal Advisor, as a staff observer.
- 1.6 The Chair welcomed Olivia Halfacre, the new Board apprentice.

Declarations of interest

- 1.7 There were no declarations of interest made.

Minutes of previous meeting

- 1.8 The November 2025 Board minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising.

- 1.9 Action: Nov-23-05, Feb-24-05 and Oct-24-01 The Chair noted the closing of this action item and referred to Action: NOV. 24.02 KPI refresh. The Director of Inspection and Enforcement updated the Board that further work was needed with Corporate Information and Inspection and Enforcement over the longer term proposals for new KPIs. The Chair proposed that the Board Strategy Day in September would be an appropriate time to explore in greater depth the refreshed KPIs for this area of work, as part of the discussions for the new strategic plan. To remain open.

- 1.10 Action Nov- 24-02. The Director of Licensing and Standards confirmed that a SIA Buyers Special Interest Group and a Buyers Charter are included as deliverables in next year's business plan. The Chair agreed to close this action.
- 1.11 Action Nov-24-02. Filling the resourcing gaps for the lead Programme Manager confirmed a priority for the new Chief Digital and Data Officer. Propose closure of this action.
- 1.12 Home Office Action Feb-24-03: There is no further update from the Home Office on the decisions and outcomes of the "Simon Bailey" Review or the outcome of the associated officials advice to Ministers. On the HMRC gateway asked for, the Deputy Director and Head of Public Protection, Home Office reported that the matter now rests with HMRC, pending approval from [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Action to remain open.
- 1.13 Home Office Action Oct-15-08, Jul-22-01 and Jul-22-02: A meeting took place 13 November 2024 with SIA and Home Office officials who were technical experts on RIPA. Update included as agenda item. To remain open.

2. Chair's report.

- 2.1 The Chair presented her paper.
- 2.2 The Chair took the opportunity to explain the purpose of the board strategy sessions to both the new apprentice and the new Chief Digital & Data Officer. An overview was provided regarding the board strategy session held in November 2024:
- The Chair informed the board members this strategy session was to update board members and offer oversight on the developments related to the proposals on Martyn's Law. The Chair informed the board members the Chief Executive Officer had presented her proposed plans for regulator set up, outlining the steps for four SIA personnel to begin the preparatory work required over the coming months, working closely with the Home Office team.
- 2.3 The Chair provided an update on the recruitment for Board membership - Non-Executive Directors. The recruitment interviews had taken place and Ministerial decisions awaiting.
- 2.4 The Chair provided an update to the board members regarding her external engagements since the last meeting. She confirmed that these experiences had offered valuable insights. She noted the benefits of herself and senior

personnel engaging directly with industry professionals, who shared their experiences and perspectives on private security with her.

Some of the engagements mentioned in her update were:

- The Fraud Summit hosted by Ofqual. The summit discussed the issue of malpractice and fraud in training. Other regulatory bodies in attendance were equally keen to see standards of training raised.
- The industry led roundtable discussing what better collaboration between policing and the private security might look like
- International Professional Security Association (IPSA) members event where the Chair presented a number of awards to individual officers.
- Annual Home Office Conference for ALBs (with the Chief Executive and other senior staff)

3. Chief Executive Report

- 3.1 The Chief Executive presented her report. She informed the board members that the third quarter of the year had been a particularly busy operational period. She noted the new record high of 499,700 live licences on the register, held by 444,900 individuals. It was also dominated by business planning and dealing with additional commissions from central government around spending review preparation. She thanked the staff for their dedication and hard work.
- 3.2 The Chief Executive updated the board members regarding the status of the Public Bodies Review report. She confirmed that while a specific publication date was awaited, Home Office officials had indicated it was imminent. The Chief Executive confirmed that she asked the Home Office team to ensure there was advance warning so that the SIA could see the Minister's intended public response and communicate the key points to SIA staff prior to external publication.
- 3.3 The Chief Executive noted the increasingly challenging fiscal context and provided a general update on finance performance this year, noting a full item was due later on the agenda.
- 3.4 Since the writing of the Q3 paper the Chief Executive explained that the financial risk had increased further based on commissions from the Home Office on the spending review. She updated the Board on the latest spending

review commission in terms of expenditure reductions and raised her concerns about the impact of this if it materialised. This may result in the SIA needing to make some difficult decisions about what operational and other activities to stop or reduce.

