

Compliance & Risk

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- UK competition authority to probe pensions market, p.17
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Research report says UK slavery checks not fit for purpose

A study by the Universities of Sheffield and Bath has found that UK businesses are running the risk of employing forced labour because they do not know enough about their staff. According to the researchers, this means that their checks are not “fit for purpose” to uncover modern slavery, with widespread use of outsourcing, subcontracting and temporary workers making it harder to spot victims of slave labour.

The university study, which focused on the construction and food industries, is one of the

first to examine forced labour in UK companies. The report's lead author, Professor Andrew Crane of the University of Bath, said: “Companies have little hope of detecting modern slavery practices unless they adopt a new approach that focuses specifically on their labour supply chains”.

The National Crime Agency has said that previous estimates of 10,000-13,000 victims of slave labour in the UK were the “tip of the iceberg”, and Home Office Minister Sarah Newton said the government was “considering what further

steps may be necessary” to ensure all large businesses report properly and take effective action on forced labour.

In the report, Dr Genevieve LeBaron, a politics lecturer at the University of Sheffield said that businesses should “be able to trace the origin of their employees in the same way as most now can for their products”.

Labour supply chains can make forced labour “seemingly invisible even when the workers subjected to them are right in

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Record £7.8m penalty for online gambling firm 888

The online gambling firm 888 has been ordered to pay a record penalty of £7.8m after it failed to protect vulnerable customers.

An investigation by the Gambling Commission highlighted a technical failure which meant 7,000 customers who had chosen to bar themselves from their 888 accounts were still able to gamble.

The regulator said there were “significant flaws” in

the firm's social responsibility processes, and Sarah Harrison, Chief Executive at the Gambling Commission, said the penalty would ensure that “lessons are learnt”.

888 said it had been working co-operatively with the regulator throughout the review resulting in the voluntary settlement, adding it was “committed to providing players with a responsible as well as enjoyable

gaming experience”.

Part of the penalty paid by 888 will be used to repay £3.5m in deposits made by the customers who had self-excluded themselves when they wanted to stop gambling. The regulator confirmed, “Our requirements are that every company must provide the facility for every customer to be able to bar themselves

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