

Monday, 1 June 2026

1
2 (1.45 pm)
3 **MR BLAKE:** Good afternoon, Chair.
4 **THE CHAIR:** Yes.
5 **MR BLAKE:** Can I please call Richard Clarke.
6 **THE CHAIR:** Yes.
7 **RICHARD CLARKE (affirmed)**
8 **Questioned by MR BLAKE**
9 **THE CHAIR:** Yes.
10 **MR BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr Clarke.
11 You have produced two witness statements for this
12 Inquiry. The first is dated 26 January 2026 and has
13 a URN of WITN0372001, and the second is dated
14 19 May 2026 and that's a URN of WITN0372003. Are both
15 of those statements true to the best of your knowledge
16 and belief?
17 **A.** They are.
18 **Q.** Thank you. Until recently, you have been the
19 Director General in the Public Safety Group within the
20 Home Office; is that right?
21 **A.** That's correct.
22 **Q.** Can you assist us with what the Public Safety Group is
23 responsible for, in broad terms?
24 **A.** Yes, certainly. So the Public Safety Group and the Home
25 Office covers all aspects of policy related to crime and

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1 **Q.** Despite the creation of Police and Crime Commissioners
2 in 2012, the Home Secretary is ultimately responsible to
3 Parliament for policing matters and can intervene in
4 policing matters in certain circumstances; is that
5 right?
6 **A.** That's right, yes.
7 **Q.** Can you give us some examples of the kinds of
8 circumstances where the Home Secretary can intervene?
9 **A.** Well, it's quite a high bar in the Police Act, but in
10 circumstances where there was a significant challenge in
11 a force or similar kinds of issues, then the
12 Health Secretary could require an inspection, for
13 example, carried out by His Majesty's Inspectorate of
14 Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, and the Home
15 Secretary can also mandate in certain circumstances that
16 particular elements of practice need to be followed.
17 But that is quite a high bar and, in general, those
18 responsibilities are held by the Police and Crime
19 Commissioners.
20 **Q.** The Home Office also has a strategic role when it comes
21 to policing; what does that involve?
22 **A.** Well, the Home Office is ultimately responsible for the
23 operations of policing in England and Wales and in
24 relation to certain issues, such as counterterrorism,
25 across the UK, but certainly for the things which I'm

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1 policing in England and Wales, other than national
2 security issues which are dealt with by a separate group
3 known as the Homeland Security Group. So I oversaw
4 policing and crime policy in England and Wales.
5 **Q.** Thank you. I want to start by looking at where the Home
6 Office sits in terms of policing. You've said in your
7 statement that chief constables are accountable for
8 operational delivery of policing services; is that
9 right?
10 **A.** That's right.
11 **Q.** Since 2012 and, for the time being and we'll hear more
12 in due course, Police and Crime Commissioners are
13 ultimately responsible for policing in their area; is
14 that right?
15 **A.** Yes, that's correct. So directly elected Police and
16 Crime Commissioners are responsible for the oversight of
17 policing, but operational decisions rest with the Chief
18 Constable or, in London, the Commissioner.
19 **Q.** We'll get on in due course in the Inquiry with regards
20 to the changes that's happened to that position and the
21 White Paper, we'll address that with the Minister. I'm
22 not going to address that with you unless you think it
23 is directly relevant to any of the questions I ask you
24 about.
25 **A.** Understood.

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1 responsible across England and Wales, the Home Office
2 has responsibility for strategic oversight.

3 The most obvious way that -- the two most obvious
4 ways, I think, in which that manifests is firstly, the
5 responsibility the Home Office has for managing the
6 overall system and the different elements that play
7 their part in that, HMICFRS, I've already mentioned, the
8 Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the
9 National Police Chiefs' Council. So we're responsible
10 for coordinating the overall system.

11 Then the second is that the Home Secretary signs off
12 what's known as the Strategic Policing Requirement which
13 says all forces in England and Wales must make sure they
14 are doing certain things and are a set of priorities, in
15 effect, for policing in England and Wales.

16 **Q.** In addition to that, obviously providing funding and
17 also guiding legislation through Parliament?

18 **A.** Indeed. Absolutely.

19 **Q.** In terms of the attacks that occurred on 13 June 2023,
20 we've seen some documents, I'm not going to bring them
21 up onto screen. For the transcript, they're
22 HOMF0000092, and HOMF0000093. They're Homeland Security
23 Operational Policy Team Situation Reports?

24 **A.** Yes.

25 **Q.** Briefly, can you tell us how it is that the Home Office

4

1 came to be involved in the actual incident itself?

2 **A.** Yes. So it's worth noting that when Operation Plato was

3 triggered locally, at that point, the Homeland Security

4 Group's Operations Team, known as the Ops Team, were

5 contacted by the force, would in standard terms be

6 contacted by the force in question and they then produce

7 what are called "We are awares", which is typically

8 a very short note to Ministerial Private Offices, senior

9 officials and others, to draw their attention to the

10 fact that, as the name suggests, the Operations Team are

11 aware of an unfolding incident.

12 As you will have seen from the exhibits, at that

13 point there was a suspicion that it might have been

14 a terrorist attack, so the Homeland Security Group led

15 on that initial -- that initial approach, and produced

16 a series of updates until it became clear that it

17 wasn't, and at that point the lead from a Home Office

18 perspective moved to my area.

