

DBS KEEPS MILLIONS OF WORKPLACES SAFE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SPS

Minimising risk in the delivery of seven million certificates each year

Challenge

Workplace Protection

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) manages a crucial service to ensure the UK's population is protected, utilising the support of reliable suppliers – such as SPS.

Solution

Secure Processing

SPS processes both DBS' incoming paper applications and outbound certificates, delivering both from a specialised and secure site.

Benefits

99.9%

SPS is a vital partner to DBS, regularly meeting a 99.9% SLA on over 150,000 annual applications and seven million certificates each year.

“Employers rely on DBS to provide precise, timely and high quality information so that they can ensure safe, appropriate staffing for a vast range of essential roles. SPS offers high quality, secure and accurate services that effectively meet our standards and the needs of our customers.”

– Ian Johnston, Executive Director for Disclosure Operations, DBS

Demanding perfection

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) carries out a vital service for employers across the UK. DBS carries out more than seven million DBS (formerly CRB) checks every year, ensuring that any new job applicant or volunteer required to work with children or vulnerable adults is fully checked before they are employed.

To deliver such an important process, accuracy and reliability are paramount to ensuring the success of DBS' service. As a result, DBS demands high standards of performance from its suppliers to meet those levels of achievement – an expectation that also applies to long-term partner SPS.

SPS' service to DBS goes beyond business-as-usual document management. The service must be hosted in an entirely secure location, with employees vetted to enhanced DBS check level, amongst other clearances. And with such an important job to fulfil, it is understandable that the department sets its expected SLAs at 99.9% for all 12,000 monthly applications.

Meeting both the expected service and security requirements provided a significant challenge to SPS, but one the company was more than willing to rise to.

Dedicated and secure delivery

To ensure that DBS' documents are as protected as possible, SPS created an enclosed, dedicated area to handle the department's data off-site. The area is only accessible by staff vetted to the level required to handle DBS' documents, with access managed by ID cards and 24/7 CCTV cameras.

SPS receives between 400 and 1000 incoming applications every day, the documents are then prepared, scanned and validated before the extracted data is sent onto DBS for the required checks to take place. Once the applications have been processed by DBS, the data is returned to SPS to securely print the unique DBS certificates and dispatched directly to the applicants – utilising SPS' favourable downstream access rates.

SPS has been successful in supporting the DBS application process since 2013 and were excited by the opportunity to renew the contract in 2021. Following a rigorous procurement process, SPS was chosen to continue delivering for DBS, this time directly rather than via a third-party. The result has been the building of a closer relationship between the two, enabling SPS to support ongoing projects more directly.

Digital transformation has quickly become a part of the agenda, beginning with the digitisation of DBS' large paper archive. The department stored physical paper records in an off-site archive. The records comprised years of highly sensitive data on individuals, posing a challenge for data retrieval. With closer communication now possible between the two, SPS offered to store and steadily digitise the records on DBS' behalf, securely destroying relevant records once scanned. Digitised records will ultimately provide DBS with a more cost-effective storage model, and much improved access to archived documents.

A decade of reliability

The key benefit gained by DBS in the last ten years of partnership with SPS has been dependability. With SPS consistently exceeding its 99.9% SLA, the department can have full peace of mind that all its seven million applications will be processed and sent accurately.

Since the 2021 renewal and archiving project, SPS and DBS have been exploring new projects to further boost the efficiency of the application process, with some success. SPS has since helped to procure a new paper supplier for the certificate printing process, resulting in a more reliable and cost-effective supply chain.

As improvements continue to be made, DBS can be certain that SPS is a partner it can trust to deliver on its promises. With millions of workplaces and volunteer organisations across the UK dependent on DBS to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults, the department knows that SPS embodies its core requirement for any close partner: reliability.



Disclosure & Barring Service

About the Client

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) helps employers make safer recruitment decisions each year by processing and issuing DBS checks for England, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. DBS also maintains the Adults' and Children's Barred Lists, and makes considered decisions as to whether an individual should be included on one or both of these lists and barred from engaging in regulated activity.

Learn more

