

News story: Civil news: improvements to reject process to speed up payments

We are improving the way we administer 'rejects' and 'document requests' through the Client and Cost Management System (CCMS).

This will speed up payment times and help with the delivery of a quality service.

Starting on 16 April 2018 we will issue a priority return for claims where there are:

- repeat requests for information
- disbursement vouchers missing or incomplete
- advocates attendance forms missing or incomplete
- court orders to support additional costs under the Family Advocacy Scheme (FAS) not submitted

Supporting evidence

There are no changes to the supporting information we require when you submit a claim.

Resubmitting claims

Where claims are returned for any of the above listed reasons, they can be resubmitted using the CCMS' 'copy bill' feature when claiming through the Portal.

Alternatively, you can re-upload the claim by using the CCMS 'claim upload' feature.

Further information

[Advanced Billing Guides](#) – scroll down to the bottom of the page

LAACivilClaimFix@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk – to challenge an incorrect reject

[Legal aid guidance](#) – to download 'Electronic Handbook' for guidance on submitting civil claims

Duke of York sees energy revolution in the making at Culham

Culham is home to JET – the Joint European Torus – the world’s largest fusion experiment, which the UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) operates for scientists around Europe. The Duke of York toured JET and learned of its role in paving the way for fusion reactors which could one day provide low-carbon energy to people around the globe. He was shown round the JET facility by officials from UKAEA, EUROfusion (the consortium that manages the JET research programme) and the European Commission.

A keen advocate of UK business and innovation, The Duke also heard how the research at Culham will help hi-tech companies to win contracts on major projects on the path to delivering commercial fusion power. UKAEA is working with international partners to prepare the world’s first reactor-scale fusion experiment, ITER, scheduled to start up in France in 2025. Over €500 million of deals on ITER have already gone to British firms and a similar amount is expected in the coming years.

UKAEA CEO Professor Ian Chapman said:

His Royal Highness was very interested in the potential of fusion. JET is both an important part of Britain’s hi-tech landscape, and the largest European science facility in the UK. We were delighted to show The Duke around JET and explain its vital role in international fusion research.

The Duke also met UKAEA staff, including engineering apprentices from Culham’s new Oxfordshire Advanced Skills centre, which is now training young people from around 20 hi-tech firms across the region as well as from UKAEA.

UKAEA apprentice Thomas Eagles said:

It was an honour meeting The Duke of York, and his interest in science and technology is inspiring to young apprentices like me. Meeting people like The Duke reinforces the importance of industries like engineering in everyday life. He asked us about our apprenticeships – what we are doing, how we feel about it, and if it was the right decision over other options.

For more information please contact Nick Holloway, UK Atomic Energy Authority Media Manager: nick.holloway@ukaea.uk or 01235 466232.

Notes to Editors

UK Atomic Energy Authority [UKAEA](#) carries out fusion energy research on behalf of the UK Government at [Culham Science Centre](#) near Abingdon, Oxfordshire.

UKAEA's fusion lab Culham Centre for Fusion Energy oversees Britain's fusion programme, headed by the MAST Upgrade (Mega Amp Spherical Tokamak) experiment. It also hosts the world's largest fusion research facility, JET (Joint European Torus), which it operates for European scientists under a contract with the European Commission via the [EUROfusion consortium](#).

Fusion research at Culham is funded by the [Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council](#) and by the European Union under the Euratom treaty.

Fusion research Fusion research aims to copy the process which powers the Sun for a new large-scale source of energy here on Earth. When light atomic nuclei fuse together to form heavier ones, a large amount of energy is released. To do this, fuel is heated to form a plasma in which fusion reactions take place. A commercial power station will use the energy produced by fusion reactions to generate electricity.

Fusion has huge potential as a long-term energy source that is environmentally responsible (with no carbon emissions) and inherently safe, with abundant and widespread fuel resources (the raw materials are found in seawater and the Earth's crust).

Researchers at Culham are developing a type of fusion reactor known as a 'tokamak' – a magnetic chamber in which plasma is heated and controlled. The research is focused on preparing for the international tokamak experiment ITER, now being built in southern France. [ITER](#) – due to start up in 2025 – is designed to show that fusion can work at the scale of a powerplant, and if successful should lead to electricity from fusion being on the grid by 2050.

[News story: MDP support Action Counters Terrorism \(ACT\) 2018 campaign](#)

Counter Terrorism Policing. Photo: All rights reserved

The ACT campaign, encourages the public to help the police tackle terrorism and save lives by reporting suspicious behaviour and activity.

With the enduring terrorist threat, it is now more important than ever that everyone, including all Ministry of Defence Police staff, plays their part in tackling terrorism.

Our actions could save lives. Communities defeat terrorism.