19 **Q.** In terms of the principal role of the Home Office,

20 therefore, in relation to 13 June 2023, it was a matter

21 of updating Ministers and was there any direct

22 coordination in respect of matters on the ground?

23 **A.** No. No role in relation to matters on the ground at

24 that point, no.

25 **Q.** I'm going to deal with a number of topics. The first is

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1 The police do however possess a common law power to

2 share personal sensitive information with third parties

3 where a 'pressing social need' can be established.

4 A pressing social need might be the safeguarding, or

5 protection from harm of an individual, a group of

6 individuals, or society at large."

7 So the risk to society can be considered to be

8 a pressing social need.

9 **A.** Yes.

10 **Q.** And then at paragraph 5, it says:

11 "This note outlines the narrow scope for the police

12 to use their professional judgement to make common law

13 based disclosures in circumstances where they consider

14 this to be necessary to support public protection."

15 Paragraph 6 -- so in paragraph 5 it explains that

16 it's essentially quite a narrow scope for this

17 provision.

18 **A.** Yes.

19 **Q.** Paragraph 6:

20 "Chief Officers are requested to consider disclosing

21 relevant information to a third party when, in the

22 course of an investigation or other policing activity,

23 a significant risk is identified [where] ... there is an

24 urgent pressing social need to address."

25 So again, that's a slightly further narrowing of the

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1 information sharing. You've highlighted in your witness

2 statements how the police are able to share information.

3 You start with the pressing social need. I'd like to

4 bring up onto screen HOMF0000107. You've identified

5 that the police essentially have a common law power of

6 disclosure and I think this document is an illustration

7 of its use; is that right?

8 **A.** Correct.

9 **Q.** It starts in paragraph 1:

10 "The [Common Law Police Disclosures] ... provisions

11 extend to the police forces in England and Wales."

12 Paragraph 2:

13 "The ... provisions relate to the circumstances in

14 which the police use common law powers to disclose

15 police information regarding an individual in order to

16 enable a third party to consider risk mitigation

17 measures in respect of an employment or voluntary role

18 believed to be undertaken by that individual."

19 So this is essentially about whether the police have

20 a power to disclose.

21 **A.** Yes. Correct.

22 **Q.** Thank you. And if we go down, please, to paragraph 4,

23 it says there:

24 "The general presumption is that the police should

25 maintain the confidentiality of personal information.

6

1 test there.

2 **A.** Yes.

3 **Q.** There's reference there to "significant risk" and

4 "urgent pressing social need".

5 **A.** Indeed.

6 **Q.** And the burden here is on the Chief Officers rather than

7 the individual officers?

8 **A.** Yes, that's how I would read that, yes.

9 **Q.** Paragraph 7:

10 "The primary trigger for consideration of the need

11 to make such ... disclosure will be the arrest (or

12 voluntary interview as a suspect) of an individual for

13 an alleged recordable offence; or if no consideration

14 has been made at that stage, upon the subject being

15 charged with a recordable offence."

16 So the trigger is an arrest, essentially.

17 **A.** In this guidance, yes.

18 **Q.** Yes. If we go over the page, please, to paragraph 8, it

19 says there:

20 "The third party recipient of the disclosure will

21 usually be an employer for other body for which the

22 individual works, including in a voluntary capacity."

23 So this guidance is really focused on disclosure to

24 people like an employer, rather than another government

25 agency; is that right?

8

1 A. Yes, that's correct. I think partly because there are
2 often information disclosure provisions in existence
3 between the police and other government agencies. So
4 I interpret this as aimed particularly at, as
5 paragraph 8 says, for example, including in a voluntary
6 capacity, an individual where the Chief Officer is
7 concerned that if information were not to be shared with
8 their employer, for example, or a place where they
9 carried out a voluntary role, there might be a risk to
10 the public.

11 Q. So actually, when we talk about -- and we'll come to
12 inter-agency information sharing, it's likely to be more
13 generous than this rather than less generous?

14 A. Correct.

15 Q. If we go down, please, to paragraph 13, there are
16 limitations on this, and it said out there:
17 "Any decision to disclose police information must
18 balance the rights and interests of the individual who
19 is the subject of the disclosure against those of the
20 public in general or any specific member or members of
21 the public".

22 In paragraph 14, it goes on to address the Data
23 Protection Act, Human Rights Act, and Rehabilitation of
24 Offenders Act; is that right?

25 A. Yes.

9

1 turn to first."

2 If we go over the page, please, we can see that the
3 Home Office are one of the signatories.

4 A. That's right.

5 Q. And then please can we turn to page 18. That sets out
6 there "Core principles and outcomes".

7 If we scroll down, please, we see on the left-hand
8 side, the penultimate paragraph, and that says:

9 "For there to be an effective emergency mental
10 health response system, there should be detailed
11 coordination arrangements in place between all the
12 agencies regularly contacted by people in mental
13 distress. People should be able to expect a whole
14 system response."

15 We go over the page, please, there's a section there
16 on "Urgent and emergency access to crisis care",
17 section B. And can we please turn to page 26. Under
18 section B we have B8, we can see there on the right-hand
19 side of the screen, and that says:

20 "People in crisis should expect that statutory
21 services share essential 'need to know' information
22 about their needs.

