



# Department for Business Innovation & Skills

1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

T +44 (0) 20 7215 5000  
E [enquiries@bis.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@bis.gov.uk)

[www.gov.uk/bis](http://www.gov.uk/bis)

Christopher Graham  
Information Commissioner  
Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow SK9 5AF

28 January 2013

Dear Christopher,

You know that Parliament last week debated concerns around blacklisting. This is clearly an unacceptable and illegal practice and I committed to the House that evidence of blacklisting continuing subsequent to your 2009 investigation of The Consulting Association and the implementation of the Employment Relations Act 1999 (Blacklists) Regulations 2010 would be referred for investigation. I also committed that the Government would review any difficulties with the legislation that such an investigation might identify.

The Scottish Affairs Committee is currently carrying out its own inquiry into blacklisting in Scotland and I expect their report to contribute to the evidence base. We have also undertaken to look at any new information that the Scottish Affairs Committee might elicit about blacklisting prior to 2010.

Given your responsibilities as Information Commissioner, I would like to meet with you to discuss how best to handle any evidence of any ongoing blacklisting that might emerge, drawing on your experience of the original investigation into The Consulting Association. Some of the accusations of blacklisting raised in the House go well beyond the issue of blacklisting of trade union members for which I am responsible. But a common theme of the accusations was the misuse of personal information, and I would welcome your view on how these matters might best be taken forward, and how best to ensure that any investigations by different authorities are best coordinated.

It is important that we are able to give confidence that such new evidence will be investigated thoroughly.

My office will be in touch to make arrangements for a meeting.

I will arrange for a copy of this letter to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

I am copying this letter to Phillip Hammond, Chloe Smith, Lord McNally, Damian Green, Hugh Robertson and Stephen Hammond because they may also have an interest in any emerging evidence. I am also copying this letter to the Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills.



**VINCE CABLE**

**The Rt Hon Vince Cable MP**

Secretary of State for Business,  
Innovation and Skills