



The Law Society



Legal Aid Agency

## Crime Contract Consultative Group (CCCG) Meeting Tuesday 23 September 2025 Minutes

When	Tuesday 23 September 2025
Where	Via Teams
Chair	Mark Newby
Minutes	Eloise Worrall
Present	<p>Alice Mutasa - TLS          Andrew Cosma – MMA          Anna Bevilacqua - LAA          Amy Shaw - LAA          Casey Jenkins - MKLAW          Dave Scothern - SAH          David Thomas - LAA          Elaine Annable – LAA          Emma Prise - LAA          Fadi Daoud – LCCSA          Fleur McQuade - LAA          Glyn Hardy – LAA          Harry Slade - LAA          James MacMillan –Moj          Janet Land – LAA          Jason Lartey – L&amp;C          Kate Pasfield – LAPG          Kath Burdett – LAA          Katy Hanson - WLAW          Mark Newby - TLS          Matt Doddridge – LAA          Melissa Thompson – LAA          Neil Lewis – LAA          Nick Poulter – LAA</p>
Apologies	<p>Adrian Vincent – BC          Arron Dolan – CBA</p>

<p>Avrom Sherr – IALS  Carol Storer – LAPG  Chris Minnoch - LAPG  Chandni Brown – CiEx  Daniel Bonich – CLSA  Edward Jones - LCCSA  Elliot Miller – LAA  Gerwyn Wise – GCLAW  Helen Johnson - LAPG  Henry Hills – SAHCA  Jerome Lucey – LAA  Jill Waring – LAA  Kathryn Grainger – LAA  Martin Secrett – BC  Nick Ford – LAA  Rakesh Bhasin – LAPG  Rebecca Booth – LAA  Richard Miller – TLS  Richard Owen – TLS A2J Cttee  Sean Wardale - LAA  Stuart Nolan – TLS  Tony Ayton - LAA  Will Hayden – LAA</p>
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M Newby welcomed attendees to the meeting

**1. Introductions, minutes, and actions from previous meeting.**

Minutes and actions were agreed from the last meeting.

JMc clarified that TRAM meetings are not considered formal hearings and therefore do not qualify for separate payment; they are covered under the standard Magistrates' or Crown Court fee.

AM and others expressed concern about increasing unpaid work being absorbed into existing fee schemes, questioning how much extra work is being added without additional remuneration and whether legal representation is required at these meetings.

FD and CJ highlighted that TRAM meetings involve significant preparation and follow-up, including email exchanges and case management, and that prosecution is active in these meetings, which can impact case outcomes.

AC questioned the legal obligation to attend TRAM meetings, with no clear answer provided, but noted that preparation and communication are often required even if attendance is not mandatory.

The group discussed the broader issue of the Litigators Graduated Fee Scheme (LGFS) not reflecting the increased workload from activities like TRAM meetings, body-worn video review, and other

modern requirements. There was a strong call for urgent reform and better data collection on these activities.

JMc acknowledged these concerns and stated that longer-term reform is being considered, with a consultation planned for the following year ,practitioner members appreciated the update but also emphasised that urgent progress was required .

**APSEP01 - JMc to Provide a more detailed update at the next CCG meeting on progress with the review of the Litigators' Graduated Fee Scheme (LGFS), including data collection and any proposed changes.**

### **SILAS System Rollout Discussion.**

FMc presented the new "Sign into Legal Aid Services" (SILAS) system, which replaces the previous legal aid portal for accessing LAA services.

The initial rollout integrates "Apply for Criminal Legal Aid" and "Submit a Crime Form" with enhanced security, including multi-factor authentication and improved admin controls for assigning permissions. The system aims to improve the experience for multi-firm users (e.g., barristers), with future updates planned to allow single sign-on across multiple firms and better notifications.

Most providers have activated their accounts, with 74% activation among users and over 93% of crime providers having at least one active user.

Common issues included Microsoft account "at risk" flags blocking access, CJSM email incompatibility, the need to activate accounts from within the UK, and confusion over Microsoft-branded login screens. Guidance and FAQs have been updated to address these.

Inactive office codes are currently visible to admins but will be restricted in a future update.

Support desk responsiveness and onboarding issues were raised by AM and KH, with JL and FMc noting ongoing improvements, troubleshooting guides, and the option to contact contract managers for unresolved problems.

Multi-firm user access improvements are expected within 4–6 weeks, and the team is aligning contingency removal with system readiness.

Planned outages for maintenance and data updates were announced, with specific dates and affected services detailed.

[SILAS Help and Information link](#) was shared in the Teams chat for further guidance.

**APSEP02 – JL to complete and communicate the rollout of enhanced multi-user functionality for external suppliers to access multiple firms within four to 6 weeks, ensuring alignment with the removal of contingency arrangements.**

**APSEP03 – FMc Review and amend the wording on the SILAS admin user page to accurately reflect current permissions regarding adding new users.**

**Planned System Outage Discussion.**

FMc explained there will be 2 days of outages to update provider and contract data across LAA services, including changes since the cyberattack and for new crime contracts.

On the first day, internal systems (CCLF, CCR, Matt) will be unavailable, but users can still submit applications via Apply and CCCD.

On the second day, the Silas-integrated applications (Crime Apply and Submit a Crime Form) will be unavailable for the full day while data is synced.

The team will try to minimize downtime, but users are warned it could last the full day. Services should be back after the second day, with contingency time built in for further work if needed.

NP clarified that the first day's outage affects only internal processing, not user submissions, while the second day's outage will prevent users from submitting applications.

**2. Operational update - Nick Poulter.**

Nick reported that most applications are being processed within 0 to 1 day, with only a few taking up to 3 or 4 days due to email-based submissions.

Graduated fees (HFS) are processed at around 5 days, with written reasons at 9 days, but volumes are low.

Low value litigator fee claims are processed in 2 days, which is noted as a record speed, and high value/disclaimed claims are at 3 to 4 days.

Magistrates' billing team: CRM4s are at 6 days (down from 10), aiming for under 4 days by early October; CRM5s are steady at 4 days; CRM7s are at 21 days, with a target of 10 days by mid-to-late October.

NP highlighted that the current position on litigator fees is the best it has been in a long time.

NP also mentioned that some LGFS claims are being processed the same day they arrive.

NP confirmed that most external systems, including Xerox and income evidence reminders, are now working again, with a backlog being processed over several weeks.

The main remaining system issue is with "In Fox," which links criminal legal aid applications to court records for common platform. It is operational for most cases, but not for those still on Libra, meaning rep orders cannot be issued for Libra cases unless manually requested.

HMCTS is making further changes to enable full restoration of In Fox, with remediation work planned for about 1,500 cases once the system is back.

JL addressed ongoing issues with submitting CRM6s and legacy family bills, stating that new systems for bulk uploads are expected within a couple of months, and CCMS (for certificated work) should be back by the end of the month or early next month.

JL explained that average payment schemes and escalated payments are available to help with cash flow until systems are restored.

Concerns were raised by AC and AM about delays in system restoration causing cash flow problems for providers, especially those unable to submit individual bills.

JL assured that contingency removal will be aligned with system availability, and multi-user access improvements are expected within 4 to 6 weeks

### **3. Rep body ongoing topics & Queries**

Nothing was raised under this section

### **4. AOB**

Nothing was raised under this section

End of meeting.

**The next meeting is Tuesday 18 November 2025.**