23 "All agencies, including police or ambulance staff,
24 have a duty to share essential 'need to know'
25 information for the good of the patient, so the

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1 Q. Thank you. When we think of a significant risk in this
2 guidance, would it be right to say that that is likely
3 to include somebody who is suffering mental health
4 issues, psychosis, or schizophrenia?

5 A. Well, it will depend on the specific circumstances of
6 the case in question, but I would certainly expect that
7 there would be cases in which those elements would form
8 part of a decision that a Chief Officer made to
9 disclose, yes.

10 Q. I want to must have on, then, to inter-agency
11 information sharing and one of the documents you've
12 highlighted is the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat,
13 and if we could please bring that on screen, that's
14 HOMF0000013. We've seen this a number of times in this
15 Inquiry. We see there at the bottom of the page -- of
16 the first page, it's a 2014 document so it's now some
17 years old, 12 years old.

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. If we turn over to page 3 we can see it starts with
20 a joint statement. It says there:

21 "We commit to work together to improve the system of
22 care and support so people in crisis because of a mental
23 health condition are kept safe and helped to find the
24 support they need -- whatever the circumstances in which
25 they first need help -- and from whichever service they

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1 professionals or service dealing with a crisis know what
2 is needed for managing a crisis and any associated risks
3 to the distressed person or to others. This may include
4"

5 Then it includes a list, and one of them, for
6 example on that first page is "Description of current
7 behaviour/presentation".

8 And we go over the page please, if we scroll down,
9 there are further bullet points. The third one:

10 "Any clinical information ..."

11 The fourth:

12 "Any presenting risk factors (for example,
13 self-harm, suicide, physical aggression, confusion
14 impaired judgement, self-neglect, missing homicide from
15 home)."

16 Is this the kind of thing you were talking about
17 earlier when you said in terms of inter-agency
18 information sharing it may be my wider?

19 A. Yes, exactly.

20 Q. Thank you. On the right-hand side of our screen, we can
21 see there:

22 "Information on patients should, through appropriate
23 sharing protocols, follow them through the system and
24 make sure that people known to services get the
25 treatment they need quickly, and where applicable, the

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1 services are aware of their crisis plan and any advanced
2 statements - no matter at what point they re-enter the
3 mental health system.

4 "Within the requirements of the data protection
5 legislation, a commonsense and joint working approach
6 should guide individual professional judgements. If the
7 same person presents to police, ambulance or Emergency
8 Departments repeatedly, all agencies should have an
9 interest in seeking to understand why this is happening,
10 and how to support that person appropriately to secure
11 the best outcome."

12 This is essentially a commitment to sharing what
13 they call 'need to know' information; is that right?

14 A. That's right.

15 Q. Now, you've said in your witness statement, it's your
16 first witness statement, you've explained that there are
17 changes to the oversight and monitoring of this
18 concordat. I think, essentially, it's been superseded
19 now by Right Care, Right Person or the mechanism that
20 oversees that; can you assist us with what you mean
21 there?

22 A. Yes, that's exactly what I mean, yeah.

23 Q. So is it still monitored?

24 A. Only, I think, via the Right Care, Right Person
25 oversight arrangements which are built on the same

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1 Q. It is essentially guidance?

2 A. That's correct. It's not a statutory document, but it
3 is something that everyone involved would expect people
4 to be aware of and to follow as best practice.

5 Q. Thank you. If we turn to page 11, it sets out a range
6 of principles. And if we go over, please, to page 14,
7 we see there that one of the principles is
8 "Communication", and similar, really, to what we read
9 earlier it says:

10 "Meaningful and effective communication between
11 responders and responder organisations underpins
12 effective joint working. Communication links start from
13 the time of the first call or contact, instigating
14 communication between control rooms as soon as possible
15 to start the process of sharing information."

16 So it sees, in an emergency situation, information
17 sharing of particular significance?

18 A. Yes, absolutely, although I should say that I expect the
19 kind of information in this circumstance to be quite
20 tactical operational information more than necessarily
21 personal information. It might need to be, but that
22 would be the primary element that I think this section
23 of the guidance would be referring to.

24 Q. Thank you. We see there on the right-hand side it says:
25 "Sharing information in a way that can be understood

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1 principles that underpin this concordat.

2 Q. The concordat itself, it doesn't impose any legal
3 duties, it is essentially a voluntary agreement; is that
4 right?

5 A. That's correct.

6 Q. Thank you. There's another document you've highlighted
7 and that's the JESIP, Joint Doctrine The
8 Interoperability Framework, that can be found at
9 HOMF0000011. This is the 2024 framework and this is
10 specific, really, to emergency responses; is that right?

11 A. Yes, to a specific incident, to an evolving and specific
12 incident as opposed to the long-term management of
13 individuals.

14 Q. Thank you. If we turn to page 5, we can see in the
15 foreword a brief description in the second paragraph, it
16 says there on the left-hand side:

17 "The Joint Doctrine provides responders, across all
18 levels, at the scene or elsewhere, with generic guidance
19 and principles on the actions to take when responding to
20 multi-agency incidents of any scale. It does not
21 constitute a set of rules to be applied without thought,
22 but rather seeks to inform, explain and guide."