- 3.5 As a result she drew the Board's attention to the executive's proposal to raise a new risk around the impact of the spending review as a separate stand alone finance risk and confirmed this had been discussed at ARAC.
- 3.6 The Chair asked the board members to endorse the proposed course of action (the exact wording to be agreed by the Chief Executive) which they did.
- 3.7 A NED raised concerns to the Home Office representative regarding the short notice deadline for the turn around of such an important commission. They questioned why such important work was being rushed. The Home Office official acknowledged the situation and confirmed that there had been unsuccessful pushback regarding the timeline centrally.
- 3.8 The Chief Executive updated the board members on a number of internal senior staffing changes. The new Chief Data and Digital Officer joined a few weeks ago in January 2025. The recruitment process for the new Chief Operating Officer to lead the corporate services functions has been completed. The successful candidate has accepted the position and is currently undergoing clearances, with an expected start date of mid/late April 2025. Pete Easterbrook would be covering temporarily the Director of Inspections and Enforcement core role whilst Paul Fullwood worked on Martyn's Law preparatory work full time over coming months.
- 3.9 The Chief Executive informed the board members an application for further Investigatory Powers regarding telecommunication had been submitted to the Home Office. This will be laid with Parliament, where it will be debated in both Houses, and where necessity of the proposal was expected to be closely scrutinised.
- 3.10 The preparatory work by Home Office consultants on the blueprint and design of the Martyn's Law functions is progressing well. The work includes stakeholder engagement, and various work streams. The date for completion of the KPMG blueprint work is end of March.
- 3.11 The Chief Executive informed the board member she has completed the SIA door supervision license qualification. She confirmed she had completed it in

preparation for the strategic review to be conducted later this year. She reflected back her observations on course content and how she had already used the experience to challenge incorrect perceptions in the industry.

3.12 The Chair thanked the Chief Executive, Head of Finance, the Head of Strategy and Governance, and their teams for their efforts and extended hours spent finalising the business plans and financial budgets, highlighting the significance of this work.

4. Business Plan and Budget 2025/2026

- 4.1 The Head of Strategy and Governance updated the Board on the proposed key deliverables in the emerging Business Plan for 2025/26.
- 4.2 She also informed the Board that a lessons learned review would be conducted at the end of the process to identify areas for improvement for next year.
- 4.3 It was noted that the 2025/26 business plan consolidates the existing three-year strategy. Efforts have been made to prioritise key objectives while safeguarding essential initiatives, including preparations for Martyn's Law.
- 4.4 Non-Executive Board members raised questions regarding specific deliverables, particularly the Licence Checker Project. A Non-Executive Director (NED) stressed the importance of timely progress and referred to previous difficulties. The Chief Data and Digital Officer confirmed that he had been made aware this was one of his top priorities to progress although it was still subject to adequate capital funding being made available.
- 4.5 A NED expressed disappointment that a digital solution for licence checking verification had not yet been implemented, describing the current method as outdated and inadequate.
- 4.6 The Chief Data and Digital Officer acknowledged the concern and explained that while some existing technology could be leveraged, full implementation of a licence checker capability remained dependent on completing other key projects in the digital and data programme.
- 4.7 A NED asked that the licence checker work should be considered a key deliverable in the plan. The Chair suggested conducting a new business impact assessment to evaluate its necessity and feasibility.

- [REDACTED]
- 4.10 The Director of Inspections and Enforcement supported the decision to prioritise licence checker, stating that improved technology would enhance efficiency and effectiveness for field workers.
- 4.11 The Chief Executive advised that the overall capital submission bid by the SIA needed to fulfil the SIA's overall objectives was around £7 million. She understood the total funding pot available within the Home Office across all ALBs amounts to c£16 million. As a result, securing full funding for all SIA proposed projects is unlikely.
- 4.12 The Home Office representative agreed to convey the Board's view that the funding should be made available to support the licence checker work which was an essential tool for the organisation to deliver its statutory licensing duties.
- 4.13 On KPIs, the Head of Strategy and Governance explained that KPI 1(a) had been adjusted to increase its measurement scope, and a refreshed additional measure was still being worked on.
- 4.14 The Director of Inspections and Enforcement noted the increase in reports, particularly due to labour exploitation concern, which require enhanced monitoring for public safety.
- 4.15 A NED questioned the impact of this work and asked whether a more in-depth session on cost-benefit analysis could be arranged to ensure financial efficiency as well as effectiveness. The Director of Inspections and Enforcement confirmed the SIA was not proactively increasing its workload but rather responding to a rise in intelligence and demand.
- 4.16 The Chair concluded the discussion, stating that by 20 March, there must be agreement on the KPIs for 2025/2026. However, a comprehensive review of the organisation's KPIs and requirements will be conducted in the autumn as part of strategic business planning

