

Dear Sir/Madam

Defence Solicitor Call Centre

I am writing with an update as promised in my letter of 8 February.

Performance Levels

Call handling by the DSCC is now stable and you should be experiencing fewer difficulties:

- The average time to answer incoming calls is less than 2 seconds with at least 97% of calls answered within 20 seconds
- The first outgoing call to firms to deploy the case is being made by DSCC within 15 minutes in at least 98% of instances
- The average time to deploy a case is 7 to 10 minutes
- Over 99% of own client cases are being accepted within 2 hours by the firm the client has requested

We shall continue to publish DSCC performance figures on our Internet site weekly.

Police Script

Issues regarding local custody suites apparently not using the correct script have reduced very significantly. If you believe this is still happening, please let our regional offices have details including the date, time and police station.

Maximising The Opportunities to Accept Calls

Many firms have asked us to route calls via their receptionists during office hours but it is apparently often the case that reception staff do not know the whereabouts of advisers. Unfortunately this means when DSCC ask "is an adviser available?" the answer is often "I don't know" and a duty case is offered to another firm.

We have seen an increase in the use of a single number for DSCC to use which often results in calls being accepted more speedily. If you use different numbers, please consider what happens when the individual is in court, is in an interview or away from the office. Ideally calls to their number should be diverted to another adviser who is available.

Internet Access

We are currently testing a system change which will allow firms to access their own records held by the DSCC on line, via a password protected system. This will allow

- Contact details to be viewed and changed in real time
- Swops to be entered on line
- Firms to see what calls have been accepted and not accepted

Once testing has been completed we will roll out progressively this enhancement region by region. We shall publish details on our website in the next few weeks.

Surveys of Practitioners

We now ring 5 police station advisers each day that we have recently deployed calls to in order to check that DSCC have used the correct contact numbers. Early signs are very positive with all firms in the last week confirming that the correct numbers have been used.

Finally may I thank you again for your patience during this time. I believe that we have now reached a stable position where we can continue to offer a high level of service.

Yours faithfully



JOHN SIRODCAR
HEAD OF DIRECT SERVICES PROGRAMME

Need help with your legal problems?
Community Legal Advice is a free government-funded confidential advice service.

Visit www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk to find out more
or Call 0845 345 4 345