

News story: Crime news: digital claims only for Proceeds of Crime Act work

Starting on 26 March 2018 Proceeds of Crime Act claims will only be accepted on the correct electronic form:

85% of bills digital

We are already processing 85% of your bills on electronic versions of Proceeds of Crime Act claim forms. This follows the launch of PA1, PL1 and PL2 in the summer of 2017.

If you are not already using electronic versions you can familiarise yourself with the process before 26 March 2018 by looking at the guidance on GOV.UK.

Downloading forms

Copies of the form should be downloaded from the GOV.UK website. Claim forms should always be downloaded from the website rather than saved to your own computer to ensure you are using the most up to date version of the claim form.

Further information

[Claims paid out of the legal aid fund](#) – guidance and links to forms

Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on Benghazi bombing

The United Kingdom strongly condemns the horrific bombings in Benghazi yesterday evening, which killed at least 34 people and injured over 40 others including women and children.

Our thoughts are with the victims, their families and the people of Benghazi at this time.

Direct or indiscriminate attacks against civilians are prohibited under international humanitarian law and constitute war crimes. The United Kingdom will continue our efforts with our international partners to pursue action against those who are complicit in such horrific attacks.

Security in Benghazi is key to Libya's overall stability, and we urge all Libyans to reject violence. The latest attack underscores the urgent need to

break the political deadlock and bring peace to Libya. It is vital for all parties to engage in good faith with UN-led political process.

Press release: UK aid supports world's first mobile app to help the poorest people with disabilities into work

Landmine amputee Khtoeb Veb is a farmer in Cambodia. His prosthetic leg is waterproofed for his work in the rice fields and adapted to allow him to balance. Picture: Humanity and Inclusion UK

UK aid is behind the world's first mobile phone app to identify innovative ways to help people with disabilities in the world's poorest countries to get jobs and contribute to their society.

Speaking at a Humanity and Inclusion event, International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt will set out how data, technology and collaboration are vital to making sure people with disabilities are consistently included in, and benefit from, the opportunities that are available to everyone in society.

The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and Humanity and Inclusion are collaborating to prototype a mobile phone app that will help employers in developing countries share information on how to adapt tools, including cutting-edge prosthetics, and working environments, to make sure that workplaces are accessible for employees and entrepreneurs with disabilities.

For example, in Cambodia, farmers are using low-cost prosthetic legs made for unstable terrain, such as swampy fields. The app will share this adaptation with other farmers with similar disabilities in developing countries so they can adapt their own prosthetics and continue to work.

In her speech Ms Mordaunt will also announce that the UK government's first Global Disability Summit will be held at the Olympic Park in London on 24 July 2018. The Summit will be co-hosted with the Government of Kenya, building on the existing strong ties through the Commonwealth. Inclusion is also a key theme of this year's Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

People with disabilities suffer appalling and entrenched stigma and

discrimination, and in many parts of the world they simply don't count.

This cannot continue – which is why I have put disability at the heart of UK aid to make those invisible visible.

DFID is using new technology and building on innovative collaborations like our work with Humanity and Inclusion to help people with disabilities in the world's poorest countries get jobs and contribute to their society and economy. Alongside this, we have issued a call for the world to step up and tackle this inequality.

We must all work together to create a healthier, more inclusive and prosperous world – this is in all our interests.

For too long many people with disabilities in the world's poorest countries have not been able to fulfil their potential due to stigma or a lack of practical support.

Ms Mordaunt met the World Bank earlier this month to call on them to scale up their work on disability and development, and pushed for data collection to make the invisible visible. The Bank is expected to announce high level commitments on disability at the Global Disability Summit in London this year.

The Summit will bring the private sector, technology companies, international governments and charities together to secure ambitious commitments which will deliver a significant and tangible difference to the lives of millions of people with disabilities around the world.

The Summit will be held at the Olympic Park in London, home to the Global Disability Innovation Hub which finds innovative ways to unlock the potential of people with disabilities, to grow global prosperity.

UK aid has already been supporting innovative technology to transform the lives of people with disabilities by collaborating with tech pioneer, D-Rev, which is supported by DFID's Amplify Programme. This project is developing low-cost, high performance prosthetic knee joints for amputees in developing countries.

[News story: Scrap metal merger could leave businesses worse off](#)

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has been investigating European

Metal Recycling Limited (EMR)'s purchase of Metal & Waste Recycling Limited (MWR). These are two of the largest metal recyclers in the UK.

As part of its initial investigation, the CMA found that EMR and MWR were the two main companies offering to purchase waste scrap metal and shred scrap metal in the area around and to the north of London. Following the deal, the merged company will face limited competition from other metal recyclers in this area.

The CMA is therefore concerned that this merger could lead to a reduction in choice, price, quality and service to customers.

It will now refer the merger for an in-depth investigation unless EMR offers acceptable undertakings to address competition concerns.

All information relating to the merger is available on the [case page](#).

News story: Post-Brexit economy will help Merseyside trade with the world

Highlighting the latest figures that show goods exports from the North West of England were worth £27.8 billion in 2016, up by nearly £1 billion on the previous year, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury reaffirmed today (24 January) the government is committed to a post-Brexit economy that gives Liverpool even more opportunity to trade.

A buoyant export market has been vital in helping to grow to the local Liverpool economy which is now worth more than £30 billion – up nearly 12% since 2010.

This strong export economy is fuelled by the continued importance of Liverpool Port with latest figures showing nearly 32,000 tonnes of traffic pass through the port.

Latest figures show that export goods from the North West of England to North America were worth £5.1 billion. The largest export destination from the North West of England is Europe, with goods worth more than £14.6 billion being shipped to the rest of the continent.

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Liz Truss said:

From machinery to medicine, Liverpool has a vibrant export industry with world-class products being sent to Europe, USA and afar. I've seen that first hand today visiting a world-class local business exporting cutting edge technology.

With trade forming such an important part of the Merseyside economy, the government is hugely committed to ensuring its businesses are even more competitive than ever before after Brexit as the UK prepares for independent trade deals.

The impact of this is more jobs and a stronger economy for people in Merseyside.

Northern Powerhouse Minister Jake Berry said:

Northern exporters, innovators and creators are thriving within the globally competitive Northern Powerhouse economy.

As a government, we're doing all we can to create a business-friendly environment to support British manufacturing in Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield and throughout the Northern Powerhouse region.

These latest stats are a testament to the resolve, determination and hard work of Northern businesses and to what we can achieve through working together.

Successful exports mean the North West of England economy was valued at more than £166.5 billion, according to latest figures. This represents more than 8 per cent of UK total output.

At [the Autumn Budget](#) the government announced that Liverpool City Region would receive £134 million from the new Transforming Cities Fund. Funding will be invested in transport projects, which drive productivity by improving transport links around the city and reducing congestion.