

LIBOR
BACB
R
transition

We have prepared this booklet to ensure that you have everything you need to begin preparing for the IBOR transition and understand the consequences this may have for you, and on the products that we provide you with...

www.bacb.co.uk/compliance/libor-transition

libor@bacb.co.uk +44 (0)20 4532 5000

THE LIBOR TRANSITION:

*The transition away from **London interbank offered rates (LIBORs)** is underway and expected to be largely completed by year-end 2021, with changes beginning to take place now.*

*Since most legacy financial contracts include reference to **LIBOR**, this could have far reaching impacts for our clients.*



LIBOR TRANSITION KEY QUESTIONS...

What is the London Inter Bank Offered Rate (LIBOR) and why the transition to alternative Risk Free Rates (RFRs)?

LIBOR provides an indication of the average rate at which each LIBOR panel bank can borrow unsecured funds in the London interbank market for a given period, in a given currency. The average is published and used by the financial markets. LIBOR is currently published across five currencies (Sterling, US Dollar, Euro, Swiss Franc and Japanese Yen) and across seven maturities (ranging from overnight to 12 months).

The integrity of LIBOR was called into question during the height of the financial crisis when several leading banks contributing to the rate were accused of manipulating submissions which undermined the determination of LIBOR. In 2017, the FCA announced that it will no longer require panel banks to submit LIBOR quotations from the end of 2021. Accordingly, the FCA and other regulators are encouraging market participants use alternative "risk-free" rates (RFRs).

What is BACB doing about the LIBOR transition?

BACB has established its own LIBOR working group, comprised of key stakeholders from across the Bank with oversight and supervision from a designated SMR who has overall regulatory responsibility for the Bank's transition from LIBOR.

The working group has been actively monitoring regulatory announcements, guidance and market updates and is in discussion with external law firms and specialist advisers.

BACB is also participating in industry-wide forums and consultations. In line with the guidance and timeframe set by the FCA, BACB has been focused on the transition of its GBP-Libor linked lending, in particular the Bank's real estate business.

What does this mean for me as a client of BACB?

BACB is looking to work with all of its clients to ensure that the client fully understands the impact of affected contracts, products and services.

Once a market consensus RFR is established, BACB intends to communicate and agree with affected clients how this may impact their existing and future products.

For products linked to LIBOR with a maturity date beyond 2021, the Bank will be in touch with those clients directly to agree appropriate amendments to their product terms.

Where can I get more information if I have further questions?

The LIBOR Transition booklet and our website contain further information, you can also e-mail specific questions to libor@bacb.co.uk.

More details of the changes can also be found on the websites of the Bank of England and Financial Conduct Authority.

Your relationship manager is also on hand to provide guidance and discuss the impact on your BACB offered services.

WHAT ARE IBORS?

IBORs are widely-accepted benchmark interest rates that underpin the cost of short-term, wholesale lending from one bank to another. They reflect the rate at which panel banks expect that they could borrow.

IBORs do not, therefore, reflect actual borrowing costs in the interbank market. An integral aspect of the financial system for many decades, IBORs are referenced in financial contracts underpinning a vast range of products – from bonds to over-the-counter derivatives, securitised products and futures contracts, and even mortgages and consumer credit cards.

The world's most used benchmark rate is the **London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR)**.

Regulated by the FCA, the benchmark rate underpins the contracts of assets estimated to be worth over US\$350 trillion.



IBORS
*are widely-accepted
benchmark interest rates*

WHY ARE IBORS BEING DISCONTINUED?