23 So again, this isn't legally binding. It's not
24 a set of rules.

25 A. No.

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1 by the intended recipient aids the development of shared
2 situational awareness, which underpins the best possible
3 outcomes of an incident.

4 "The following supports successful communication
5 between responders and responder organisations".

6 The first one is:

7 "Exchanging reliable and accurate information, such
8 as critical information about hazards, risks, and
9 threats."

10 Over the page, please, we can see in large bold
11 letters it says:

12 "People should start from a position of considering
13 the risks and harm if they do not share information."

14 A. Correct.

15 Q. So this is quite different, really, to some of the rules
16 that we see relating to the Data Protection Act and the
17 securing of information; this is actually suggesting
18 that you should start really in an emergency situation
19 from the opposite perspective?

20 A. Yes, correct. I think if I may say, driven by a sense
21 in previous incidents that led to the development of
22 JESIP, that individuals had been in some cases reluctant
23 to share information because they felt there was some
24 kind of significant element to overcome in legislation
25 and so there's been concerted effort by agencies since

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1 then to support their staff in making the right decision
2 when faced with that balance.
3 **Q.** Thank you. Both of those documents I've just taken you
4 to are guidance rather than rules, and I want to ask you
5 about duties and what kinds of duties there may be on
6 public authorities to proactively share information.

7 You've set out in your witness statement, you've set
8 out the Serious Violence Duty.

9 **A.** Yes.

10 **Q.** Can you assist us with what is the Serious Violence
11 Duty?

12 **A.** The Serious Violence Duty is a duty on a number of
13 organisations locally, particularly the police and local
14 authorities, to share information in managing the threat
15 from serious violence in their local areas.

16 It's worth saying, I think, that it is primarily or
17 overwhelmingly aimed at the sharing of what might be
18 described as population-level data more than data about
19 individuals. So it might be, for example, the sharing
20 of information about levels of drug -- the particular
21 kinds of drugs being consumed in a local area, the
22 nature of the gang crime in that area, the rates of
23 domestic abuse and things like that in a particular
24 area, so that between them all the agencies can develop
25 a coordinated approach to managing serious violence

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1 explicitly clear that there is not only a presumption
2 but a requirement on those agencies to work together to
3 manage that.

4 Now, that is not the same thing as saying that it
5 always works perfectly everywhere, or that individual
6 agencies don't sometimes have to make difficult
7 decisions about what information they share, but much
8 like the reference you made in JESIP, there is an
9 assumption that agencies should be sharing data in order
10 to be able to do the best possible job they can to
11 protect the public in the area that they serve.

12 **Q.** As you have said, this is principally at the moment in
13 relation to things like fighting youth knife crime, gang
14 crime, perhaps violence against women and girls?

15 **A.** Correct.

16 **Q.** Is there a role for that in respect of those who have
17 severe mental illness and may pose a threat to the
18 community?

19 **A.** So I don't think it is the primary mechanism for that,
20 no. I think there are -- and you may come onto them --
21 but I think there are other routes that are possibly
22 better suited to managing very specific individual
23 cases. This is more, as you say, at issues like knife
24 crime locally and county lines, drugs gangs, for
25 example, and things like that.

19

1 overall.

2 It would be unlikely, I think, in those
3 circumstances that responding to the Serious Violence
4 Duty would involve the sharing of personal information
5 about specific individuals; it's much more likely to be
6 focused on, as I say, population-level or local
7 area-level data.

8 **Q.** You have primary organisations and secondary
9 organisations?

10 **A.** Correct.

11 **Q.** The primary ones being police, local government, youth
12 offending teams, fire services, I think health
13 organisations, probation services.

14 **A.** Correct.

15 **Q.** Then the secondary involve, for example, prisons,
16 education authorities, and others?

17 **A.** Yes.

18 **Q.** How, in your view, does that encourage information
19 sharing in the context you've just explained?

20 **A.** So in two ways, really. The first is -- I mean, it
21 creates a duty on public authorities. So as a local
22 authority senior executive or as a senior police
23 officer, I know that I am under a duty to share that
24 kind of information in order to manage the threat of
25 serious violence locally. And secondly, it makes

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1 **Q.** We've heard a lot of evidence about rates of serious
2 crime amongst those who may be suffering from
3 schizophrenia spectrum disorders or homicide rates
4 amongst those who have had contact with mental health
5 services. Can you give us some examples, then, of how
6 you think that the information sharing there can be
7 improved?

8 **A.** Well, I think in the first instance, and you referred to
9 this under the concordat earlier on, I think the most
10 important thing is to ensure that we are creating the
11 environment in which -- and I think -- and others I know
12 people like Andy Marsh and others have made this comment
13 to the Inquiry previously -- I think this is primarily
14 what you might describe as a small C cultural issue more
15 than it's a legal one, of creating a situation in which
16 it is as easy as possible for individual officers, and
17 particularly, I guess, in the case of the area that
18 I have worked police officers, but it would apply
19 equally to mental health professionals and others, that
20 we make it as easy as possible for them in the
21 appropriate circumstances to share information.

22 And the risk, I think, at the moment, is that it is
23 that the weight, if you like, of responsibility I think
24 is sometimes felt more on the side of worrying about
25 sharing information when it would be inappropriate to do

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1 so, as opposed to thinking about the downside
2 implications of not sharing information in specific
3 circumstances.

