

PERSONNEL  
CHECKS

# Safety in numbers



The State of DBS Checks 2024

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# Who are the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)?

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are a non-departmental government body. They exist to help employers make safer recruitment decisions by providing them with criminal record and barring information, in the form of DBS Certificates.



# A Brief History of the DBS



The DBS are a relatively new organisation, formed on the 1st December 2012 following the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. This Act merged two existing agencies, the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). This merger aimed to streamline criminal record checks and create a centralised organisation with a responsibility for both criminal records checks and barring.

Within the DBS' first 4 months of operating, 1.2 million DBS certificates were issued. Since then, the DBS have processed more than 52 million DBS Basic, Standard and Enhanced checks. During that period more than 41,000 individuals have been placed on one or both Barred Lists.

The work the DBS carry out is fundamentally important to safeguarding and recruitment in the UK. They ensure that inappropriate people are prevented from working with vulnerable groups. In the rest of the eBook, we'll be taking a deep dive into the DBS' stats and figures that reflect this work.

# 2023 Figures Overview

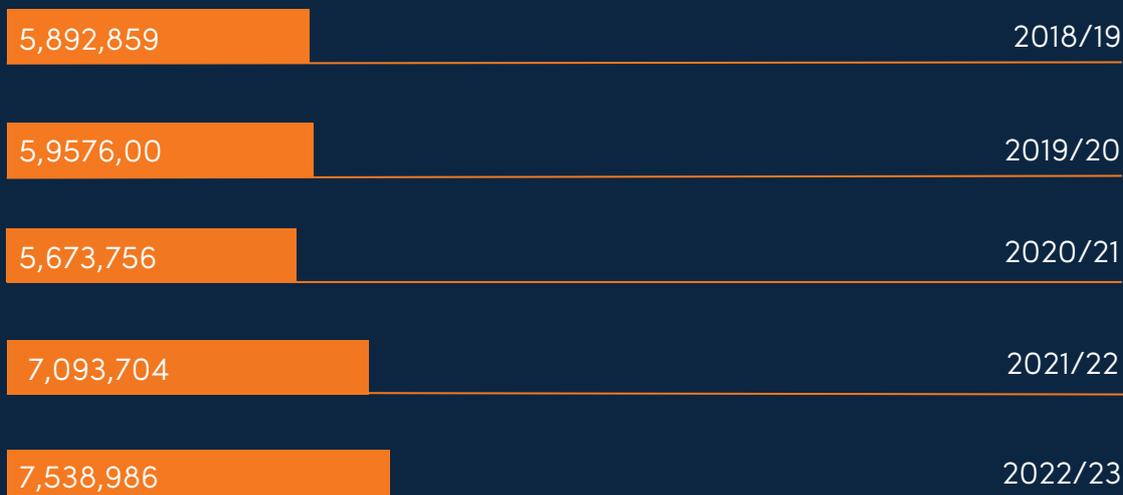


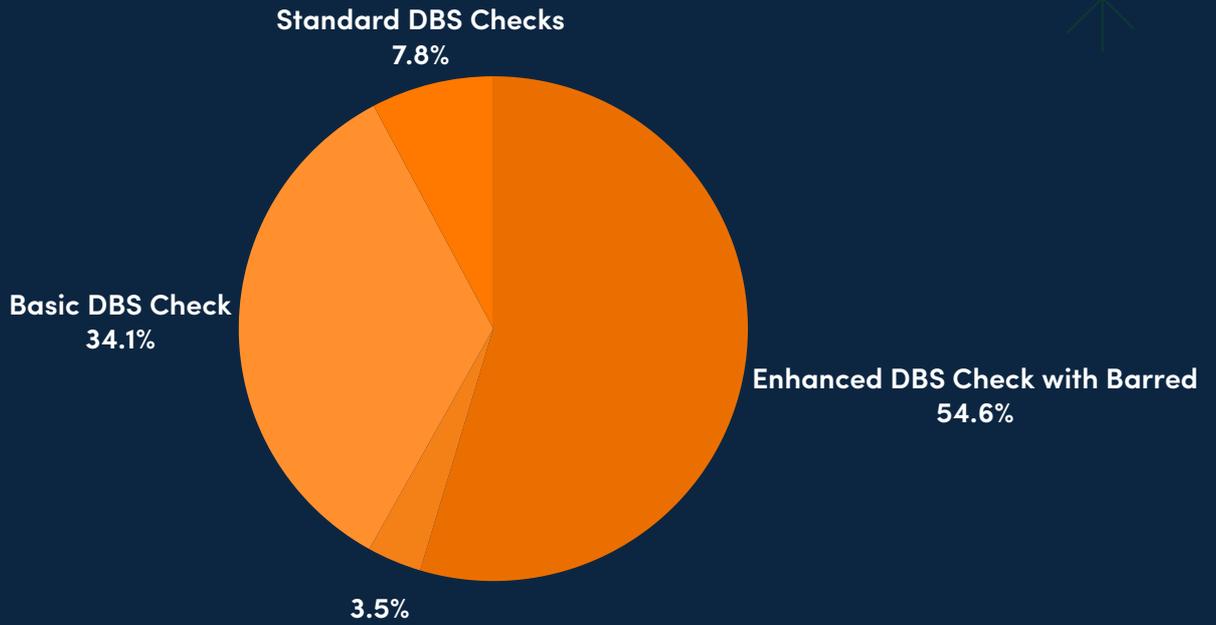
Between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, the DBS worked with 83 Responsible Organisations and 813 Registered Bodies.

**83** Responsible organizations

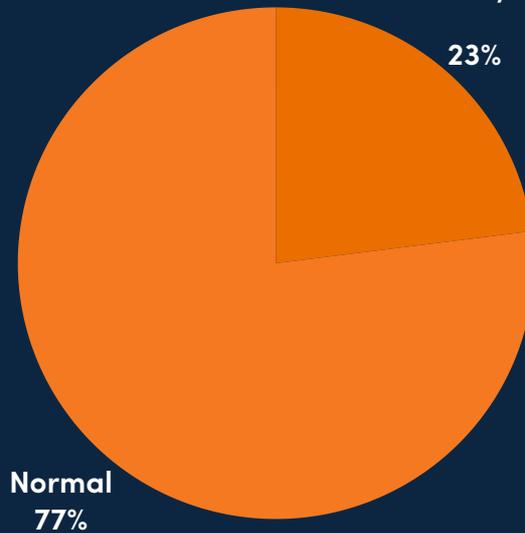
