

## MP Enquiries

This procedure take you through the steps to follow when parliamentary contact raises a general or case specific enquiry.

This action is within MP Contact and is dealt with by a parliamentary caseworker within the resolutions team.

Parliamentary contact is received, either via the regional MP Hotlines or by written contact.

Parliamentary contact is from the office (including secretaries, researchers, and briefing aids) of a Member of Parliament (MP), Minister, Member of Legislative Assembly or Member of the House of Lords. All these positions will be covered by the term MP in the parliamentary contact process. Enquiries may also be received from Members of Scottish Parliament (MSP), Members of European Parliament (MEP) and Assembly Members (Wales).

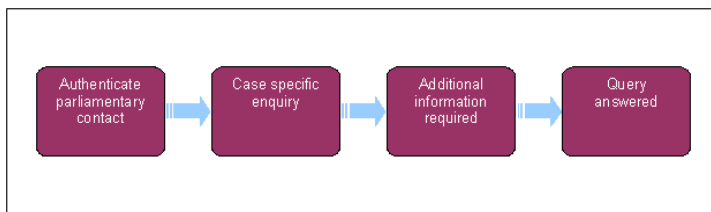
MP enquiries, queries and complaints are held against the individual MP's record on the system. MP records are created following any election or by-election by the Government Relations Unit.

Parliamentary contact can be categorised into four types:

- A general enquiry – this can be an enquiry from a parliamentary office, e.g. a question on how the maintenance calculation works
- A case enquiry – requesting information on a constituents case
- A parliamentary complaint – a complaint on behalf of a constituent. For more information refer to [Complaint/Dissatisfaction - Log](#) and [Complaint Resolution](#).
- Parliamentary requests for information – a parliamentary question, ministerial briefing or adjournment debate. For more information refer to [Parliamentary Question/Ministerial Briefing](#).


Once parliamentary contact has been received, the parliamentary caseworker needs to authenticate the contact, gather all required information and then answer the enquiry. If the parliamentary caseworker identifies that the contact relates to a complaint rather than an enquiry they need to progress a resolution complaint and cancel the enquiry. For more information please refer to [Complaint/Dissatisfaction - Log](#) and [Complaint Resolution](#)

For more information refer to the Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance. 



 When speaking to clients always use the new terminology - for more information refer to the [Terminology Changes](#).

### Parliamentary Contact Received

 Certain critical performance targets cannot be measured accurately in the 2012 system. Each stage of the parliamentary contact and MP hotline process are recorded in the [Respond](#) database system. For more information refer to the following link [Respond and reporting](#) and [Management Information - ICE/PHSO/Parliamentary Contact](#).

1. Parliamentary contact will be received, either via the Member of Parliament (MP) Hotline, written contact, email or in some instances a warm transfer from a Business as Usual Caseworker (BAU) For more information refer to [Complaint - Third Party](#).

 If Parliamentary contact is received by a BAU Caseworker, refer to [Complaint/Dissatisfaction - Log](#)

2. Where contact has been made by letter/email go to **step 12**. If contact has been made by phone, whilst on the phone you will need to collect the following details from the caller:

- Last name
- First name
- If the MP isn't the person making contact, you will need to take the MP's name

- MP's Constituency
  - You will also need to determine the purpose of the contact.
3. Once you have determined who is making contact and the purpose of the call, you will need to inform the caller that you will call them back on their published number. Where the phone number does not match the House of Commons or constituency phone numbers, advise that as a precaution we will always call them back on their constituency number. This is to ensure that the contact is being made by a valid parliamentary source.  
If the parliamentary contact relates to a complaint rather than an enquiry, close and cancel the enquiry and raise a resolution complaint. For more information refer to [Complaint/Dissatisfaction - Log](#) and [Complaint Resolution](#).



You can use both internet and intranet directories to verify the phone number eg <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/>

