

Construction workers to challenge Met over blacklist

Decision by the Metropolitan police not to investigate claims that officers supplied information to the blacklist faces appeal by workers' lawyers

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Solicitors acting for thousands of construction workers are appealing a decision by the [Metropolitan police](#) not to investigate claims that officers supplied information to an illegal blacklist of construction workers.

Christian Khan solicitors, representing the Blacklist Support Group, submitted a complaint to the Independent [Police](#) Complaints Commission and the Met in November. But it has now emerged that the complaint was "non-recorded" with a spokesman for the IPCC saying it was too general.

Sarah McSherry, a partner at Christian Khan solicitors, called the police response "deplorable".

"The complaints process is the only forum in which criminal allegations against police officers can be investigated yet the [Met's] directorate of professional standards refuse to record the complaint, suggesting that our clients 'should report the matter as a crime in the normal way' as the 'complaints process is not the correct vehicle to forward their concerns or allegations'", McSherry told Building magazine. "This smacks of a complete lack of knowledge of the Police Reform Act and indeed the very function of the directorate of professional standards." McSherry added that they would be appealing the decision.

More than [half of the country's leading construction firms were using the blacklist run by the Consulting Association](#) in 2009 when the operation was shut down, paying an annual £3,000-a-year subscription plus £2.20 for each blacklist check.

Many of those on the list were forced into destitution because they could not find work. Earlier this week it emerged that the same organisation was running [a separate blacklist on environmental campaigners](#) in an attempt to disrupt direct action campaigns on major development projects.

The information commissioner carried out the original investigation and David Clancy, its investigations manager and a former police officer, said

some of information he recovered from [the Consulting Association list](#) ["could only" have come from the police or security services.](#)

In parliament last week blacklisting [was described as a "secret, insidious, shameful practice"](#) and this week business secretary, Vince Cable, announced that he is to meet with the information commissioner to discuss how to handle the scandal and any new information that may emerge.

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