**813** Registered bodies

Between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, the DBS issued a total of 7,538,986 Basic, Standard, Enhanced and Enhanced with Barred List(s) check DBS certificates. This is an increase of 445,282 since 2021/22.





Standard & Enhanced DBS Checks were processed free-of-charge for the voluntary sector



The DBS Barred

**6266**

between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The average time to issue a DBS certificate (of any level) was

**6.26 days**

# Basic DBS Checks



Basic DBS Checks are the lowest level of criminal record check available to people in the UK. This level of DBS Check reveals any unspent cautions, convictions, reprimands, or warnings on someone's record.

Although historically Basic DBS Checks constituted a relatively small amount of total DBS Checks completed, in recent years they have experienced significant growth. Basic DBS Checks now account for just over a third of all DBS Checks completed.

This growth is likely motivated by several high-profile fraud and safeguarding cases in recent years.

Employers now have a far greater awareness of the power of screening tools in protecting their business and employees.

Average time to issue a Basic DBS Certificate was 1.1 calendar days

**85.2% of Basic DBS Certificates were issued within 2 calendar days.**

**2,642,272 Basic DBS Checks were carried out. A decrease of 14849 (-0.56%).**

**35.05% of all DBS Checks processed were Basic DBS Checks.**

# Standard DBS Checks

Standard DBS Checks are the least common type of criminal record check carried out. They account for less than 10% of all DBS Checks that the DBS complete. This level of check is uncommon because they are generally reserved for specific jobs or licences. This includes certain roles regulated by the gambling commission, as well as solicitors and accountants upon qualification. Standard DBS Checks reveal any spent or unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings on an individuals criminal record.