4. Where the phone query is non case specific, you will need to create a service request (SR) via the contact rather than the third party account. Go to the **Contacts** screen and select the **Contacts Query View**.
5. Query on the MP's name. Select the appropriate last name hyperlink to go to the **Contacts Summary View**.
6. Where necessary, populate any fields associated with the inbound activity.
7. Confirm that the inbound call has come through to the correct geographical location. On the occasions where the call has come through to the wrong location, contact the correct geographical complaints team so they can continue from **step 8**.
8. Select the Type **Call - Inbound** hyperlink to go to the service request view. Create the following SR:
- **Process = Escalated Enquiries**
  - **Area = Parliamentary Contact**
  - **Sub Area =** Depending on the purpose of the contact possible entries are Enquiry, Ministerial Briefing, Parliamentary Question or Adjournment Debate.
9. In the event the contact is regarding a ministerial briefing, parliamentary question or adjournment debate update the **Notes** to record the purpose of the contact, update the Director General Case-list, and if required contact the Government Relations Unit.
10. Select the **SR#** hyperlink to navigate to the **More Info** view.
11. Set the SR status to **In Progress** to generate the activity plan. Do not set the **Status** to **Pending Assignment**. Go to **step 17**.
12. If written contact/email has been received, you must validate the contact by comparing the contact details on the correspondence to those held on the MP's record. Written notification from an MP received on 'Letterhead' paper will be accepted as verification that the contact details are valid without further investigation. MP phone numbers need to be validated by external directories before making calls to the MP. Email addresses can be verified at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/>. All non minor changes to an MP's record need to be validated by an outbound call to the MP to confirm (a minor change is defined as a simple spelling mistake in organisation\contact name\address and a change to preferred contact method).



Parliamentary contact via email is an acceptable form of written inbound contact. However, all responses must be made via letter or call.



13. Create an **Escalated Enquiries** SR.
14. From the drop down select:
- **Process = Escalated Enquiries**
  - **Area = Parliamentary Contact**
  - **Sub Area =** Depending on the purpose of the contact possible entries are Enquiry, Ministerial Briefing, Parliamentary Question or Adjournment Debate.
15. In the event the contact is regarding a ministerial briefing, parliamentary question or adjournment debate update the **Notes** to record the purpose of the contact, update the Director General Case-list, and if required contact the Government Relations Unit.
16. Once the SR has been created you will need to search for the parliamentary contact.
17. If only the Constituency information is supplied:
- Go to Third Party Account Screen
  - Select Constituency in Name column
  - Note MP primary contact details, First and Last Name etc.
- Or if the MP Name is known (or found out by previously checking the Constituency):
- Go to Contacts Screen

- Select Contact Query View
- Query on MP details
- Select the appropriate Last Name hyperlink
- Select Service Request View
- Select "New" and create Parliamentary Contact SR



The Complaints Review team will receive updates to MP details and will raise a third party SR for the Third Party team to update the record. The Third Party team can apply updates by using the parliamentary website for official information <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/>.

## Authentication

18. Once the MP has been found, if the original contact was made via telephone you can call the MPs office back. If the original contact was made by written correspondence you should compare the provided contact details to those held on the system.
19.  If the original contact was made by phone, using the published constituency contact number, call the MPs office to check the parliamentary contact is authentic.
20.  When the contact has been authenticated, update:

- **Parliamentary Contact Authenticated = Y**
- **Letter = Outbound**

If required issue letter CMSL5600. Ensure that the additional paragraph giving a named caseworker is inserted into the letter. This is detailed in the Customer Materials tab. For more information on sending this letter to an MP refer to **Letters (Outbound) - Send to Client**; step 11. You need to ensure that;

- The content of the drafted letter is appropriate as a response to the original enquiry. Refer to the [Style Guide](#) for help with this.
- The action taken is correct.
- Grammar and spelling, including the client's name and address is correct.



An outbound acknowledgement letter will be required when the original contact was made via letter and the enquiry cannot be answered immediately.

21. If the MPs office has no knowledge of the contact or the contact details on the correspondence do not match those held on the MPs record then the authentication has failed. Update:

- **Resolution Code = Authentication Failed**

Then close the SR by setting the following values:

- **Status = Closed**
- **Sub Status = Complete**

22. When the contact has been validated open the SR and update the fields:

- **Last name** = Last name of person making contact
- **First name** = First name of person making contact
- **Type** = Select the most relevant from the drop down:
  - Debt
  - Constituency Cases
  - Organisation
  - Enforcement
  - Policy
  - Consolatory Payment
  - Parentage

- Telephony
- Options
- HR
- IT
- Migration & Conversion
- Running Costs
- Complaints
- Arrears Action
- Errors
- Statistics
- Shared Care
- Staffing
- Targets/Performance
- Advertising
- Data Protection
- HMRC
- Benefits
- Financial Redress
- Refunds
- Operational Procedure
- **Addressee** = Commissioner, Minister or Business in General
- **Question/Enquiry** = details of the contact

Once these fields are updated change the **Status** of the SR to **In Progress**. This generates an activity plan for you to follow.

