

IT maintenance disrupts IPO service to search and classify trade mark goods and services

News story

Search service unavailable from 6 January 2021.



To ensure IPO services operate smoothly, maintenance to our IT systems is required. As a result of the latest work customers will experience disruption to the IPO's new service to search and classify trade mark goods and services. While essential work takes place the service will be unavailable from 6 January 2021.

Alternative services are available. Customers can make use of the [Nice trade mark classification system](#) that groups together similar goods or services into 45 different classes. They can also make use of the [TMClass classification search tool](#).

We will update customers once maintenance to the UK classification system is completed.

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New funding for innovative space tech to help solve problems on Earth

Through the UK Space Agency, the government is giving a cash injection to 5 projects specifically designed to bring together UK business expertise with

universities to help build space solutions to global problems, on UK soil.

One of the projects, involving the University of Southampton, will use artificial intelligence to automatically detect buried archaeological remains on satellite imagery, providing construction companies with higher accuracy at an earlier stage. This will save them time and money during the planning permission process and help them to reduce their carbon footprint.

Meanwhile the University of Leicester will use satellite analytics to track the greenhouse gas and pollution emissions of shipping fleets, ushering in a new approach that could help shipping companies to face down climate change.

Another, run by the University of Edinburgh, will support Malawian farmers by developing land-classification maps of high potential agricultural sites, providing a vital tool that can enable effective planning of large-scale agriculture in the region.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

The UK's space sector is flourishing and it is vital we give our most innovative space businesses and universities the right support to collaborate, share best practice and drive forward new ideas that could help enrich all our lives.

Today's funding will provide lift off to some of the country's most ambitious space collaborations, accelerating potentially game-changing technologies that will help the UK respond to global challenges such as cutting carbon emissions.

The UK Space Agency funding will see the national Space Research and Innovation Network for Technology (SPRINT) support the new space projects, with industry working alongside scientists from the University of Southampton, University of Edinburgh and University of Leicester.

SPRINT provides unprecedented access to university space expertise and facilities to help businesses develop new commercial products.

The scheme has previously supported 87 collaborative projects with 70 companies, developing space hardware or using space-enabled data and transferring space know-how and expertise to develop products destined for non-space use.

Professor Martin Barstow, Leader of the SPRINT project and Director of Strategic Partnerships for Space Park Leicester, said:

We appreciate the vote of confidence for SPRINT that the UK Space Agency has given in making this funding award.

We are very grateful to the Agency for providing this new support for SPRINT, which allows us to support more companies in their

development journey.

Ross Burgon, Head of the national SPRINT programme, said:

SPRINT has developed a novel approach to knowledge exchange and industry/university collaboration for the space sector.

We've spent the last two years building and demonstrating the efficacy of our approach and this new partnership with the UK Space Agency is a great milestone for us to further our mission to support business growth through university collaboration.

The SPRINT approach makes it much easier for both companies and academics to build successful, productive and collaborative partnerships that are focused on growing the space sector and that also demonstrate the increasing benefits of space sector knowledge in addressing challenges across many other sectors.

What is space archaeology?

It is archaeology using satellites or high-flying aircraft to take pictures remotely of the Earth's surface to find hints of ancient features buried under the ground. Things may show up visually or near infrared may show small differences in vegetation, with growth on top of buried stone likely to be less healthy.

Dr Fraser Sturt, a professor of archaeology at the University of Southampton, said:

Aerial photography transformed archaeology in the early 20th century, revealing sites in a way that few people could have conceived of in the past. Advances in Earth Observation and Machine learning offer another leap forward, helping us to identify and monitor sites across of space and time.

This information is critical not only for our understanding of the past, but how we manage the built environment and its development in the future.

In December 2020, the government redefined treasure to increase protection for archaeological finds to ensure more significant artefacts are saved for the public. For the first time, the official treasure definition will not be based solely on the material qualities of an artefact. The changes will make the treasure process more transparent and efficient for museums and the public.

ArchAI Ltd – University of Southampton

This project will use AI to automatically detect archaeology on Earth observation data. Knowing where archaeology is located at the earliest planning stages will allow accurate estimates of time and cost involved with acquiring planning permission and significantly reduce the risk of discovering unexpected archaeology during construction. This means that ArchAI will lower the cost of construction and ensure that vital historical sites are preserved.