— **Average time to issue a Standard DBS Certificate was 1.6 calendar days.**

— **94.7% of Standard DBS Certificates were issued within 5 calendar days.**

— **396,122 Standard DBS Checks were carried out.**

— **An increase of 19934 (+5.29%).**

— **Standard DBS Checks only represent 8% of the total amount of DBS Checks processed in 2022/23.**

# Enhanced DBS Checks

Enhanced DBS Checks are the highest level of criminal record check available to UK employers. These checks reveal any spent or unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings on an individual's criminal record. They will also include any notes that the police consider relevant to the job role being applied for. In certain cases, they will also include a search of one or both barred lists.

**The average time to issue an Enhanced DBS Certificate was 10.7 calendar days.**

**78.4% of Enhanced DBS Certificates were issued within 14 calendar days. This is just less than 2% lower than the DBS target for the 22-23 calendar year, which was 80%. 267,720 Enhanced DBS Checks (without Barred Lists) were processed. An increase of 26,916 (+11.18%).**

**3.55% of DBS Checks processed were Enhanced no Barred.**

**4,232,872 Enhanced DBS Checks with one or more Barred List(s) included were processed. An increase of 413,281 (+10.82%).**

**56.14% of all DBS Checks processed were Enhanced with Barred.**

Enhanced DBS Checks can take significantly longer than both Basic and Standard DBS Checks. This is because the DBS applications need to be sent to any relevant police force which may contain information on the applicant.

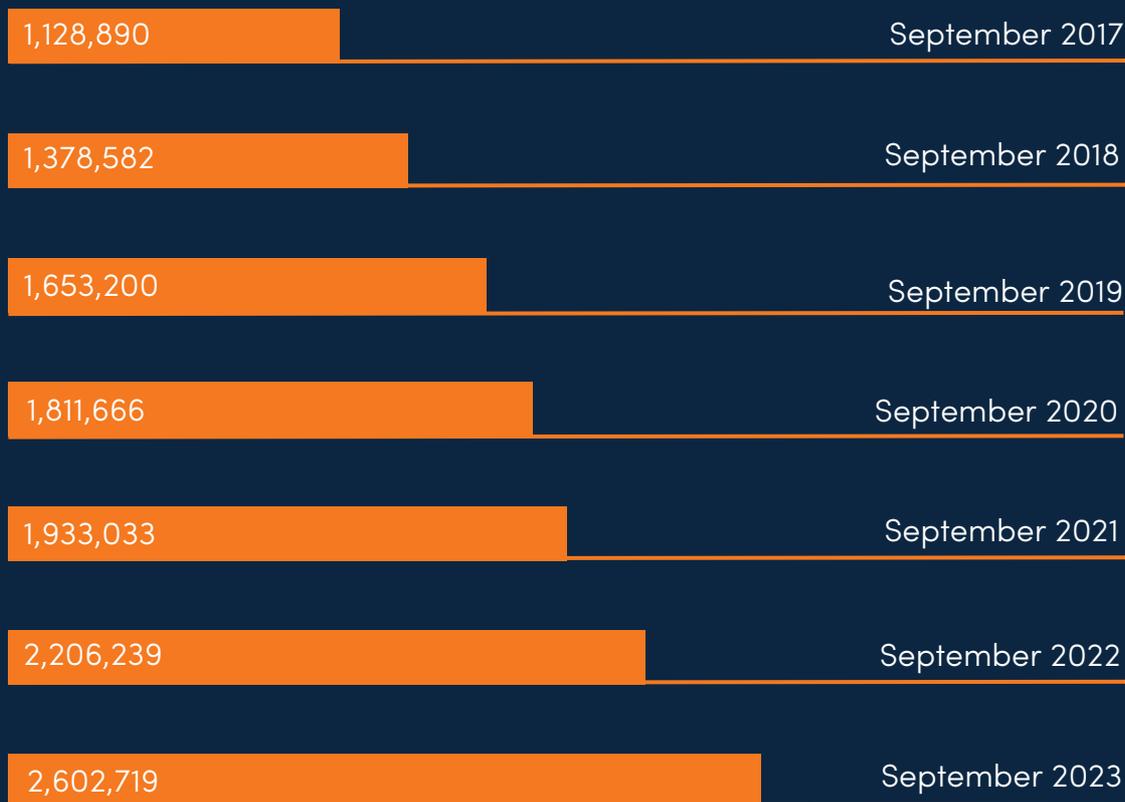
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- There are various factors which can impact how fast the police can process a DBS application:
  - Demand – fluctuations in demand for DBS checks, over and above anticipated volumes (police are staffed and resourced according to forecasted volumes).
  - Staffing – local recruitment and retention issues.
  - Systems/process – system changes, additions, upgrades and associated changes to processes and practices (including those that arise from changes in legislation and from government directives).

