

CDS Policy Team

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For the attention of the Head of the Criminal Department

26 February 2007

Dear Practitioner,

Notices of Amendment to the General Criminal Contract

I am writing to provide you with Notices of Amendment to the Standard Terms and Contract Specification of your General Criminal Contract. Further details of these amendments are given below. In addition this letter contains important information about the termination of the General Criminal Contracts and the Unified Contract that will replace the General Criminal Contract from April 2008.

Unified Contract

The new Unified Contract is designed to simplify and update our contractual relationship with our providers, to underpin a new and better relationship with providers, including a "whole organisation" approach to contract management (instead of the current office-by-office approach). Our civil providers will be working under the Unified Contract from 1 April 2007 and we will be consulting with The Law Society on the Unified Contract for crime during 2007.

In order that we can implement the Unified Contract from 1 April 2008 all General Criminal Contracts will now be terminable on three months' written notice and will end on 31 March 2008 unless lawfully terminated before this date. Providers in London have a different Contract for Signature from providers elsewhere and there are therefore differences in how the Commission intends to end Contracts for these providers which are set out below.

Providers in the London Region

Since July 2005 Contracts in London have been subject to termination on no less than three months' notice in writing. We will write to all providers in London giving notice that their Contracts will terminate on 31 March 2008, unless lawfully terminated before this date.

Providers Outside the London Region

Under the terms of your General Criminal Contract (Contract for Signature), your contract is automatically extended to the following 31 March, unless we have given you at least a year's notice that there will be no extension. This letter is formal notice that the General Criminal

Contract will not continue in force beyond 31 March 2008 but will terminate on that date, unless lawfully terminated before that date.

Notice of Amendment - Contract Standard Terms

For **providers outside of London**, the Contract for Signature provides that we may make amendments to the General Criminal Contract Standard Terms applicable from 1 April 2007 after no less than three months' consultation with The Law Society and one month's notice to you.

We commenced consultation with the Law Society on 12 October 2006 on amendments to the Standard Terms, and this consultation finished on 12 January 2007.

We notified the Law Society on 23 November 2006 that we also proposed to make 3 further amendments, and this second consultation finished on 22 February 2007.

The amendments are provided in the enclosed Notice of Amendment.

The power to amend Standard Terms does not apply to **providers in London** and therefore we are inviting providers in London to voluntarily adopt these amendments but the Commission will not enforce compliance.

Notice of Amendment - Contract Specification

The enclosed Notice contains amendments to the Contract Specification that apply to all holders of the General Criminal Contract.

The narrative at the beginning of the Notice provides details of all changes. The main changes are to implement revised standard and non standard fees for magistrates' court work in designated urban areas and changes resulting from consultation on "Market Stability Measures".

Amendments are effective from 16 April 2007, however, for some changes providers have the flexibility to start to operate to the new requirements from 1 April 2007. Full details are contained in the narrative.

General

We will publish the outcome of both consultations on our website at www.legalservices.gov.uk

If you have any questions about the contents of this letter or enclosed Notices please contact the Account Manager responsible for your Contract in the first instance.

Yours faithfully



Derek Hill
CDS Director