Absolar Solutions Ltd – University of Southampton

The collaboration will develop Absolar's Carbon Action Planning Tool that integrates satellite images, solar radiation and LiDAR with other data sources to provide organisations with a clear view of a building's current energy performance, develop plans for achieving Net-Zero carbon emissions and reduce their energy costs while tracking and reporting on their progress.

XCAM – University of Leicester

Critical equipment for use in the space industry is often built in clean rooms to make sure it is not contaminated with small particles. Cleanliness is vital because if equipment is contaminated it might fail completely or not operate as it was designed to do.

This project uses a novel machine learning solution to improve the accuracy of clean room monitoring, and to efficiently report problems in real time. In addition, this solution will be used to monitor potential contamination of sensitive equipment during the launch of spacecraft, which is something that has never been done before.

Redshift Associates Ltd – University of Leicester

This collaboration will develop analytics to track the carbon and pollution emissions of ships, with a new approach to establish emission audits of shipping fleets and their individual vessels. The project builds upon previous work developing analytics solutions for ports and harbours, extending this to coastal and international waters.

Trade in Space – University of Edinburgh

Trade in Space and Geospace Agricultural are collaborating with the University of Edinburgh School of Geosciences to support the generation of a land use classification map of key agricultural production regions of Malawi.

This will be a vital tool that can enable effective planning of large-scale agriculture in the region, following the model set by the 'Jacoma Estates' mega-farm in the area, which has already provided productivity improving micro-financing, and a route to market for over 5,000 Malawian smallholder farmers.

Jobcentre guidance on new national COVID restrictions



This means from 5 January 2021 until further notice, the following updated jobcentre guidance will apply to customers in England, and will ensure essential support is provided whilst keeping colleagues and customers safe.

- Jobcentres will remain open, as they have throughout this pandemic, to provide essential services and support to those who we cannot help in any other way.
- Jobcentres will be open from 10am to 2pm to help keep our colleagues and customers as safe as possible in the latest phase of this pandemic. Members of the public entering a jobcentre, unless [exempt](#), will be required to wear a face covering.
- We will ensure that this support continues to be delivered in line with the latest government and PHE guidance – such as maintaining social distancing and rigorous cleaning regimes – keeping our colleagues and customers safe.
- Work Coaches will be empowered to support customers through the best and most appropriate channels – whether online, by phone, or in person – with jobcentres remaining open to help those who need extra support and are unable to interact with us on the phone or digitally.
- Our Work Coaches will continue to deliver employment support programmes such as the Job Entry Targeted Support (JETs) scheme, by phone or through online channels.
- Face-to-face assessments for disability benefits remain suspended.

- If you think you might be entitled to a health and disability benefit, you should contact us as soon as possible to make a claim in the usual way.
- For existing customers, payments will continue as normal. Anyone who has a change in their needs should contact us immediately so we can ensure they are receiving the correct level of support.

On 3 November 2020, we also confirmed that the suspension of the Minimum Income Floor for self-employed customers claiming Universal Credit in England, Scotland, and Wales has been extended to the end of April 2021. This means that self-employed customers on Universal Credit will receive a payment that reflects their earnings at this difficult time.

For Scotland:

On 4 January 2021, the Scottish Government announced they are moving to level five – the highest of their COVID tiered system. The jobcentre guidance in place for England above will therefore also apply to jobcentres and customers in Scotland.

For Wales:

On 28 December 2020, Wales moved into alert level four – the highest of their COVID tiered system. The jobcentre guidance in place for England above will therefore also apply to jobcentres and customers in Wales.

For Northern Ireland:

Please contact the Department for Communities for more information on measures introduced in Northern Ireland – 028 9082 9000.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

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Last updated 15 January 2021 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 15 January 2021

Jobcentres will be open from 10am to 2pm to help keep our colleagues and customers as safe as possible in the latest phase of this pandemic. Members of the public entering a jobcentre, unless exempt, will be required to wear a face covering.

2. 6 January 2021

First published.

Unregulated immigration advice earns Directors £17,000 fine

Directors from two law firms which generated £2.5 million in fees by providing unregulated immigration advice have been fined nearly £17,000 and ordered to pay over £28,000 in compensation.

Dan Romulus Dandes and Babbar Ali Jamil (Directors at DDR Legal Services LLP) and Ms Zia Bi (Director of Burlow & Spencer Ltd) were sentenced yesterday, (Tuesday 5 January 2021) at the Old Bailey where they were given the following sentences:

- Mr Dandes received a £20,000 compensation order and fined £750.
- Mr Jamil, who is currently believed to be out of the country was fined £10,000 in his absence.
- Ms Bi was given a fine of £6,000 and an £8,745 compensation order.

