

News story: The Chief Inspector's report on the Home Office's approach to learning from immigration litigation has been published

It is important that the Home Office, with support from the Government Legal Department (GLD), manages litigation claims made against decisions and actions by its Borders, Immigration and Citizenship System (BICS) business areas both efficiently and effectively.

In addition to being an opportunity to acknowledge errors and provide appropriate remedies to claimants, there are the substantial costs of processing and defending cases, and of sums paid out to settle claims, or in compensation when cases are lost. There are also risks to the Home Office's reputation and functioning from poorly handled claims and adverse judgements.

Between 2004 and 2013, the number of Judicial Reviews lodged against the Home Office increased seven-fold. In 2013, the Home Office's Legal Strategy Team (LST) produced a document entitled 'Litigation – Blueprint for a Target End to End Process'. This 'Blueprint' recognised that learning "should be used to identify improvements and refine our processes, or suggest actions to other units to improve the handling of litigation.

In this inspection, my focus was the mechanisms the Home Office had put in place since 2013 to manage litigation claims, and to capture and use the learning from litigation in order to improve the way claims are handled and to reduce the number of future claims and associated costs through better ("right first time") decision making.

Litigation Operations manages the bulk of the Pre-Action Protocol letters, Judicial Reviews, and Private Law Claims that relate to BICS business areas. I found that since it was created in 2013, and particularly in the last two years, Litigation Operations had made various process improvements and, at the time of the inspection, was looking to build on these.

However, I identified room for further improvements in the processing of claims, and the need for clearer communication to original decision makers about litigation outcomes in order to avoid repeated claims citing the same issues.

In 2016-17, the relevant Legal and Compensation budgets were both significantly overspent, which raised concerns about the Home Office's ability to control its expenditure in this area. The overall budget is planned to reduce substantially in 2019-20, which will require an exceptional level of cost saving efficiencies. I found no evidence that would support such optimism.

Others, including potential claimants and the Courts, will affect the actual numbers and costs of future claims. However, the Home Office needs to make a more deliberate and determined organisational effort to learn lessons from litigation, and to apply these systematically to initial decision making, if it is to have greater influence over the financial and other consequences of such claims.

My report makes 7 recommendations. These include formalising, and possibly extending, the involvement of GLD; creating a closer and more structured working relationship between Litigation Operations and decision-making business areas; enhancing Litigation Operations' analytical capabilities, reviewing performance targets, and aligning responsibility for deciding which claims to settle or defend with budgets and financial authority.

The Home Office has accepted all of my recommendations fully or in part, in the latter case addressing the substance of concerns. I look forward to revisiting this area in due course to check on progress, and will also look in future inspections to test that lessons from litigation are reaching decision making business areas and improving initial decisions.

[News story: Improving collaboration to protect public health – MHRA and Health Inspectorate Wales sign MoU](#)

Today we have set out how we will work more effectively with HIW in a new [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\)](#). (PDF, 326KB, 11 pages)

HIW is the independent inspectorate and regulator of healthcare in Wales. They also monitor the use of the Mental Health Act 1983 and 2007, and the Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010, and protect the interests of people whose rights are restricted under this legislation.

Our working relationship helps maintain an effective regulatory system for health and care in Wales, while promoting patient safety and high quality care.

The new MoU sets out the framework to support our joint working relationship. We agree on how to share information, to carry out regulatory functions and to benefit the public.

The principles of the MoU will:

- address overlaps and gaps in the regulatory framework and responsibilities
- promote open and transparent cooperation

- respect each other's independent status
- promote the use of resources and intelligence effectively and efficiently

Notes to Editor

1. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Dr Kate Chamberlain, Chief Executive, HIW and Dr Ian Hudson, Chief Executive, MHRA.
2. MHRA is responsible for regulating all medicines and medical devices in the UK. All our work is underpinned by robust and fact-based judgments to ensure that the benefits justify any risks. MHRA is a centre of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency which also includes the [National Institute for Biological Standards and Control \(NIBSC\)](#) and the [Clinical Practice Research Datalink \(CPRD\)](#). The Agency is an executive agency of the Department of Health. www.mhra.gov.uk

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[News story: New online service could help drivers report accidents](#)

Drivers could soon be able to report accidents online, making it quicker and easier, under new proposals by the Department for Transport.

Many police forces already allow victims to report crimes online and this could be extended to crashes in a bid to modernise the service, Roads

Minister Jesse Norman will tell the National Roads Policing Conference today (30 January 2018).

The move would lessen the burden on motorists who have to report a crash in person within 24 hours, cut the need for people to take time off work and also free up police resources. People will still be able to report crashes at police stations.

Transport Minister Jesse Norman, who is today launching a consultation into the plans, will say:

Our roads are among the safest in the world, in part due to the outstanding work of traffic officers.