4 So I think a lot of what we need to do, collectively
5 with senior police officers and others, is make sure
6 that it is as smooth and easy for people to make those
7 decisions in the moment.

8 **Q.** We saw it, for example, in the JESIP document that part
9 in bold that said --

10 **A.** Yes.

11 **Q.** -- people should start from a position of considering
12 the risks and harm if they do not share information.
13 How can that kind of message be communicated to the
14 police and mental health services?

15 **A.** So I think partly through guidance and others that the
16 College of Policing are currently reviewing their
17 approved professional practice in relation to mental
18 health. That's something that Chief Officers and others
19 draw on to establish the right approach in their own
20 forces. I think it's partly about the training that we
21 give to officers, and also the way in which senior
22 leaders across the sectors respond in circumstances
23 where individuals believed they were doing the right
24 thing by sharing information, making sure that that is
25 appropriately recognised.

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1 not, I think, the kinds of criminality in this case.

2 **Q.** I want to stick with the issue of access to information,
3 but I want to shift the focus now to sharing between
4 police forces.

5 **A.** Yes.

6 **Q.** We've heard some evidence about police operating from
7 different systems and perhaps those systems not
8 interacting with each other or perhaps a police force in
9 one part of the country not having the full range of
10 access that they may have to their own systems in
11 another part of the country.

12 **A.** Yes.

13 **Q.** Is that something you're aware of?

14 **A.** Yes, very aware, yeah.

15 **Q.** And is that something that you're addressing?

16 **A.** Yes. So the different forces use different local
17 systems. So every police force, every police officer,
18 is in effect dealing with both their own local system
19 and the Police National Computer, and then some trained
20 individuals also have access to the Police National
21 Database.

22 We're doing three things, and I don't know how much
23 you want to discuss this now or in questioning later but
24 we're doing two or three things in relation to each of
25 those areas. We are stabilising and increasing access

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1 **Q.** When we were speaking about the Serious Violence Duty,
2 you mention in your statement one way in which that is
3 addressed is through community safety partnerships.

4 Can you briefly tell us what those are and whether
5 there is any role for the kinds of risks that we've been
6 talking about to be addressed within those partnerships?

7 **A.** So Community Safety Partnerships are essentially local
8 agency fora that fill a similar role to those outlined
9 in relation to the Serious Violence Duty but in relation
10 to a broader range of local criminality and antisocial
11 behaviour. So they might focus on a broader range of
12 local crimes.

13 Again, my sense is that they are very unlikely to be
14 the primary vehicle for addressing the kinds of issues
15 that I suspect this Inquiry will wish to reach
16 conclusions on and make recommendations.

17 **Q.** Is that because they don't go down to the granular
18 detail of individuals?

19 **A.** Correct, very unlikely to. They might well deal with
20 a particular gang or they might refer to a -- they might
21 well, for example, deal with antisocial behaviour in
22 a particular part of a city and map what might be done
23 locally through things like street lighting. They might
24 well deal with a burglary or a theft from vehicles, for
25 example, and what can be done in relation to that. But

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1 to the Police National Database so that more trained
2 individuals can access it. We are replacing the Police
3 National Computer with a new system known as LEDS, the
4 Law Enforcement Data Service, and we're also working not
5 to create a single police force system locally. We have
6 for some time felt that would not be the right approach,
7 to try to put everybody on to a single system, but what
8 we are investing in at the moment is considering whether
9 there are ways to make it easier for forces and, in
10 time, the National Police Service, to operate in effect
11 a front end so it is easier to search across multiple
12 systems without having to replace those individual
13 systems.

14 **Q.** And what is the downside of replacing the entire
15 nationwide system?

16 **A.** Well, there are two or three, really. I mean, the most
17 obvious is it would be an absolutely enormous and
18 extremely disruptive undertaking, bearing in mind that
19 forces each operate different systems. There aren't
20 a huge number. Most forces are on one of two or three
21 major providers but it would be a very significant
22 undertaking. It would be very expensive, and it would
23 come with considerable risk.

24 Every time we make changes to systems that are
25 critical on which organisations rely, we have to make

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1 an assessment of the benefits versus the risks of
2 doing so.
3 Secondly, at least at the moment, Chief Officers are
4 responsible for making their own decisions about the
5 individual systems that they choose to operate. We are
6 changing that through the Police Reform White Paper, and
7 thirdly because we actually think it would be quicker
8 to, because of some of the changes that are now possible
9 with technology, to in effect create this front end
10 rather than replacing individual systems.

11 Q. Thank you. I'm going to move on now to two topics that
12 have been of interest to the Inquiry during the
13 hearings. The first is the Police Uplift Programme.
14 And I'd just like to spend a bit of time on the Uplift
15 Programme. That was announced in July 2019; is that
16 right?

17 A. That's correct.

18 Q. And it involve the recruitment of 20,000 officers by
19 March 2023, was what was announced.

20 A. That's right, so 20,000 net officers, so including
21 dealing with individuals who would have left during that
22 time, the recruitment of around 40,000 officers.

23 Q. Thank you. So in fact it's 20,000 new officers in
24 addition to all of those that you're replacing along the
25 way when people retire, for example?