Despite being a pervasive feature of the financial system for many years, the use of IBORs is coming to an end. There have been concerns mounting that the underlying markets that IBORs measure are no longer liquid enough to represent a reliable benchmark rate, and therefore submissions have increasingly been based on judgements with little actual borrowing activity to validate them. In 2014, the Financial Stability Board (FSB) provided recommendations to improve the underlying processes that determine how IBORs are set. **The conclusion was that – despite efforts to reform IBORs – market concerns that IBORs lacked reliability and integrity had not been fully addressed.**

In parallel, regulators and working groups across many jurisdictions have coordinated to establish alternative benchmark rates to IBORs. The result is **risk-free reference rates (RFRs)**. Recognising the FSB's recommendations, these rates are designed to address the shortfalls of IBORs and limit the influence of panel banks' expert judgement in rate-setting. RFR's therefore are not open to manipulation.

In 2017, the UK Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) announced that, by year-end 2021, it will no longer compel nor persuade banks under its jurisdiction to make LIBOR submissions. Following the FCA's statement, regulators in other countries, including the US, followed suit. The timetable for transition has since been amended, and the four most commonly used USD LIBOR tenors have been given an additional grace period of 18 months.

As such, FCA's statement created what is now referred to as “the IBOR transition”

– with working groups and regulators in multiple jurisdictions have begun implementing RFR transition strategies, with some RFRs already in use.



RFRs
risk
free rates

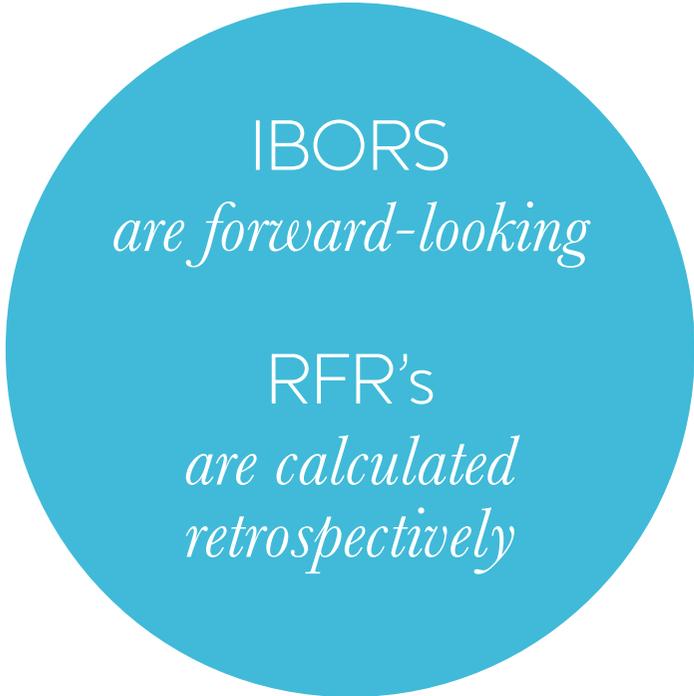


HOW WILL THE ALTERNATIVE BENCHMARK RATES WORK?

RFRs will be fundamentally different to IBORs in the way they are set. IBORs are forward-looking: in essence, the interest rate for various tenor lengths (e.g. from overnight up to six month and even one year) is set at the beginning of the borrowing period – hence why submissions and judgment from panel banks were relied upon. To factor in any uncertainties, IBORs incorporate the perceived credit risk of the panel banks, which can make the rate more susceptible to volatility. But since the rate is fixed at the beginning of the term, the borrower has full visibility of the interest due at the end of the loan term, which can have advantages for forecasting.

By contrast, RFRs are calculated retrospectively. Rather than defined by term length, RFRs track overnight lending – published at the end of the overnight borrowing period and calculated using real-life transaction data. As a result, judgments about anticipated or future events by panel banks are not necessary, and RFRs are therefore seen as more transparent.

Though an RFR is expected to be less volatile than a term rate and are generally considered almost entirely risk-free, the exact rate is only known at the term's maturity.



OVERVIEW OF RATES

The chart below indicates the preferred alternative reference rate for each relevant currency.

