

## **MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT**

Highways England supports the government's objectives to eradicate modern slavery and human trafficking. We recognise the significant role that we play in both combatting it and supporting victims. We are committed to ensuring our supply chains and business activities are free from ethical and labour standards abuses. Steps taken to date include:

### **People**

The company makes appropriate pre-employment checks on all directly employed staff. Only agencies on approved frameworks are used for temporary employment and a standard requirement of these are to provide assurance that pre-employment checks are conducted.

There is a range of policies and procedures designed to protect our staff from poor treatment or exploitation, which comply with all relevant employment law and the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service code of practice. These include the provision of fair pay rates based on nationally negotiated terms and conditions of employment. There is also a range of benefits, including health and wellbeing support, and access to training and development opportunities.

Where changes to employment, work, organisation and policies and procedures are proposed, there is communication, consultation and negotiation with the Trade Unions, as appropriate. Efforts to engage and involve staff in matters which affect them include regular staff briefings and consultation with a range of staff forums, including BAME and LGBT+ and Allies.

### **Procurement and our supply chain**

Most of our products and services are purchased from UK or EU based firms, who may also be required to comply with the requirements of the UK Modern Slavery Act (2015) or similar legislation in other EU states. A significant number of products are purchased through our supply chain, whose 'Supplier Code of Conduct' includes a provision around forced labour.

Where possible, and consistent with the Public Contracts Regulations, we build long-standing relationships with our suppliers.

### **Training**

Advice and training about modern slavery and human trafficking is available to staff through our counter-fraud team and supported by our modern slavery policy and procedure. This year, specific training was provided to a range of key staff members across our operations, major projects and commercial and procurement teams. A new awareness package specifically for modern slavery is under development and will be rolled out across the relevant parts of the business in 2020-21.

### **Responding**

Any concerns about modern slavery are taken seriously and managed sensitively. This includes referring to external agencies, such as the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority and the Home Office, where appropriate.