

PRESS RELEASE – for immediate release

Monday 9 January 2023

The launch of new pressure group to raise the profile of human trafficking and to promote solutions comes in response to a 40% increase of modern slavery complaints

The [Anti-Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit](#) (ATLEU), a legal charity working exclusively with survivors of trafficking and modern slavery, is collaborating with [7BR](#), Chambers of Rachel Langdale KC, to launch the Trafficking Compensation Action Group (TCAG).

TCAG will bring together practitioners who conduct trafficking and modern slavery compensation claims, in order to share best practice, improve access to justice, and to provide each other with advice and support. The group will be open to anyone, including those issuing modern slavery compensation claims and survivors of trafficking.

The launch of TCAG is particularly timely in view of the deteriorating landscape for trafficked survivors, both with regard to their identification as victims and the reflection and recovery from their experiences. In 2022, the Home Office released its Modern Slavery statistical bulletin breaking down the number of potential victims flagged to the [National Referral Mechanism](#) (NRM). The NRM is the first response mechanism for potential victims of modern slavery in the UK, that observed a 38% increase in Q3 2022 in comparison to Q3 2021, the highest number of referrals since the NRM began.

The launch will take place at 7BR, whose [barristers](#) are regularly instructed in compensation matters brought by survivors of trafficking. To mark the launch of the initiative, 7BR and ATLEU will host an expert panel discussion on 7 Bedford Row on 12 January 2023 at 6pm-9pm, chaired by Jamila Duncan-Bosu, who is a solicitor at ATLEU.

The panellists will consist of:

- Susannah Johnson, Barrister at 7BR;
- Rose Harvey-Sullivan, Barrister at 7BR;
- Nusrat Uddin, Solicitor, Wilsons LLP;
- Louisa Leeper, Managing Director, FIND; and
- Urmila Bhoola, Principal Research Fellow, University of Nottingham's Rights Lab Law and Policy Programme.

For those interested in attending this in-person event, please email Christianah Babajide at RSVP@7br.co.uk, by the 11th of January to register your interest.

Jamila Duncan-Bosu, solicitor at ATLEU says:

“Compensation is vital to promoting recovery, punishing perpetrators and preventing trafficking, yet accessing legal advice and assistance is extremely difficult. Horrifyingly, some of our own clients have died, still waiting for their claims to be processed. We want the TCAG to support more advisors in this work and to improve the help available to survivors. One of ATLEU's core beliefs is that compensation

for victims of trafficking and modern slavery is crucial to helping them rebuild their lives. This is because most survivors are destitute after escaping their traffickers, having been paid little or nothing, often for years, so receiving compensation provides the financial security to reduce their vulnerability to further exploitation.”

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Notes to Editors

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About 7BR

7BR is a leading set of Barristers’ Chambers, based in Central London, with a countrywide and international reach. In terms of practice areas 7BR is, and has been for many years, a broad based multi-disciplinary set with complementary practice areas. These include [Personal Injury](#) and [Clinical Negligence](#), [Employment](#), Family, Crime, Financial Crime, Commercial and Regulatory work.

About ATLEU

The Anti-Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit is a charity providing legal representation to victims of trafficking and labour exploitation, assisting victims to obtain safety, recovery and redress.

About TCAG

The Trafficking Compensation Action Group, led by ATLEU, aims to bring together practitioners who conduct trafficking and modern slavery compensation claims, in order to share best practice, improve access to justice and provide each other with advice and support. The group is open to anyone, helping survivors with trafficking and modern slavery compensation claims.

Case study

The High Court awarded damages in excess of £700,000 to three survivors for what it described as an ‘egregious example of modern slavery’.

ATLEU represented the three men for a number of years. They were all in vulnerable situations in Hungary, facing homelessness or financial insecurity. They were approached by traffickers with the promise of jobs and good wages in the UK.

When the men arrived in this country, they were forced to work in appalling conditions in a Yorkshire bed factory, which sold products to well-known high street retailers, such as John Lewis, Next and Dunhelm.

The clients were made to work up to 14 hours a day, often seven days a week for just £10 per week and two packets of tobacco. Their accommodation was squalid and overcrowded: one of the clients lived in a house shared with 13 other workers, sleeping on a thin mattress on the floor. Their food each day consisted of ‘two slices of bread and animal fat’. The men lived in constant fear due to threats of violence from the people who had trafficked them. After managing to escape, the men were diagnosed with psychiatric injuries including PTSD and two of the three men have been unable to work as a direct result of their injuries.

The High Court awarded the money to cover general damages, past and future loss of earnings, and to meet the costs of the medical treatment they needed. They also found that the shocking conduct of the employer merited an award of exemplary damages to each claimant.

The Queen's Bench Master closed by expressing his deep regret that the men had suffered conditions far below what he hoped they could expect in a country like the UK.