Speaking on the campaign T/Chief Constable Andy Adams said:

The core role of the MDP is the protection of the people and assets at the various Defence and national infrastructure sites where our officers are deployed across the UK. We cannot, however, do this in isolation. We need members of the public and the staff employed at the sites where we are located to report any unusual or suspicious behaviour that they see or hear. No report is a waste of time and any piece of information, no matter how small, could make the difference that enables us to disrupt and prevent a potential terrorist attack.

Crown Copyright

Like other criminals, terrorists need to plan.

To find out more about what could potentially be terrorist-related suspicious activity or behaviour visit the [ACT campaign](#)

If you see or hear something unusual or suspicious trust your instincts and ACT by reporting it in confidence at gov.uk/ACT. If it's an emergency, call 999.

Don't worry about wasting police time. Any piece of information could be important and it is better to be safe and report. No call or click will be ignored. What you tell the police is treated in the strictest confidence and is thoroughly researched by experienced officers before, and if, any police action is taken.

Remember to trust your instincts and ACT: Action Counters Terrorism.

The MDP will be further promoting the ACT campaign on Facebook and Twitter during the coming weeks.

Press release: New Chairman of the Planning Inspectorate board appointed

- Royal Town Planning Institute CEO Trudi Elliott takes up post of Chairman of the Planning Inspectorate board on 1 April 2018.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has today (22 March 2018) announced the appointment of Trudi Elliott as the new independent Chairman of the Planning Inspectorate board.

From Sunday 1 April, Trudi will work with other Non-Executive Directors to provide support to Chief Executive Sarah Richards and the management team through the advisory board for a period of 4 years.

Trudi, a Chartered Town Planner, has a wide-ranging and in-depth knowledge of planning, a sector where she has worked for 20 years.

She has been Chief Executive of the Royal Town Planning Institute since 2011 but will step down from that role at the end of March 2018.

Trudi takes over the role of Chairman at the Planning Inspectorate from Sara Weller who held the position from August 2014 to September 2017.

Commenting on her new role, Trudi said:

The Planning Inspectorate plays a vital function in the planning system and the future development of England and Wales.

I am absolutely delighted to have been appointed to help with that task and look forward to working with Sarah Richards and her executive management team to continue to shape this renowned organisation.

Trudi joins the Inspectorate at an exciting and crucial time with the recent launch of the [revised draft National Planning Policy Framework](#).

Trudi's previous roles include: Director of the Government Office for the West Midlands, Chief Executive of the West Midlands Regional Assembly, Director of Local Government Practice ODPM and Chief Executive of Bridgnorth District Council.

Prior to this, Trudi was a lawyer, practising in both the public and private sectors.

She currently chairs the Oxford Joint Planning Law Conference Committee and sits on the National Infrastructure Planning Association policy council and the University of Warwick Estates Committee.

Trudi was also a member of the [Taylor Review](#) into planning practice guidance and will become Patron of the Commonwealth Association of Planners from April.

Trudi Elliott's appointment runs from 1 April 2018 for a period of 4 years. She will step down from her role as CEO of the Royal Town Planning Institute on 31 March 2018.

The post is held at the discretion of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Minister for Housing and Regeneration in Wales.

A photo of Trudi is available on request.

The Planning Inspectorate is the government agency for England and Wales responsible for handling approximately 20,000 appeals a year, including:

- national infrastructure planning

- planning and enforcement appeals
- examinations of local plans

See [more information](#) about the Planning Inspectorate.

Press release: M621 preferred route announced to improve journeys into Leeds

Following a 6-week consultation held last year, 3 options were presented to the public on plans to improve this busy commuter route. The proposals included junction improvements between junction 1 and 7 and additional lanes at points along the route.

The preferred route includes a number of improvements which aim to reduce the causes of congestion on the M621. This includes widening the carriageway at junction 2, closing junction 2a anti-clockwise and installing improved technology and signs along the route. The anti-clockwise carriageway at junction 3 will also be widened from 1 to 2 lanes and the way the lanes merge at junction 3 will also be changed to give priority to traffic on the main carriageway.

Highways England project manager Sarah Kearns said:

This is an exciting scheme and we look forward to moving this project to the next stage and improving the road for drivers heading into and out of Leeds.

The option we have chosen to take forward will work well alongside the other transport and infrastructure projects taking place around the city.

Highways England is currently carrying out improvements between junction 3 and junction 6 on the M621 until May 2018 as part of vital work which needs to take place before we begin work on this major scheme.

The works include the installation of central reserve concrete barrier for safety reasons and renewal of verge barriers and drains.

For more information on the major scheme please visit our [website](#) or e mail M621J1to7@highwaysengland.co.uk.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.