



Introduction to Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs)

- **What is a SAR?**

A SAR is a Suspicious Activity Report, a piece of information which alerts law enforcement that certain client/customer activity is in some way suspicious and might indicate money laundering or terrorist financing.

- **Why do I have to submit a SAR?**

Submitting a SAR provides law enforcement with valuable information on potential criminality as well as protecting you, your organisation and UK financial institutions from the risk of laundering the proceeds of crime.

By submitting a SAR to SOCA you will be complying with any potential obligations you have under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

- **When do I submit a SAR?**

As soon as you '**know**' or '**suspect**' that a person is engaged in money laundering or dealing in criminal property, you must submit a SAR.

- **Do I have to submit a SAR if I am not in the regulated sector?**

Even if you are not in the regulated sector, you may have an obligation to submit a SAR. You may commit an offence if you have '**knowledge**' or '**suspicion**' of money laundering activity or criminal property, do something to assist another in dealing with it, and fail to make a SAR. Submitting a SAR provides a defence against committing a money laundering offence.

- **Is the information contained in the SAR I submit held securely?**

All users of SARs adhere to specific guidelines to protect the confidentiality of SARs. Once a SAR is received by SOCA it is held on a secure database with strictly limited access to appropriate law enforcement and government agency staff. **THE INFORMATION IS ALWAYS HELD IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE.** If in the unlikely event you are made aware that any confidentiality may have been breached, you should contact SOCA on Freephone 0800 234 6657 immediately.

- **May I inform a client/customer that I have made a report?**

You must not say anything to your client/customer which leads to an investigation being prejudiced. If that provides you with particular difficulties you can seek guidance from SOCA. In certain cases a form of words can be agreed that may overcome problems.

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- **What is consent in relation to SARs?**

Persons and businesses generally, and not just those in the regulated sectors, may avail themselves of a defence against money laundering charges by seeking, via a SAR, the consent of the SOCA UKFIU to conduct a transaction or undertake other activity about which they have concerns. The legislation gives SOCA seven working days to respond. Where SOCA refuses consent, the transaction or activity must not proceed for a further 31 calendar days or, if earlier, until further notified by SOCA.

Further information is available at www.soca.gov.uk or SOCA Consent desk 020 7238 8282 option 4.

- **Who do I send SARs to?**

To: The Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA)
How: Through the SAR Online System

SOCA's electronic SAR Online system will allow your business to submit SARs in a secure and efficient manner and to receive a prompt acknowledgement. The SAR Online system is accessible through a link on the SOCA website (www.soca.gov.uk) or directly at <https://www.ukciu.gov.uk/saronline.aspx>

- **How do I register with SAR Online?**

You will require a unique email address in order to register for this service, and you can register by internet at the above address. You will be supplied with a password by email, and when your account has been activated, you will be able to login, complete and submit SARs.

- **Enquiries and Support**

Further help or guidance is available at www.soca.gov.uk. SOCA's dedicated support team provides a helpdesk facility to address problems encountered with any aspect of SAR Online. The support team is available from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays). Please telephone 020 7238 8282 and select option '3' from the menu.

Further details on the UK's legislation and money laundering regulations are available from your regulator or the websites of Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT) or the Home Office (HO). Hard copy SARs can still be faxed to SOCA's UK Financial Intelligence Unit on 020 7238 8286 or posted to: UKFIU, PO Box 8000, London SE11 5EN. *Please Note:* No acknowledgement will be sent out by SOCA for SARs submitted in hard copy.
