

The new changes to Vetting will actually lead to MUCH greater risk to the vulnerable.

In February the Government announced significant changes to the vetting scheme in what it called a more proportionate approach, saying checks will only be required for people in sensitive posts or who have 'intensive' contact with children or the vulnerable -although we don't know exactly what this means yet and how many will be required to register. In addition it announced the merger of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) to create a new body.

Over the last eight years it has been an integral part of anyone wanting to work with or have access to children or vulnerable people to undertake a CRB Disclosures. Although initially it did receive some resistance, in particular from a small minority of people who felt they were being treated with suspicion, the large majority of people supported the process.

Following the murders of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman, Sir Michael Bichard undertook an inquiry into child protection measures, record keeping, vetting and information sharing, and as a result of this enquiry 31 recommendations were made , of which recommendation 19 called for a new registration scheme . In 2007 the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) was created in which a new Vetting scheme would ensure anyone working in a regulated position with children and vulnerable adults would have to register, a scheme that was halted by the Coalition Government in 2010.

However as a result of the halting of the ISA Vetting registration scheme it is clear that the proposals will not only increase the number of CRB's that will be undertaken , but will significantly increase the risk to children and vulnerable adults

The below chart sets out the changes in regards to CRB Disclosures.

<b><u>Enhanced CRB check with Barred status</u></b>	<b><u>Enhanced Only</u></b>	<b><u>Standard</u></b>	<b><u>Basic</u></b>
<b>Convictions</b>	<b>Convictions</b>	<b>Convictions</b>	<b>Unspent Convictions</b>
<b>Cautions</b>	<b>Cautions</b>	<b>Cautions</b>	
<b>Warnings &amp; Reprimands</b>	<b>Warnings &amp; Reprimands</b>	<b>Warnings &amp; Reprimands</b>	
<b>Children's Barred list status</b>	<b><u>No Children's Barred List check</u></b>		
<b>Adults Barred list Status</b>	<b><u>No Adult's Barred List check</u></b>		
<b>Other Relevant Info</b>	<b>Other Relevant Info</b>		

\*Source- [www.SafeguardingMatters.co.uk](http://www.SafeguardingMatters.co.uk)

So the massive change here is that only those working in a Regulated Position will be able to undertake an 'Enhanced CRB Disclosure with Barred Status'. Currently no definition has been agreed for a Regulated Position, but it is likely to relate to a role of a specified nature, e.g. teaching, training, care, supervision, advice, treatment, or transport. The aspects of a 'Specified place', 'Specified role' and 'Frequently, intensively and/or overnight' will no longer exist.

These changes will have a massive effect on the safety of children & the vulnerable; I have set out below some of my major concerns.

- 1) As it stands the roles of school governor, caretaker and other similar roles in schools, care homes and similar establishments would not be caught under a Regulated Position. However after very strong concerns raised by schools advisors those on the payroll in these establishments will be required to undertake a CRB. Although it would not cater for anyone used through an outsourced contract, so kitchen staff, caretaker (that looks after a number of schools), gardener or any helpers.
- 2) Only those that are in Regulated position will be able to undertake an 'Enhanced CRB Disclosure with Barred status'. This will mean that many thousands of sports coaches, children's helpers and other roles where people have direct contact with children, could be barred from working with children or vulnerable adults. But because they are not in a Regulated Position they would not be required to undertake the Enhanced check with Barred Status so the organisation or establishment using them would not know, or be able to find out if the person was barred.
- 3) The CRB Disclosure will go to the applicant in order that they can challenge any information they consider not to be accurate. This means that if you believed any information is likely to appear on your CRB, that would give cause for concern, you will be the first to know. The applicant can then either challenge it delaying the process, or leave. All the time the organisation or establishment will have no knowledge of what the concern is. This means that the individual (who may potentially present a significant risk to children or vulnerable adults) is in total control of the situation.

Put simply the changes by the Coalition Government have been ill thought out, have ignored many of the recommendations from the Bichard inquiry following the tragic events of Soham, and will put the welfare of children and the vulnerable back to the position before CRB was first introduced in 2002.

The Government believes that the changes display a more 'Common Sense' approach and will not put children at risk. I don't know what is meant by a 'Common Sense' approach, but what I do know is that this is not about safeguarding the most vulnerable in our society, but about pandering to the minority civil rights voices and saving money.

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**15/4/11**