However, the current system is out of date; it takes up considerable amounts of time and increases queues for reporting crimes.

The ability to report accidents online will make the whole process quicker and easier for both drivers and the police.

[Collision Reporting and Sharing System animation](#)

More than 130,000 personal-injury accidents are reported to the police each year with most recorded by an officer at the scene. But around 20% of these are made at police stations. A further 55,000 damage-only crashes were also reported over the counter in 2015.

Jesse Norman will also announce an updated system for officers to record crashes, which is being developed by the Department for Transport and will be free for all police forces.

The new Collision Reporting and Sharing System (CRASH) will see officers use an app on a handheld device to fill in details of accidents at the scene with accurate locations.

This will not only make the process quicker and save police time, but highways authorities will also be able to access accurate and up to date information, meaning councils can better plan safety improvements and in a shorter time.

Chief Constable Anthony Bangham, Roads Policing Lead for the National Police Chiefs' Council said:

We always welcome ideas which enable the public to be better served. On line collision reporting will greatly benefit members of the public and also enable officers to deal more quickly with their collision reports, meaning they can spend less time on paperwork and more time on police work.

If supported in the 12-week consultation, police forces in England, Scotland and Wales will be able to adopt online reporting.

[Press release: Grading under review for First Priority Housing Association Limited](#)

The Regulator of Social Housing reports that First Priority Housing Association Limited's grading is currently under review.

The regulator notifies that First Priority Housing Association Limited has fewer than 1,000 homes and therefore does not have a current published regulatory judgement in accordance with our established procedures. The outcome of the investigation will be confirmed in a regulatory notice, once completed.

The regulator is currently investigating a matter which may impact on First Priority's compliance with the Governance and Financial Viability Standard.

The [GUR list](#) is available on the website.

1. The [regulatory framework](#) can also be found on the website.
2. The regulation of social housing is the responsibility of the Regulation Committee, a statutory committee of the Homes and Communities Agency. The organisation refers to itself as the Regulator of Social Housing in undertaking the functions of the Regulation Committee. Homes England is the trading name of the HCA's non-regulation functions.
3. The regulator's purpose is to promote a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs. It does this by undertaking robust economic regulation focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money that maintains lender confidence and protects the taxpayer. It also sets consumer standards and may take action if these standards are breached and there is a significant risk of serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants.

For more information visit the [RSH website](#).

Our [media enquiries page](#) has contact details for journalists.

For general queries to RSH, please email enquiries@rsh.gov.uk or call 0300 124 5225.

Speech: UK closing statement, OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

Madam Director

As you bring HDIM 2017 to a close we have much to reflect upon.

I fully subscribe to the statement delivered on behalf of the EU and its member states, and I will not repeat all the thanks already expressed except to applaud the hard work of your team preparing and delivering this conference.

I would like to add a couple of brief thoughts, as much as in my capacity as Chair of the OSCE Human Dimension Committee as in my national capacity.

First I want to highlight the connection between HDIM, which brings together a wide range of civil society and governmental representatives, and the meetings of the Human Dimension Committee in Vienna where diplomats meet roughly monthly for in depth topical discussions related to our OSCE Human Dimension Commitments.

Over the past nine months the Human Dimension Committee in Vienna has discussed specific aspects of issues also considered here at HDIM: tolerance, hate crime; political participation; freedom of peaceful assembly to name just a few.

Secondly I want to highlight the importance of engagement with civil society. In democratic societies civil society organisations play an essential role in helping keep governments accountable. Strong, independent civil society organisations also make a significant direct contribution to the lives of individuals and to the health and stability of society. As we have seen so often this week the key to tackling some of our most difficult challenges lies in trust and co-operation between authorities and genuine civil society. I am grateful to the invited civil society experts who have significantly enriched each of our discussions this year in the Human Dimension Committee.

I pay tribute too to civil society representatives, be they activists, lawyers, journalists or simply private individuals who have travelled to Warsaw this year to fight discrimination and injustice, and to defend people and principles.

Madame Director,

As long as there is injustice, or unfairness in our region, as long as a changing world presents us with new or shifting challenges there will be a need for the conversations between states and civil society that HDIM provides a forum for.

Finally, Madame Director, you and other moderators have reminded us more than once of the need for respectful interventions. It has been deeply troubling to hear speakers using HDIM as a platform for views and language incompatible with the principles and commitments of this organisation and to attack the legitimate rights of others. Upholding freedom of expression whilst not allowing prejudice and incitement of hatred is a challenge we need to face together.

Madam Director,

The best discussion I heard in the past fortnight involved speakers with very different perspectives discussing sensitive issues with a critical but respectful audience. That for me is what HDIM should be about.

I look forward to working with you over the coming months in support of the valuable work of ODIHR and as you plan ahead for next year's HDIM and other activity in the coming year.

Thank you.