

INDEPENDENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE ADVISERS, INTERMEDIARIES AND WITNESS SUPPORTERS

The Law Commission has published a [consultation paper](#) that sets out provisional proposals for reform of the way that evidence is used in sexual offences prosecutions in England and Wales. The proposed reforms have three goals: improving understanding of consent and sexual harm by countering the effects of rape myths, improving the treatment of complainants, and ensuring that defendants receive a fair trial.

The consultation paper is necessarily detailed and covers a range of topics within the trial process. This document sets out the parts of the paper that may be of most relevance to **ISVAs, intermediaries and witness supporters**. In addition to this, our [summary document](#) provides an introduction and overview of all of the topics we cover in the full consultation paper. We have also published a document that gives a very brief overview of our [key proposals](#) (and does not therefore cover all the areas we consider in the full consultation paper).

How to respond

We welcome responses to the questions posed in our consultation paper. The easiest way to do this is to access the consultation questions using our online form [here](#). You can navigate to the sections relevant to you, and answer any or all questions. You can also respond to our summary consultation [here](#). Alternatively, you can email us your answers at evidence.raso@lawcommission.gov.uk

Most relevant areas in the consultation paper

As our review is concerned with the use of evidence in trials, we generally do not consider matters that arise at other stages of the criminal justice process. This means we have not specifically considered, for example, the ISVA role outside of court proceedings. However, there are some aspects of our review that directly impact the work of ISVAs, intermediaries and witness supporters, and others have an indirect impact. Below we set out the areas of the consultation paper we think will be of most relevance to you, with paragraph references and consultation question numbers for ease of reference.

Access, disclosure and admissibility of complainant-support records

See paras 3.138-3.141

Consultation Question 6

Use of specialist examiners to question the complainant

See paras 13.9-13.111

Consultation Questions 108, 109 and 110

Criminal Injuries Compensation claims

See paras 6.28-6.55

Consultation Question 38

[Attendance of supporters for complainants during the trial](#)

See paras 7.199-7.208

Consultation Question 57

[Role of ISVAs during the trial as witness support](#)

See paras 7.209-7.212

Consultation Question 58

[Independent legal advice for complainants and the role of ISVAs](#)

See paras 8.51, 8.65, 8.78, and 8.166-8.171

Consultation Question 72

[Intermediaries for complainants in sexual offences](#)

See paras 7.225-7.241

Consultation Question 60

[Intermediaries for defendants in sexual offences](#)

See paras 7.256-7.279

Consultation Question 63