

Modern Slavery Act 2015 Statement

The Financial Ombudsman Service was setup under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 to resolve individual disputes between consumers and financial businesses – fairly, reasonably, quickly and informally. As we continue to be guided by that sense of fairness, we're fully committed to preventing acts of modern slavery and human trafficking from occurring within our business and supply chain – in line with the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

The service, based in Tower Hamlets, London, responded to nearly 1.4 million queries and resolved over 336,000 complaints during the 16/17 financial year.

Our people and suppliers

The service is classed as a "contracting authority" for the purposes of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and is, therefore, bound by them. As such, we often make use of government frameworks such as the Crown Commercial Service. Approximately 81% of our spend relates to staff costs, with the majority of the remaining spend procured either via an EU tender process or a compliant framework. In addition to the scrutiny and support provided within these frameworks, we have reviewed our key suppliers and identified those with the greatest potential exposure to slavery. For these suppliers, we've reviewed their Modern Slavery Act statements and where these were unavailable, contacted them directly to ensure compliance. We'll verify their commitment to the Modern Slavery Act on an annual basis as part of our standard contract management practice. We've also updated our template contracts to include a new clause that covers the Act.

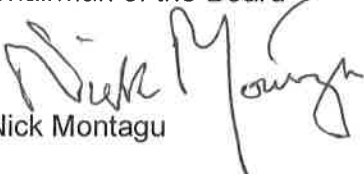
We have a number of internal staff policies which are designed to reduce the risk of modern slavery and facilitate reporting of any potential slavery instances. These include: our pay policy, which ensures all of our London based staff are paid the London Living wage; a speak up policy, encouraging reporting of any aspect of dishonesty or unfairness; and an equality and diversity policy and action plan, which sets out our intentions of treating our people fairly. We've also briefed all our procurement and resourcing teams on the importance of modern slavery.

Next steps

We'll be embedding further the importance of the Modern Slavery Act into our procurement practices, checking that all new suppliers are committed to complying with the requirements of the Act. We'll also include these checks as part of our security auditing process, encouraging suppliers and contractors to develop their awareness and understanding of their obligations under the Modern Slavery Act.

We'll make sure that our staff are aware more broadly of our commitment to preventing acts of modern slavery and human trafficking and the ways in which they can raise any issues of concern. We'll do this, and issue periodic reminders, through all appropriate channels, including staff induction, training and staff newsletters.

Chairman of the Board



Nick Montagu

Date: 17 May 2017