



## Civil Enforcement Association responds to government review of bailiff regulations

Responding to the Ministry of Justice announcement that it will be launching a call for evidence to identify any aggressive behaviour as part of its review of bailiff regulations introduced in 2014\*, Russell Hamblin-Boone, chief executive officer of the Civil Enforcement Association (CIVEA) said,

“It is encouraging to read that the government has completed a thorough review which shows that the regulations introduced in 2014 are working well in the vast majority of cases. While we welcome acknowledgement of the huge strides that have been made in improving enforcement practices, we are concerned that it has been stated that there is a minority that are damaging the reputation of our industry, and we welcome the opportunity for a full exploration of any evidence of rogue bailiffs”.

Enforcement agents (formerly known as bailiffs) collect debt owed to our local authorities and other public bodies. All agents act within a strictly defined legal process and local authorities set the standards which they are required to meet.

Referring to the Ministry’s concerns about the behaviour of a minority of agents, Hamblin-Boone said,

“We await the evidence, but all enforcement agents are given extensive training. They must pass an exam to qualify for certification and this decision is made by a judge. Increasing numbers of agents wear body worn cameras to record their visits on film. Film footage is constantly reviewed to monitor agents’ conduct and performance. Often agents’ vehicles are tracked by satellite and their phone use is monitored and recorded.”

Hamblin-Boone advised that “enforcement visits are at the very end of the path for people who have failed to make payment arrangements with their local authority and/or an enforcement agency, despite every attempt to make contact by letter, text, email and phone calls. Anyone who is struggling with their debts should seek free advice from one a debt advice charity.”

### Notes for editors:

CIVEA is an independently funded association which represents around 2000 enforcement agents operating in England and Wales. CIVEA members enforce a variety of debts including, council tax, parking fines, magistrate’s court fines, business rates, commercial rent arrears.

In 2014, regulations took effect as part of the Tribunals Courts and Enforcement Act, which were designed to reform enforcement practice and eliminate the main cause of complaints.