The trio were originally found guilty of providing unqualified immigration advice and/or services at the Old Bailey in April 2020 following a two-year investigation by the OISC which revealed fees in excess of £2.5m was generated.

Sentencing, Judge Munro said:

“The consequential loss and the impact on the complainants is far-reaching and in some cases devastating.”

Referring to the defendants the Judge stated:

“All of the defendants were of previous good character. The mitigation in all cases is a genuine lack of knowledge that the criminal behaviour was in fact criminal. Both Ms Bi and Mr Dandes now accept that they were negligent and innocent people suffered as a result.”

Among the complainants there were a number of consequences. One had to leave the UK permanently; another paid £7000 in expenses to contest a failed application; others had to travel to Shanghai or Bangkok to submit applications which were bound to be rejected; and a couple who travelled for work were unable to leave the UK for two years while their documentation was sorted out.

John Tuckett, Immigration Services Commissioner remarked:

“We are pleased with the Judge’s decision today to impose these fines on these individuals, who acted outside the law by providing immigration advice illegally and putting the lives of many vulnerable people at risk. As the Judge stated, these financial penalties will not be able to fully or properly

compensate victims for the 'severe consequences' of the defendants' actions, but we hope it will emphasise the importance of using a regulated immigration advisers".

Mr Dandes began the supervision scheme for DDR Legal Services LLP, (a UK registered company) claiming qualification as an EU registered lawyer.

This meant law firms could circumvent regulation by the OISC or any other appropriate regulatory body as they were under Mr Dandes' supervision.

However, Mr Dandes did not have the necessary UK qualifications to act in a supervisory role, so he was unqualified to supervise, and any advice given by an individual or firm under this scheme was unregulated and illegal.

Burlow and Spencer Ltd, one of the law firms he allegedly supervised, were investigated after an unprecedented 95 complaints were received about the quality of its immigration advice.

Burlow and Spencer Ltd subsequently ceased trading in 2019.

Notes to the Editor

1. The OISC is an independent public body, established under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, to regulate the provision of immigration advice and services in the UK.
2. The legislation regarding qualification and supervision is provided by section 84 Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
3. For media enquiries, please contact Cornelius Alexander, Corporate Communications Business Partner at the OISC on 0207 211 1617 or communications@oisc.gov.uk.

[Window cleaning boss banned after failing to account for £1.7m](#)

Nicola Bentley (39), from Oxted, Surrey, was the sole director of Stephenson's (National Window Cleaning) Ltd and has now been disqualified from being a company director for 7 years. Her ban is effective from 31 December 2020.

The company was incorporated in January 2017 and provided window cleaning services, predominantly for bookmakers.

The window cleaners traded for 2 years but in January 2019 entered into creditors voluntary liquidation and Nicola Bentley's conduct was referred to the Insolvency Service for further investigations.

The Insolvency Service found that from February 2018 until the company went

into liquidation, Nicola Bentley's company had spent almost £1.7 million.

Nicola Bentley, however, failed to preserve accounting records and investigators could not determine if the amount was for legitimate business expenditure.

The investigation discovered that almost £640,000 had been transferred out of the company bank account to three unknown bank accounts. Nicola Bentley had also failed to keep any records that could identify the source of almost £1.7 million paid into the company bank account and whether it was legitimate business income.

From June 2017 to January 2019, the window cleaning company failed to pay all its tax obligations, with more than £405,000 being owed. Despite more than £2.1 million being paid out of the company bank account, only £1,000 was paid to the tax authorities in relation to its increasing VAT debt.

On 10 December the Secretary of State accepted an undertaking from Nicola Bentley after she did not dispute that she failed to keep sufficient accounting records and did not settle the company's tax liabilities.

Nicola Bentley is now banned from being a director of a company or, whether directly or indirectly, be concerned or take part in the promotion, formation or management of a company unless she has leave of the court

Lawrence Zussman, Deputy Head of Insolvent Investigations, said:

Maintaining company records is a statutory requirement for every business but despite millions passing through Nicola Bentley's company bank account, she failed to provide information about her income and expenditure. The company owed a significant amount of tax yet paid only a minimal amount towards its tax obligations.

Nicola Bentley totally disregarded her responsibilities as a director of Stephenson's and has now been banned from the business environment for seven years.

Nicola Bentley's date of birth is November 1981.

Stephenson's (National Window Cleaning) Ltd (Company Reg no. 10553769).

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is available.](#)

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: