

The Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP
Chair of the Business and Trade Sub-Committee on Economic Security, Arms and Export Controls
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

22 July 2025

Dear Liam,

UK GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON RANSOMWARE LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

I am writing to you in your role as the Chair of the Business and Trade Sub-Committee on Economic Security, Arms and Export Controls to inform you that the Home Office will publish its response to the public consultation today on proposals to reduce ransomware attacks and harden the UK as a target. In light of your committee's clear interest in ransomware, demonstrated during the 8 July oral evidence session, I wanted to share a direct update. The consultation was open for 12 weeks (from 14th January 2025 to 8th April 2025) and revealed strong public support for continued action against cyber criminals and the need to protect vital public services.

Recent ransomware incidents highlight the threat and damage these types of attacks have on our economy and way of life. Attacks across the UK retail sector caused widespread disruption. Marks & Spencer revealed that ongoing harm from a ransomware attack would likely cost the company at least £300 million. Cyber criminal activity against the Legal Aid Agency has caused disruption and distress for vulnerable people seeking to access important services.

It is this significant risk of harm that warrants focused and specific intervention to reduce the impact of ransomware across the UK. The proposals in the consultation aim to break the ransomware business model, change victim behaviour, and harden the UK against this threat.

The proposed measures are:

- **A targeted ban on ransomware payments for CNI and the public sector.**
- **A ransomware payment prevention regime for all ransomware payments.**
- **A ransomware incident mandatory reporting regime.**

During the consultation process, the Government received 273 responses, of which 233 were via the online survey or followed the survey format. A further 40 responses took other forms such as emails or written prose. Alongside formal responses, the Government held 36 events to encourage engagement in the consultation process, engaging over 1000 stakeholders. Respondents to the consultation included a mix of organisations and individuals.

The overall response to the proposals has been broadly positive. There were high levels of engagement and thoughtful commentary throughout.

- Nearly three quarters (72%) of respondents agreed that HMG should implement a targeted ban on ransomware payments for CNI owners and operators and the public sector, including local government. CNI/public sector respondents showed high levels of agreement for the targeted ban (82%).
- There were mixed views on a new ransomware payment prevention regime, but of the measures presented, an economy-wide payment prevention regime for all organisations and individuals not covered by the targeted ban had marginally more support (47% net agreement) than the other measures.
- Respondents were supportive of an introduction of an economy-wide mandatory incident reporting regime (63%).

Other cross cutting themes were also identified from the feedback. This included questions concerning the scope of the proposals and definitions of CNI, the types of penalties/enforcement that might accompany any ransomware payment ban legislation and further types of support the Government could offer organisations to strengthen their resilience against ransomware attacks.

This package of proposals would be the first specific measures in UK law to counter ransomware. The Government will continue to reflect on, and consider, expert feedback when finalising any legislative proposals. The Government will continue to work alongside key stakeholders and industry to develop these proposals further and ensure consistency and alignment with the proposals in the forthcoming Cyber Security and Resilience Bill.

My officials would be happy to continue discussions with your team to update them on any proposed legislation as policy work progresses.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Dan Jarvis', followed by a horizontal line.

Dan Jarvis MBE MP
Minister for Security