					
CURRENCY	GBP	USD	EUR	CHF	JPY
Reference rate	GBP LIBOR	USD LIBOR	EUR LIBOR EONIA	CHF LIBOR	JPY LIBOR TIBOR
Recommended alternative rate	SONIA <small>(Sterling Overnight Index Average)</small>	SOFR <small>(Secured Overnight Financing Rate)</small>	€STR <small>(Euro Short-Term Rate)</small>	SARON <small>(Swiss Average Rate Overnight)</small>	TONAR <small>(Tokyo Overnight Average Rate)</small>
Features	Fully transaction-based Overnight Unsecured	Fully transaction-based Overnight Secured	Fully transaction-based Overnight Unsecured	Based on transactions Overnight Secured	Fully transaction-based Overnight Unsecured
Forum	Working Group on Sterling Risk-Free Rates	The Alternative Reference Rates Committee	Working Group On Euro Risk-Free Rates	The National Working Group on Swiss Franc Reference Rates	Cross-Industry Committee on JPY Interest Rate Benchmarks

LETTER OF CREDIT DISCOUNTING

Process changes are taking place as the London Interbank Offered Rate comes to an end and is replaced by alternative Risk Free Rates (RFRs). The following illustrative example shows how the discounting charge for a 3 month deferred payment LC denominated in USD would be calculated:

CURRENT CALCULATION USING LIBOR London Interbank Offered Rate



NEW CALCULATION UNDER TERM SOFR Secured Overnight Financing Rate



This differential in the margin is the credit adjustment spread, added to bridge the gap between the discontinued benchmark and the new benchmark. The market favoured methodology is the ISDA five-year historical median spread differences, which has since been fixed for each tenor following the announcement by the FCA.

HOW MIGHT THE REFORMS IMPACT BACB CLIENTS?

Since IBORs (such as LIBOR) have been firmly entrenched in the financial system for many decades and used as the reference rate in financial contracts, the impact of the transition could have far-reaching effects that our clients should consider.

*Taking action now
will ensure that
businesses are well prepared
for an IBOR-free future.*

Importantly, the distinctly different ways that IBORs and RFRs are calculated create myriad considerations.

First: When a new benchmark rate is applied, the value of a product (such as a derivative, loan or bond) may change. Of course, a change in balance-sheet values could have wider ramifications for your business to consider – which may therefore require professional guidance.

Second: Since the rates will shift from forward-looking, term rates to backward-looking rates that are unknown at the term's outset, IT systems and hedging arrangements will most likely need to be altered to accommodate this change.

For clients with longer-term financing: It will be necessary to identify and understand the impact of legacy contracts (those that mature from 2022 onwards). While this will more likely apply to our clients' agreements with other banking partners, it will apply to our real estate finance clients (please see the following page). We advise clients to create an inventory of these contracts. In some instances, it may be necessary to agree revised contractual language and even credit terms.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON THE REAL ESTATE FINANCE PRODUCTS AND HOW WILL IT BE COMMUNICATED?

*Ensuring that you
& your business
is prepared for the
transition away from
LIBOR*

Effect on products

Any impact on your Real Estate Finance loan quarterly repayments will be discussed with your relationship manager.

The approach recommended by the regulators is to minimise any impact on customers as far possible.

Please note that regulators have consistently stated the transition does not present an opportunity for Banks to profit from the transition.

Given the move to RFRs there will be a change to the mechanics of the interest calculation, including potentially the notice which the customer will receive on how much interest will be due for each interest period. The Bank will be in contact to discuss these changes.

Outreach & changes to documentation

BACB is tracking industry recommendations, the recommendations of the GBP RFR Working Group and monitoring the work, consultations and drafts published by the Loan Market Association.

In conjunction with an external legal advisor, the Bank will prepare appropriate amendment documentation for existing facilities, incorporating an alternative reference rate.

The Bank will share this with the customer well in advance of it coming into effect, and provide a summary of the changes and how they will impact the customer and the mechanics of their loan product with the Bank.