Emerging budget position for 2025/26

- 4.17 The Head of Finance presented the emerging 2025/26 budget, highlighting its impact on the three-year financial plan. He reminded Board that this year was the final year and a deficit year, requiring surplus funds from earlier years to balance even and for the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer to meet her duties under managing public money guidelines.
- 4.18 The Board reviewed RDEL expenditure. Although a deficit year was expected in 25/26 due to it being year 3 (lower year) of the three-year cycle, the position was worsened as a result of not receiving the full capital funding ask in 24/25 – this meant that the efficiencies initially planned to be delivered in 25/26 have been delayed. What started as .£2.5m gap had reduced through further scrutiny to c.£1m including through capping headcount and Travel and subsistence budgets. The consequences of the budget pressure was various items had moved to a reserve list including legal costs and the long awaited work on a new Target Operating Model review.
- 4.19 The Board was also updated on the executive's proposal to adopt a new forecasting model, which had been presented to and scrutinised by ARAC. This was the Bayesian Non-Linear Model for income forecasting.
- 4.20 **Decision:** The Board confirmed agreement with the assumptions and key decisions set out in the paper underpinning the 25/26 budget figures enabling the executive to take the necessary next steps to finalise the 25/26 budget for the next meeting.

ACTION FEB-25-01: Head of Safeguarding Sponsorship, Home Office to follow up on the assurance for the forecasting model by facilitating a meeting between the HOAI and the SIA's Corporate Information Team.

5. Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) Guidance on Inhouse Lawyers

- 5.1 The Head of Legal Services and Principal Legal Advisor delivered a presentation detailing the recent guidance issued by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) concerning in-house legal teams.
- 5.2 Key Takeaways:
- The SIA's Legal Team must abide by and continue to uphold the SRA Principles.

- The SIA's role is vital in recognising the importance of in-house legal teams in promoting ethical governance and effective risk management.
- The SIA shall also focus on developing systems and processes that enable the in-house legal team to fulfil their obligations to deliver independent and impartial advice, avoid conflicts of interest, and act in the best interests of their clients.

5.3 It was noted that next steps are for the Legal Team to

- review various processes, systems, and policies to ensure compliance with SRA guidance
- conduct a review to identify areas for improvement
- report back on progress and present the key findings to the Board at the meeting in May.

6. Proposal to include SIA as a prescribed body for whistleblowing under PIDA.

6.1 The Senior Policy Advisor joined the meeting to present an overview of the whistleblowing protections provided by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) and the proposal for the SIA to seek to become a recognised body for whistleblowing in the private security industry.

6.2 The Senior Policy advisor explained the background of PIDA, the process for obtaining its protections, and the potential benefits of adopting this legislation for the SIA. Board members engaged in a discussion regarding the advantages and implications for current resources.

6.3 The Senior Policy Advisor assured the Board that becoming a recognised PIDA body able to receive and act on qualifying disclosures would require only minor adjustments to existing systems and would have minimal impact on resources.

Decision: The Board supported the executive's proposal to seek a change in secondary legislation to include the SIA in the statutory list of bodies prescribed under PIDA

ACTION FEB-25-02: Director of Inspections and Enforcement to feedback to the Home Office MLR Team the SIA's view that PIDA status should also apply for the SIA's future new functions as Martyn's Law regulator, not just PSIA duties.

7. Q3 Finance report 2024/25

7.1 The Head of Finance presented a high-level summary of the Q3 Finance Report for the 2024/25 fiscal year.

8. Performance and KPIs

8.1 The Senior Data Analyst joined the meeting and presented the Q3 KPI Dashboard and performance metrics for the period, noting all but one were green. The one red result was the efficiencies target.

8.2 The Strategy & Planning Manager updated the board on the performance against the Q3 2024/25 Business Plan key deliverables. In relation to 16 key deliverables: 10 are on track to be delivered by 31 March, one was behind, two were unrecoverable and 3 were already complete. The Strategy and Planning Manager emphasised that any stagnant movement was due to external factors beyond the control of the relevant directorates. She highlighted organisational CRM digital and data work was completed within budget and within the prescribed time. In October, refreshed top-up qualifications were made available, which include additional content required on safety-critical issues, including spiking awareness and counter-terrorism training.

8.3 The Manchester Arena Inquiry Chapter 2 recommendation had been implemented. This was to work with the Health and Safety Executive to develop a new security-specific emergency first aid at work syllabus - this had been launched in October 2024 on time.

9. Standing Data and Digital Programme 2024/25 Q3 Report

9.1 The Head of Estates/ interim Programme Manager) and Digital Transformation Lead joined the meeting and provided a high level update. Key highlights included:

- Organisation CRM Completed Upgrade to Microsoft Dynamics 365
- Organisation Portal Ongoing User journey requirements finalised.
- Common Data Platform Ongoing: Delivery pushed to March; with phase two proposed for 2026/27.
- HMPO Ongoing API changes were scheduled to go live that week.
- Disaster Recovery had been completed: Testing showed stability, but a further review with Version 1 was planned.

