

News story: New process for artists and sportspeople entering from Ireland

It will be free to use and mean that eligible individuals in sporting and creative industries will be able to work in the UK for up to 3 months, bringing into line their entry conditions when arriving from other destinations.

These new arrangements will allow musicians and sportspeople from countries such as Australia and America to apply for leave to enter remotely, putting an end to their requirement to apply for a visa to perform in the UK when entering through Ireland.

This change follows close work with the sector and builds on the government's already strong commitment to the creative industry. In June 2018 for example the exceptional talent visa was opened up to include leading fashion designers.

Immigration Minister Caroline Nokes said:

Our creative industries are world leading. Not only do we produce elite talent, but we also host some of the most exciting live events in the world.

Ensuring the best international talent can perform in the UK is vital for the creative industries' continued success and that is why we launched this new process, ensuring creative talent can easily arrive to perform in the UK directly from Ireland.

I look forward to continuing to work with UK Music and the wider sector so our leading live music industry can continue to thrive.

UK Music's CEO Michael Dugher said:

I am delighted to have worked, alongside our Live Music group, with the Home Office to identify a solution so that non-EU artists and their crews can still enter the UK via Ireland under a Certificate of Sponsorship.

The live music industry, which contributes around £1 billion to the economy, will put this into practice so that we can continue to attract the biggest and most talented global artists to perform at our world-leading concerts, festivals and venues.

Individuals will be required to have a Certificate of Sponsorship under the Tier 5 (Temporary worker – Creative and Sporting) route, which has been in

existence since 2008. It provides an option for those non-EEA, non-visa nationals in the sporting and creative sector to undertake short-term engagement in the UK without being required to hold a visa to enter the UK.

You can read detailed [common travel area](#) information on the process.

Press release: Timeshare claims specialists wound-up by courts

Meredith Pritchard Claims Consultants Ltd (MPCC) and First Law Solutions Ltd (FLS) were wound-up in the public interest on 22 February 2019 at the High Court (Manchester) before District Judge Obodai. The Official Receiver has been appointed liquidator of the companies.

The court heard that MPCC and FLS offered timeshare claims management services, helping clients get out of their existing timeshare contracts and pursue compensation claims against providers.

MPCC traded between October 2016 and August 2017, before FLS continued MPCC's activities, and both companies shared the same director – Stephen Paul Fairclough (59) of Chester.

While carrying out confidential enquiries, investigators found that between the two companies approximately 113 clients had typically paid either £1,950 or £5,950 dependent on the services being purchased. In return, customers expected that lawyers based abroad would be instructed on their behalf to relinquish their timeshare and in some cases seek compensation.

But investigators established that while lawyers may have been instructed in some cases, MPCC and FLS were unable to demonstrate any significant evidence of clients having their contracts relinquished or of compensation being paid.

Investigators also discovered that MPCC received income of more than £440,000 and that FLS received £110,000. Despite this, investigators were unable to identify any payments made by MPCC to overseas lawyers, while FLS only made payments to overseas lawyers totalling £13,000 during the period of the investigation.

The Insolvency Service presented petitions to the court on the grounds that both companies traded with a lack of commercial probity by failing to provide contracted services in a timely manner or at all. This included accepting payments in respect of non-viable claims, charging excessive fees, and using misleading and aggressive sales techniques.

It was also alleged that MPCC and FLS did not maintain, preserve and/or deliver up full accounting records and that they were remiss in complying

with statutory obligations to file annual accounts and confirmation statements. In the case of MPCC only, it was alleged that the director had failed to fully co-operate with the investigation.

David Hope, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Service, said:

People genuinely sought out these companies for help to get them out of difficult situations concerning their timeshares. However, many customers did not receive the services they were led to expect, despite paying over significant fees.

Securing winding-up orders through the courts will protect any more people from being duped by MPCC and FLS and the Insolvency Service will continue to protect consumers by closing down rogue companies that operate in this way.

All public enquiries concerning the affairs of the company should be made to: The Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit, 2 Floor, 3 Piccadilly Place, London Road, Manchester, M1 3BN. Email: piu.north@insolvency.gsi.gov.uk.

Meredith Pritchard Claims Consultants Ltd – company registration number 10395171 – was incorporated on 26 September 2016. The company's registered office is at 20 Nicholas Street, Chester CH1 2NX.

First Law Solutions Ltd – company registration number 9351120 – was incorporated on 11 December 2014. The company's registered office is at 20 Nicholas Street, Chester CH1 2NX.

The petitions were presented under s124A of the Insolvency Act 1986 on 12 December 2018.

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Further information about live company investigations is available [here](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Press release: Timeshare claims specialists wound-up by courts](#)

Courts have shut down two rogue timeshare claims specialists based in Chester

for failing to deliver advertised services.

[News story: 2019 Appointment of Chair to IRP](#)

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[Statement to parliament: Police pay award 2018 to 2019](#)

The government has carefully considered the Police Remuneration Review Body (PRRB) recommendations for police pay 2018 to 2019. These recommendations are not being accepted in full.

The government is announcing today that the 2018 to 2019 pay award for the police which will award police officers an increase of 2% consolidated from 1 September 2018. This also includes the recommended 2% increase in London weighting and 2% increase in Dog Handlers' Allowance.

Officers who have not reached the top of their pay band will also receive incremental progression pay worth at least 2%, depending on satisfactory performance.

The PRRB issued early recommendations on police apprentice pay ahead of their main report. The government is accepting PRRB recommendations on this issue, in that forces should appoint apprentice constables on a starting salary of between £18,000 and pay point 1, with understandings that:

- individual forces are able to choose to use a starting salary between £18,000 and pay point 1

- the pay expectations of apprentices will not be undermined by later changes to the arrangements
- the NPCC will develop further proposals for apprentice pay and career progression beyond the first year

The government is committed to world class public services and ensuring that public sector workers are fairly paid for the vitally important work that they do. It is thanks to our balanced approach to public finances – getting debt falling as a share of our economy, while investing in our vital services and keeping taxes low. We ended the 1% average pay policy in September 2017, because we recognised more flexibility is now required to deliver world class public services including in return for improvements to public sector productivity.

We value the role of the independent pay review bodies and thank them for their work in considering pay awards. In reaching a final position for 2018 to 2019 public sector pay awards, we have balanced a need to recognise the value and dedication of our hard-working public servants whilst ensuring that our public services remain affordable in the long term, to contribute to our objective of reducing public sector debt. We have also sought to ensure that pay awards are fair and consistent across public sector workforces, reflect existing pay and benefit packages, in addition to recruitment and retention levels.

It is vital that we consider all pay awards in light of wider pressures on public spending. Public sector pay needs to be fair both for public sector workers and the taxpayer. Around a quarter of all public spending is spent on pay and we need to ensure that our public services remain affordable for the future.

It is also vital that our world class public services continue modernising to meet rising demand for the incredible services they provide, which improve our lives and keep us safe.

The PRRB report has been laid before Parliament and copies are available in the Vote Office and on GOV.UK.