

Private Members' Modern Slavery Bill dropped but the Modern Slavery Act 2015 remains fully in force

The Modern Slavery (Transparency in Supply Chains) Bill has effectively been dropped by its sponsoring MP and will not progress any further.

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The Modern Slavery (Transparency in Supply Chains) Bill would have required in scope commercial organisations and public bodies to include a statement on slavery and human trafficking in their annual report and accounts; and contracting authorities to exclude from procurement procedures economic operators who have not provided such a statement. However, the Bill has effectively been dropped by its sponsoring MP and will not progress any further.

Organisations could and arguably should choose to adopt some or all of the changes in the Bill on a voluntary basis, as part of their approach to combating modern slavery in their organisation and its supply chains. Excluding such economic operators from a procurement process is relatively straightforward and should help the contracting authority 'sleep at night'. An authority ought to view a 'cut and paste' statement as providing little if any reassurance. Adding the statement to the annual report and accounts is likely to become common place and be expected. Little additional work is required and the reputation of the organisation is enhanced. Adding the statement avoids an organisation having to explain its absence.

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