

**CPS Response to HMCPSI Inspection of Crown Prosecution Service
Internal Fraud Control**
30/11/2017



Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI) has today 30 November 2017 issued a report following its inspection of Internal Fraud Controls in the Crown Prosecution Service.

We are pleased that the Inspectorate recognises the good headway that the Crown prosecution Service has already made at both strategic and operational levels in line with the Cabinet Office Functional Standards.

The Inspectorate pays tribute to a number of good practices in operation that further strengthen internal control systems in the Crown Prosecution Service.

The report raises 13 issues to address and our response to each is set out below:

1. The Crown Prosecution Service should raise awareness of how to access its gifts and hospitality registers to all staff and managers.

CPS response: We accept the recommendation and will ensure that communication on gifts and hospitality registers is also included in *Team Talk* – our internal communication bulletin.

2. The Crown Prosecution Service should update its Fraud Policy to align it with the Discipline Policy, provide more clarity on the application of both policies and illustrate examples of what type of infringements the Fraud Policy covers.

CPS Response: The Fraud Policy has now been updated. We will consider how best to align the Fraud Policy to the Discipline Policy.

3. The Crown Prosecution Service needs to update its fraud strategy reporting mechanisms and ensure these are followed in order for it to meet its reporting obligations to the Cabinet Office.

CPS Response: Our Fraud strategy has now been updated. We intend to meet our reporting obligations to Cabinet Office and are clarifying the requirements.

4. There should be a mechanism in place so that the Crown Prosecution Service headquarters is aware of all suspicious activity and actions taken. This will assist with ensuring consistency of approach and aid headquarters in reporting its activities to the Cabinet Office.

CPS response: We already have a separate e-learning module for our managers highlighting suspicious behaviour to look out for. We are concerned that a central repository of reported 'suspicious activity', particularly as unproven, could breach the GDPR and advice would need to be taken before we could accept this recommendation

5. The Director of Finance should review the checks outlined in the Crown Prosecution Service Guide to Finance to ensure that they are pragmatic, achievable and add a valuable control.

CPS Response: We accept the recommendation – the Guide to Finance has now been updated.

6. Headquarters should ensure that all Areas and Directorates maintain a declaration and conflict of interest register which should be updated on any changes including when the conflict no longer exists.

CPS Response: Our code of conduct demands that staff declare any conflicts of interest. We will explore this further with other Government departments to identify any best practice models that we could consider for the CPS.

7. Headquarters should mandate that line managers undertake an element of cross checking as part of their standard checks.

CPS Response: We accept the recommendation and will update our Guide to Finance checklist accordingly.

8. Headquarters should, as a matter of urgency, ensure that all staff complete the mandatory CSL Counter fraud, bribery and corruption e-Learning and assessment. Areas must retain and maintain a list of staff that have satisfactorily completed the course and submit this to headquarters. This will assist the Crown Prosecution Service in meeting the Cabinet Office standards.

CPS Response: In 2012 approximately 5,402 members of staff had completed the training – this is approximately 90% of staff. Since then the training is completed by new joiners as part of their induction. Another round of e-learning has been launched recently and the deadline for completion is 30 November 2017. The list of staff that have completed the course will need to be maintained centrally.

9. Headquarters should ensure that all Areas are using the latest version of the Induction Checklist that confirms the requirement to complete mandatory CSL Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption E-Learning and assessment.

CPS Response: We accept the recommendation.

10. Headquarters should review its fraud awareness training and ensure it meets the requirements of the Cabinet Office standard.

CPS Response: We will continue to rely on CSL to make sure that the training provided meets the requirements of Cabinet Office.

11. Headquarters should ensure that there is a comprehensive induction programme for all Area Finance Managers including what to check and how to identify potentially fraudulent or suspicious activity.

CPS Response: We accept the recommendation and will consider building the comprehensive induction programme into our Area Finance Managers meetings and Area Business Managers meetings.

12. Headquarters should ensure that as part of their standard training programme for all managers that it includes some element for fraud and for checking suspicious and fraudulent activity.

CPS Response: The CSL *Responsible for Information* is mandatory e-learning that includes some elements of fraud and checking suspicious or fraudulent activity.

13. Headquarters should create a mechanism for sharing good practice for checks and other matters related to fraud and utilise the current Infonet page effectively.

CPS Response: We accept the recommendation.