25

1 statement, page 15. And if we could have a look,
2 please, at paragraph 38, and you say there:
3 "As part of the evaluation of the Uplift Programme,
4 some forces have highlighted the challenges associated
5 with a workforce that includes a larger proportion of
6 young in-service officers than prior to the Uplift.
7 This included some local challenges, for example in
8 tutor constable provision. These were operational
9 decisions for each force based on the specifics of local
10 conditions. The Uplift Programme was also clear
11 throughout that it would take time for ... new officers
12 to reach full effectiveness as officers undergo their
13 initial training and probationary periods. The
14 probationary period for a police recruit lasts 2 or 3
15 years depending on their entry route, meaning that the
16 entire PUP cohort would not be fully effective until
17 2026 at the earliest. The Uplift Programme was clear
18 that all new officers should be supported to thrive in
19 their role and that every officer whether new or
20 experienced is valuable."

21 Was the Home Office position is that it essentially
22 assumed there would be proper supervision of these new
23 officers?

24 A. Yes, absolutely. So in each case, each force developed
25 a plan, each of the police forces in England and Wales,

27

1 A. Exactly.

2 Q. And you've said that the 20,000 at least was phased.
3 I think you've said that there were 6,000 in one year,
4 6,000 in another, and 8,000 in the next; is that right?

5 A. That's right.

6 Q. And those numbers were achieved and I think they were in
7 fact exceeded, ultimately; is that right?

8 A. Yes, that's correct.

9 Q. In the case of Nottingham, you have outlined in your
10 statement there were 357 additional officers initially
11 and I think there were a further 50 more in due course;
12 is that right?

13 A. That's right.

14 Q. And in the case of Leicestershire you've referred to
15 a figure of 297 additional officers.

16 A. That's correct.

17 Q. The result of that is inevitably younger officers, more
18 inexperienced officers; would you agree with that?

19 A. Yes, that's correct. So by the end of the Police Uplift
20 Programme I think from memory about 45% of police
21 constables had less than five years' service, and it had
22 been, I think, in the high 30s prior to that. So there
23 was an increase in the percentage of officers who had
24 served less than five years.

25 Q. Perhaps we could bring on to screen your second witness

26

1 developed a plan to manage the very large numbers of new
2 recruits that would be joining in a concentrated period.
3 As my witness statement refers to, that included tutor
4 constables, so constables who would be working alongside
5 new recruits and also sergeants who would oversee their
6 team.

7 There is a very important distinction between
8 an individual -- and again, I think Andy Marsh touched
9 on this in his appearance before the Inquiry, there's an
10 important distinction between when a police constable is
11 ready to serve operationally on their own unsupervised
12 and when they reach, as I describe here, full
13 effectiveness, so being able to be fully effective.

14 But the arrangements that we, the Home Office put in
15 place jointly with the National Police Chiefs' Council
16 and the College of Policing, with whom the Police Uplift
17 Programme was run and coordinated, we worked closely
18 with local forces to ensure that they had plans in place
19 to be able to manage the new recruits.

20 Q. Could we please bring on to screen HOMF0000120. This is
21 His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary report,
22 2022. I think it was published the next year, so
23 published in 2023.

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. And that addresses the state of policing in that year.

28

1 Can we please begin on page 16. There's a section that
2 begins with the heading "Resources", and I'll just read
3 to you a few passages from this section. In that second
4 paragraph it says:

5 "The Police Uplift Programme, which was intended to
6 recruit an additional 20,000 police officers and extra
7 members of [...] staff during the three years to
8 31 March 2023, has now finished. Overall, the police
9 have achieved that target."

10 And then I want to look at the final two paragraphs
11 on that page. It says:

12 "It hasn't been easy to increase police numbers so
13 rapidly. And it certainly has come with risks. To
14 recruit the extra 20,000 officers while replacing
15 leavers, the police have had to recruit more than 46,000
16 additional officers. The resources required to recruit,
17 train and supervise so many junior officers are
18 substantial.

19 "The sheer scale of recruitment has created
20 a heightened risk that people unsuited to policing may
21 join the service. In our 2022 report [...] we found
22 examples of forces granting vetting clearances to
23 substantial numbers of unsuitable applicants. Some of
24 these vetting decisions may have been influenced by
25 pressures on forces to meet certain recruitment

29

1 Office, and as I said, this was very much a joint
2 programme between the Home Office and policing
3 colleagues and run as such. But I've spoken to the
4 colleagues who were involved with the programme at the
5 time. They were very conscious of both of the risks
6 that His Majesty's Chief Inspector refers to in this
7 report, namely that there would be a large influx of
8 recruits who would require supervision; and secondly,
9 that there was a risk of individuals in those
10 circumstances being recruited who were not to the
11 appropriate standard, including the risk that aspects of
12 vetting processes might not be managed appropriately.
13 And deliberate mitigations were put in place to manage
14 that.

15 The evaluation report that we carried out in the
16 Home Office into the programme showed that there were
17 undoubtedly forces who struggled with that -- those --
18 that context in which there were large numbers of new
19 officers coming in who required support. But overall,
20 my sense is that the approach that the Home Office took
21 at the time to it was proportionate in the
22 circumstances.

23 Q. And if I could bring on to screen the evaluation report
24 you've just mentioned. That's HOMF0000116. Is this the
25 document you were talking about?

31

1 targets."