# The DBS Update Service



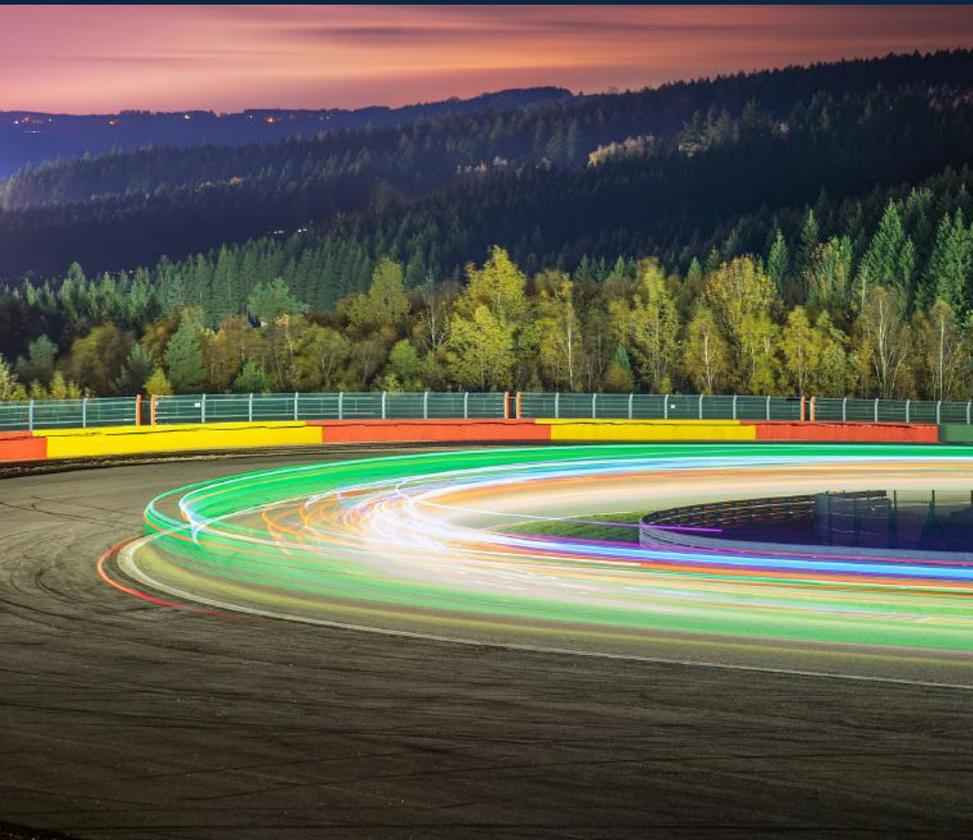
The DBS Update Service is a subscription service introduced by the DBS in 2013. This subscription allows holders of Standard or Enhanced DBS Certificates to register their details and keep the certificate up to date for a fee of £13 a year. This reduces the need for multiple DBS Checks to be carried out.



# Fast-Track DBS Checks Applications

2023 saw the end of the DBS' fast-track application route. This application route was set up in response to COVID-19 and provided discounted and prioritized DBS Checks for employers recruiting for roles relating to COVID-19.

In total the DBS processed 279,203 Standard or Enhanced DBS Checks in support of the governments COVID-19 initiatives.



# About Personnel Checks

Personnel Checks are the UK's highest-rated DBS Umbrella Body and background screening organisation. Working with over 30,000 companies across the UK, they process hundreds of thousands of DBS Checks every year.

If you would like to learn more about how Personnel Checks can support you with your screening compliance, you can get in touch via the details below:

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[sales@personnelchecks.co.uk](mailto:sales@personnelchecks.co.uk)

[www.personnelchecks.co.uk](http://www.personnelchecks.co.uk)

You can also follow us on social media to make sure you stay in the know:

