

## **Vetting and Barring Scheme Halted**

As you will be aware through various communications over the last couple of years, the final phase of the new Vetting and Barring Scheme, being run by the Independent Safeguarding Authority was due to launch next month, on the 26th July.

Both the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats cited in their manifestos that both parties intended on scaling back the current, and proposed criminal records and Vetting and Barring regimes. It was therefore without surprise, that our new Government announced their decision to halt the final phase of the new Independent Safeguarding Authority's Vetting and Barring Scheme, due to launch next month.

### **The Official Statement**

*The Home Secretary, Theresa May stated today (15 June): "I am announcing today that the commencement of voluntary registration with the new Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, which was due to begin on 26 July, will be brought to a halt as of today.*

*The Government has made clear its intention to bring the criminal records and Vetting and Barring regimes back to common sense levels. Until this remodelling has taken place, we have decided to maintain those aspects of the new Scheme which are already in place, but not to introduce further elements.*

*The safety of children and vulnerable adults is of paramount importance to the new government. We will therefore maintain the current arrangements under which the Independent Safeguarding Authority is able to bar from "regulated activities" those considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults, and appropriate cases must be referred to them. Criminal records checks will also remain available for those eligible to receive them, and will continue to be required for certain posts where regulations are already in place.*

*However it is vital that we take a measured approach in these matters. Vulnerable groups must be properly protected in a way that is proportionate and sensible. The remodelling of the VBS will ensure this happens.*

*The terms of reference for the remodelling of the VBS and of the criminal records regime are currently being considered and a further announcement will be made in due course".*

### **Impact for DCC**

This news is of course disappointing for DCC, due to the intensive preparation work that has been invested in being ready for the launch date of the new Scheme. However, a delay to the implementation will of course allow us further time to enhance our implementation plans, improve the documentation and tools for managers and broaden the scope of our communications.

Any further ISA Information Sessions planned will not go ahead at this time until we have received the outcome of the review. If the Scheme is significantly remodelled, a host of new sessions will be run to communicate these changes.

The CRB have announced that the implementation of the new CRB Application Form will go ahead as planned on the 26th July. Therefore the training 'drop-in' sessions being offered will go ahead as scheduled. If you would like further information on these or to book a place please contact [disclose@devon.gov.uk](mailto:disclose@devon.gov.uk)

Please be advised that the CRB have announced the last date for sending in applications on the current form will be the 16th July, therefore all applications for CRB checks must reach the Records Disclosure Service by close on Monday 12th July. Applications may be submitted after this date using the new Application Form, although please be aware the CRB will not be able to process these requests until 26th July.

### **Current arrangements stand**

Whilst the Scheme is being remodelled, existing safeguarding regulations must continue to be adhered to. There is no change to the current CRB check requirements and the changes that came into effect on the 12th October 2009 remain in place. Specifically, these include our legal duty to refer information to the ISA, the introduction of the two new ISA Barred Lists, and additional positions being covered by the new regulations (Regulated Activity).

### **What will happen next**

We are hopeful that we will receive a further update from the Government within the next couple of weeks, outlining the exact scope of the review to the Scheme and the intended timescales. This information will be communicated out as soon as it is known.

As stated above, the new CRB Application Form will launch on the 26th July as originally planned and further communications will be sent directly to all CRB Authorised Officers.

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