2 Then if we look over the page, please, it says:

3 "In policing, it is important to maintain an
4 experienced workforce. But during the austerity years,
5 forces had to reduce the numbers of experienced officers
6 and staff at an alarming rate, meaning that many new
7 recruits didn't receive adequate supervision. As a
8 result, there is currently an increasingly inexperienced
9 workforce. According to a press release [...] by 2024,
10 38 percent of all police officers will have fewer than
11 five years' service."

12 I think that's a figure you referred to earlier.

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. "There are some benefits to a young-in-service
15 workforce, such as the fresh perspective new officers
16 and staff can bring that can help the police to
17 innovate. But the correct balance must be maintained,
18 and there needs to be an appropriate degree of
19 supervision and guidance."

20 You've explained that there was some assistance in
21 respect of supervision and guidance but, looking back at
22 it now, do you think that there was insufficient
23 assistance with regards to supervision and guidance?

24 A. No, I don't think that's the conclusion I would draw.
25 It was definitely the case that the team in the Home

30

1 A. That is correct.

2 Q. If we go over the page, please, we can see that was
3 actually published in 2025. Thank you. If we go to
4 page 8, we can see that page there begins an "Executive
5 summary", and I'd just like to read to you a few
6 passages from the Executive summary. If we go over the
7 page, please, to page 9, at the bottom of the page
8 there's a section that says: "Shifting the age and
9 experience profile of the frontline".

10 It says:

11 "The age and experience profile of frontline ...
12 policing has shifted, with officers in these functions
13 now younger in age and less experienced."

14 Over to page 12. The bottom of that page, please.
15 There's a section on "Funding and recruitment
16 decisions". It says:

17 "The majority of Chiefs reported that the pace of
18 recruitment was a challenge, and that they would have
19 preferred a slower, steadier pace. Evidence suggests
20 recruiting and training over 46,000 new officers over
21 a 3-year period carried risks around vetting and
22 suitability of applicants."

23 And that's the report we've just been looking at.

24 A. Correct.

25 Q. If we can turn to page 40, please. The bottom of that

32

1 page. It says there:
 2 "The shift towards a younger and less experienced
 3 frontline ... is expected to be a continual obstacle for
 4 forces over the next several years, with Chiefs
 5 reporting that this has created challenges to service
 6 delivery, capability and capacity."
 7 Do you understand those issues to still be
 8 experienced within the police?
 9 A. Yes, I think it remains the case. So the final -- the
 10 final period, if you like, of all of those individual
 11 officers who have joined reaching full competence was
 12 a couple of months ago, by coincidence. I think it was
 13 March 2026 that it was expected. So I absolutely
 14 acknowledge and recognise that for forces, this has been
 15 a challenge.
 16 It has obviously been combined with the explicit
 17 public policy intention of the previous government to
 18 significantly increase the number of police officers
 19 that were available to Chief Officers, but I absolutely
 20 acknowledge and recognise that this has created
 21 challenges, alongside, as the evaluation report
 22 testifies to, the benefits that have come from that
 23 injection of additional workforce.
 24 Q. What is the Home Office doing specifically to address
 25 that problem?

33

1 far as you aware, doing anything specifically to address
 2 the supervision of those officers?
 3 A. Yes, we have a programme called the Neighbourhood
 4 Policing Programme that includes representation from
 5 senior police officers on that programme board and we
 6 have ensured that the lessons from this are taken
 7 forward into that including through guidance to forces
 8 about the way in which new individuals joining neighbour
 9 policing teams are supervised.
 10 It is important to say that although some of those
 11 will be newly-joined officers, in lots of cases they may
 12 well be individuals who have moved into neighbourhood
 13 policing from previous policing experience and they will
 14 be backfilled by someone joining policing. So
 15 individuals joining neighbourhood policing teams will do
 16 so with a range of different prior experience.
 17 Q. Thank you. You mentioned vetting issues. Could we
 18 please bring onto screen HOMF0000123. This is an
 19 8 January 2026 Metropolitan Police Force announcement.
 20 If we look at the time, the HM Constabulary report
 21 was in 2022, published in 2023. We're now a few years
 22 on from that. I'll just read a couple of passages from
 23 this announcement. It says:
 24 "The Met has today published a review into
 25 historical vetting and hiring practices as part of its

35

1 A. Well, there are a couple of things. The first is that
 2 we're working very closely with the College of Policing
 3 and one of the things that we have set out in the Police
 4 Reform White Paper is the plan to develop in effect
 5 a strategic workforce plan for policing in England and
 6 Wales that is intended to deal with issues such as
 7 training, supervision, making sure people are
 8 appropriately supported across the board.
 9 The second is that the government that was elected
 10 two years ago, the current government, arrived with an
 11 explicit manifesto commitment to increase by 13,000 the
 12 number of police officers and police community support
 13 officers in neighbourhood policing teams, and we have
 14 deliberately and very consciously applied the learning
 15 from the Police Uplift Programme including on both the
 16 obligation and the burden, if you like, on forces of
 17 supervising new recruits alongside the issues around
 18 vetting as part of the approach that we've taken to the
 19 Neighbourhood Policing Programme.
 20 Q. So there are going to be a further 13,000 more personnel
 21 in neighbourhood policing?
 22 A. Yes, although they will not necessarily all be new
 23 recruits to policing.
 24 Q. Thank you. In respect of those and the supervision,
 25 insofar as they are new recruits, is the Home Office, so