- 9.2 A NED reported on the discussions at ARAC and the GIAA IT audit risks flagged. AI was also discussed, with a recommendation for the steering group to review capabilities for decision-making and training for staff, with a recommendation that the business makes clear guidelines on what is acceptable use.
- 9.3 The Home Office representative confirmed the existence of an AI government prototype and offered to share information about this, including contact details for further discussion.

ACTION FEB-25-03: The Head of Estates/ interim Programme Manager) was asked to include greater clarity on the business benefits of each work stream as part of the next update.

- 9.4 The Chair thanked the Data and Digital Lead for her regular updates and for the team's hard work and commitment, particularly in coordinating the Disaster Recovery exercise. Thanks, were also extended to the Head of Estate/Interim Programme Manager for stepping in as Programme Manager.

10. Licensing and Standards Forward Look Report

- 10.1 The Director of Licensing and Standards presented his paper, highlighting the work to educate industry stakeholders on the technical changes supporting the new LDN process. This was ahead of the policy changes coming in on 24 February 2025. Engagement has included webinars, communications, and e-learning, with Business Relationship Managers assisting ACS firms in preparation.
- 10.2 The Director of Licensing and Standards also updated the Board on the Security Industry Skills Board event at The Shard attended by senior security executives, and government representatives. Key outcomes included:
- Launch of the Professional's Map
 - (an Oversubscribed) Mentoring Scheme
 - Assessment centres ensuring new recruits for large intakes.
- 10.3 The Director of Licensing and Standards provided an update on the status of the Business Approval Scheme, reporting that internal workshops have shaped the design phase and guidance documents. Updated proposals will be presented to the BAS Programme Board in March.

11. Updates on progress on significant licensing related matters:

11.1 The Director of Licensing and Standards provided the board members with a summary of the various updates. The public consultation on the proposed changes to the "Get Licensed" was on track. This consultation will run for two months, and the Director of Licensing and Standards anticipates presenting the results to the Board for formal decision in July 2025.

11.2 A Non-Executive Director suggested that it may be beneficial to promote the consultation with the Prison Reform Trust and probation offices in order to ensure different perspectives were sought and a holistic view considered.

12. Inspections and Enforcement Forward Look Report

12.1 The Director of Inspections & Enforcement presented the forward look report.

12.2 The Director of Inspections & Enforcement highlighted key items of interest:

- Inspection activity carried out up to the end of the third quarter of 2024/25 has exceeded the annual targets.
- Project Evolve processes and procedures are now in place, with the second phase of reviewing job descriptions and role evaluations currently underway.
- Operation Empower, which addresses labour exploitation in the regulated private security sector, has seen collaboration between the SIA, HMRC, and HOIE. A summit was organised with senior stakeholders, where commitments were made by them to tackle labour exploitation. A subsequent summit is scheduled for March.
- Operation Benchmark; the inspection side is now housed in Inspections & Enforcement. Work has taken place with the six awarding organisations to strengthen the expectations of them. Notably, twelve training centres had closed down following malpractice investigations.
- The rollout of IPP and PIP training is underway, with the aim of all staff receiving training with a national accreditation.

13. Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee update.

13.1 The ARAC Chair reported that the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) had delivered a final report on SIA IT Security Controls, which received a limited rating. The Chief of Digital and Data is currently reviewing the recommendations outlined in the report.

13.2 A helpful lessons learned exercise over the handling of this year's Annual Report and Accounts for 2023/24 had been completed, given this year's audit was longer and more difficult than in previous years.

13.3 It was also noted that the management of knowledge transfer is important, particularly with the impending departure of the interim Director of Corporate Services from the SIA. The Director holds historical knowledge, and work is underway to ensure corporate knowledge is effectively documented and passed on.

14. Licencing and Service Delivery Team – Show and Tell

14.1 The Head of Licensing and Service Delivery provided a comprehensive presentation detailing the licensing process, covering the journey from application to final decision.

14.2 It was noted that there has been a significant increase in the number of licences, while the headcount /resourcing within the team has remained unchanged. Praise was given for the increased productivity and achievements of the team dealing with often more complex cases.

14.3 The Head of Licensing and Service Delivery highlighted that the future planned changes to licensing requirements, alongside the rise in applications, will result in increased pressure on team resources. The Head of Licensing and Service Delivery explained that the implementation of new technology and strategies to manage this, would help some of the strain.

14.4 Board members acknowledged the impressive turnaround times for licensing matters.

14.5 The Chair extended her thanks to the Head of Licensing and Service Delivery for his continued practical and pragmatic leadership. The Chair requested that this message of appreciation be conveyed to the wider team.

15. Any Other Business

15.1 There being no other business the meeting ended.

Next Meetings:

**Date of next extraordinary Business Plan and Budget Special Board Meeting:
20 March 2025**

Date of next quarterly Board meeting: 8 May 2025