We will be looking to reach out and agree changes to your product as we transition to an alternative reference rate.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your Relationship Manager

WHAT SHOULD BACB CLIENTS BE DOING AHEAD OF THE LIBOR TRANSITION?

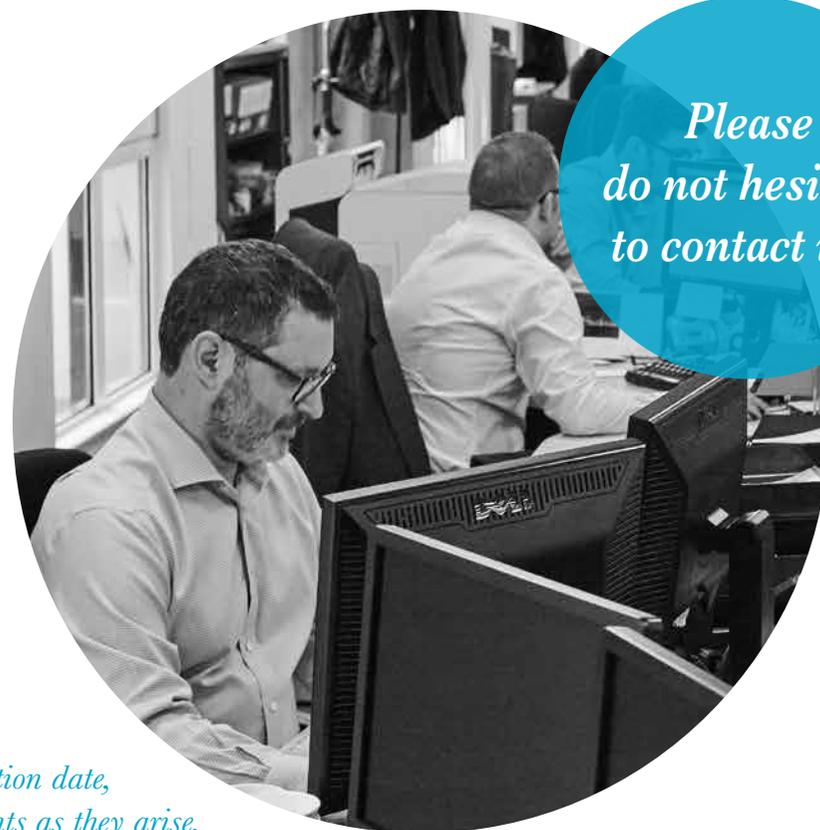
The transition to RFRs still carries some uncertainties ahead of year-end 2021, making preparation key.

We recommend that our clients assess their IBOR exposures from legal, financial risk, accounting, tax, and technological perspectives. Establishing a dedicated, cross-divisional working group can help in detecting where IBORs are applied across your business, as well as the potential hurdles the transition may create.

The group can also be integral to ensuring the transition is as smooth as possible.

