

# Return of probation service to public hand 'welcome'

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The GMB has welcomed the return of the probation service to public hands.

The move – confirmed by the Richard Buckland QC, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice is a victory for a long and hard-fought campaign by GMB and the Senior and Chief Officers of Probation (SCOOP)

It means delivery of important sentences of the court, alongside the offender management of medium and low risk offenders, will be taken in house seeing probation services in England and Wales fully restored to public ownership and control.

The Lord Chancellor also confirmed that the remaining 20% of work that remains outside public control will no longer be opened up for private tender and that the staff responsible for delivering those services will be brought under Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service.

GMB and SCOOP have been campaigning for the unification of these services since the organisation was split in 2014.

**George Georgiou, GMB National Officer, said:**

"This is a very welcome step and brings the probation service back into public ownership following years of increasing recidivism and ballooning costs. We are delighted that the Lord Chancellor has taken this pragmatic step. All the evidence suggests it will reduce reoffending, protect the public and save taxpayers money.

"There is much work to do still in harmonising the conditions of service of existing staff and filling an enormous number of vacancies and we are ready to work with the Government to achieve that."