## Query Answered Immediately

23. If you are able to provide an answer to the query immediately, you can provide the answer during the authentication call, if you received written correspondence that has been authenticated and the preferred method of contact is phone then you can call them immediately and provide an answer. Once the query is answered update:

- **Answer** = Enter the answer that you have provided to the enquiry
- **Resolution Code** = **Information Provided**

This closes the SR. Update the Director General caselist.

## Case Specific Enquiry



When an enquiry is case specific and the MP has been validated, this is sufficient evidence that the client has given them consent to access case information. Data Protection guidelines should be followed and only information relevant to the enquiry should be disclosed.




24. For MP Hotline enquiries; link the enquiry from SR view of the client's case, and select **New** to create a **Parliamentary Contact/Enquiries** SR. Link the SR to the client **Contact** and the MP Constituency **Account**. Add the MP as the **Source** and continue with the activity plan.
25. For written correspondence enquiries; link the from the Service Request sub view within the Inbound Correspondence View and select **New** to create a **Parliamentary Contact/Enquiries** SR. Select the SR hyperlink and associate the enquiry to the **Case**, the client **Contact** and the MP Constituency **Account**. Add the MP as the **Source** and continue with the activity plan. For more information also refer to [Correspondence \(Inbound\)](#)

## Additional Information Required

26. Where an enquiry cannot be resolved immediately, during the authentication call you should advise the MPs office that they will receive an answer within 15 working days.

27. When additional information is required it is the parliamentary caseworkers responsibility to conduct any necessary research to answer the enquiry. When information is required from another area of the business you will need to contact them by any means necessary.
28. When you have the answer you need to update the **Answer** field in the SR with details of who the information was received from (if not yourself) and what answer has been collated.
29. In the event the information requested is not recorded and/or the cost of gathering an answer exceeds the disproportionate cost, the SR should be updated with Information not available in the **Answer** field.

## Query Answered

30.  Where the preferred method of contact is phone, call the MPs office and provide the answer to the enquiry, as recorded on the SR.
31.  If the preferred method of contact is letter, **CMSL5600** MP general enquiry should be issued advising the MP of the answer to the enquiry. Ensure that the additional paragraph giving a named caseworker is inserted into the letter. This is detailed in the **Customer Materials** tab.
  -  Check the <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/> website to identify if the MP has the title Rt. Hon. If the MP does, **CMSL5600** should be issued clerically using the contingency process, enter the full title and name in the address header. The salutation should not include the additional title Rt. Hon.
32. Once the MP has been given the answer to the enquiry, change the **Sub Status** of the SR to **Complete** and complete all activities. Update the Director General caselist.

### CMSL5600 To MP in answer to general enquiry

Basic template to respond to an enquiry from an MP

- If the enquiry was a request for information, use paragraph code **TM\_01378\_E** "Thank you for your information request" and insert the date of the MP request into the freetext date field
- If the enquiry was a general enquiry, use paragraph code **TM\_01379\_E** "Thank you for your enquiry" and insert the date of the MP enquiry into the freetext date field
- If the enquiry was a complaint, use paragraph code **TM\_01380\_E** "Thank you for your complaint" and insert the date of the MP complaint into the freetext date field
- Use the freetext response field to answer the MP's enquiry.
- In the feetext box underneath your response, insert: If [name (of the client)] requires any further information, they can call 0845 266 8792 from Monday to Friday between 8.00 am and 8.00 pm or Saturday from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm, and ask to speak to [case worker], who is a [job title]. [case worker] normally works from [day] to [day] between [h.mm xm] and [ h.mm xm], but if they are unavailable when [name] calls, one of their colleagues will be pleased to help. [Name] will need their 12-digit Client Reference Number, beginning 12, to hand when they call.

Insert your telephone number into the freetext telephone number field at the end of the "If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on" paragraph.

[Complaint/Dissatisfaction - Log](#)

[Letters \(Outbound\) - Send to Client](#)

[Management Information - ICS/PHSO/Parliamentary Contact](#)

[Parliamentary Question/Ministerial Briefing](#)

[Respond And Reporting](#)

[Terminology Changes](#)

[Wet Signature](#)

<http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/>

### Who deals with a query from a Member of Parliament (MP)?

MP queries are dealt with by parliamentary caseworkers within the resolutions team.

[Is there a time limit on answering a query from MP's?](#)

Yes, where a query cannot be resolved immediately you will need to advise the MPs office they will receive an answer within five working days.