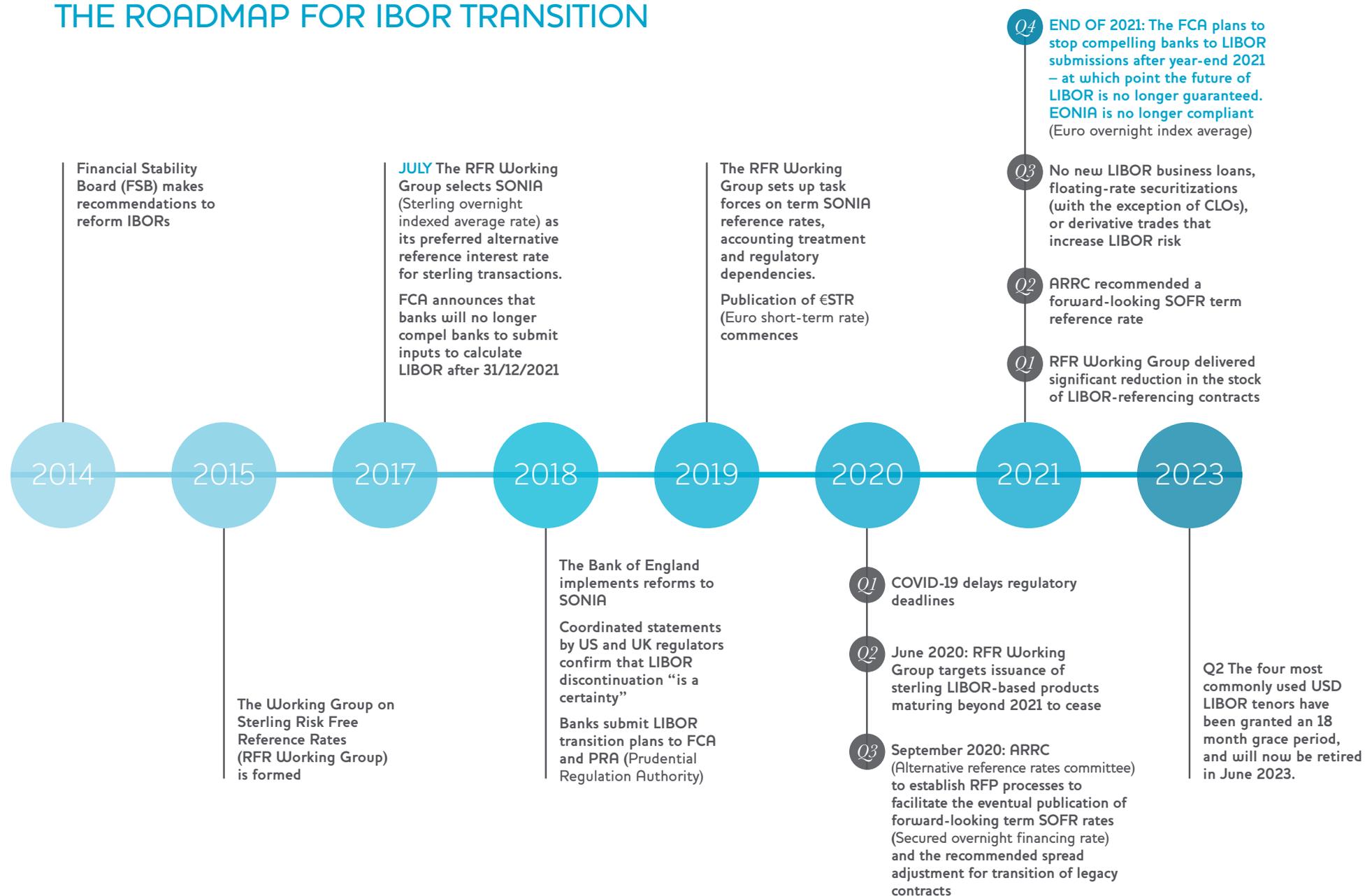
We at BACB are here to ensure that our clients fully understand the impacts of affected contracts, products and services with us. As such, we view this briefing document as only the start of the conversation. Your relationship manager is on hand to discuss the impact on your BACB-offered services and to determine the right course for your business.

Please do not hesitate to contact us. Ahead of year-end 2021 transition date, we will provide timely updates to our clients on the latest developments as they arise.



*Please
do not hesitate
to contact us.*

THE ROADMAP FOR IBOR TRANSITION



BACB

your banking partner for
SPECIALIST MARKETS

BACB
British Arab Commercial Bank plc
8-10 Mansion House Place
London EC4N 8BJ
United Kingdom

+44 (0)20 4532 5000
LIBOR@bacb.co.uk
www.bacb.co.uk

British Arab Commercial Bank plc authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and Prudential Regulation Authority.

The material and information contained in this factsheet are provided for general information only and should not be used as a basis for making business or investment decisions.

BACB does not represent or warrant, nor accepts responsibility, as to the completeness or accuracy of the information contained in this factsheet.