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1 unprecedented drive to raise professional standards
 2 across the organisation."
 3 I'll just read to you that third paragraph. It
 4 says:
 5 "The findings bear out concerns raised by
 6 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary ... in 2022
 7 about the need to maintain vetting standards given the
 8 scale and pace of officer recruitment during the
 9 national Police Uplift Programme ... Given the wider
 10 implications for policing and government policy, we have
 11 shared several recommendations from our review with
 12 partners to support best practice in vetting and
 13 recruitment across all forces."
 14 Can you assist us, what was the background to this
 15 particular issue?
 16 A. The Metropolitan Police carried out a review locally in
 17 side the Met to concerns that had started to arise in
 18 their force about the possibility that individuals who
 19 were recruited principally but not exclusively during
 20 the period of the Police Uplift Programme had not been
 21 recruited in line with approved professional practice.
 22 The Metropolitan Police contacted the Home Office to
 23 tell us that that was the case and the concerns that had
 24 been identified, and said they were carrying out
 25 a review, which they did, and which bore out,

36

1 unfortunately, the conclusion that in too many cases
2 that had been the case.

3 As the exhibit notes at the bottom, as you can
4 imagine, we, in the Home Office, and Ministers were
5 extremely troubled by this and the Home Secretary
6 required or asked, directed, HMICFRS, His Majesty's
7 Chief Inspector, to carry out an inspection of the Met's
8 recruitment and vetting processes and also to look at
9 other forces to see whether there might be similar
10 problems, and that work is underway.

11 Q. An issue that we will get to in due course that has
12 arisen in this Inquiry is about inappropriate accessing
13 of particular materials, distressing materials. Do you
14 think there may be a link between that and unvetted
15 staff or the influx of new staff who may not be
16 necessarily appropriate for the roles?

17 A. I don't think I could draw that conclusion. Clearly the
18 inappropriate accessing of material is completely
19 unacceptable. I'm not sure I would say that there's --
20 I've certainly seen no evidence to suggest that any of
21 those individuals were not appropriately vetted
22 beforehand, or indeed that individuals who may not have
23 been appropriately vetted in these circumstances would
24 be more likely to conduct that kind of behaviour.

25 Q. Thank you. I'm going to move on to the second

37

1 [Inspectorate's] ... remit -- there must be room for
2 commentary on the optimal methodology for different
3 components parts of the police role. The review will
4 identify ways in which forces across England and Wales
5 can be more productive, improving outcomes."

6 So this is to some extent linked to what we've just
7 seen in relation to the Uplift Programme; there was
8 a large recruitment of additional police officers, but
9 am I right in saying that there was also at the same
10 time a real drive to increase productivity and free up
11 police hours.

12 A. Yes. I think it's fair to say that a succession of
13 governments of different political parties, different
14 political persuasions, have been seized of the fact that
15 policing in England and Wales is a continual balance
16 between the importance of ensuring, as this -- the
17 passage you just referred to points out, a balancing the
18 importance of operational independence where individual
19 Chief Officers make decisions about operating in their
20 forces, and indeed, democratic oversight provided
21 through the Police and Crime Commissioners, with the
22 urgent importance of ensuring that the police are being
23 as productive and efficient as possible, so that the
24 investment that the taxpayers of England and Wales make
25 into policing is spent in the best way possible, and so

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1 substantive topic and that's Right Care, Right Person,
2 and you've addressing that in your first witness
3 statement. Can we please bring up on to screen
4 HOMF0000016. I should say you've addressed that in both
5 of your witness statements.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. This is really by way of background. There was The
8 Policing Productivity Review carried out by the National
9 Police Chiefs' Council in October 2023; is that right?

10 A. That's right.

11 Q. And that was commissioned by the Home Office. I think
12 if we go to page 40 of this document we can see there
13 the issue in terms of reference. If we could zoom in to
14 that top left-hand corner, please. It says there under
15 "Issue", it says:

16 "The Home Secretary has commissioned the study into
17 police productivity. The required output is a report
18 back to the Home Secretary by the end of September 2023.

19 "Driving greater productivity in policing will
20 deliver better outcomes for the public. The review is
21 done against a backdrop of the Police Uplift Programme,
22 with 20,000 additional police officers being recruited
23 between 2019 and 2023, but also an ever-more complex and
24 expanding policing mission. Operational independence of
25 policing is fundamental. However -- as evidenced in the

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1 that officers are freed up to focus as best they
2 possibly can on the jobs that only they can do.

3 So a focus for a number of years in public policy
4 terms on the eradication of bureaucracy wherever
5 possible, or making it as easy and simple for police
6 officers to operate effectively, so that in addition to
7 increasing the number of police officers, the
8 governments are also focused on ensuring that officers
9 can be effective as possible in their jobs.

10 Q. One aspect of that was reducing the involvement of the
11 police in unnecessary call-outs to mental health issues.

12 A. Yes, but with a real importance, I think, on that first
13 word, on "unnecessary" call-outs.

14 Q. If we could bring on to screen, please, page 9 of this
15 document. We see it set out there. It says:

16 "From the outset of [our] ...Review, and in our
17 visits to forces, Chief Officers raised a number of
18 areas outside their direct control that prevented their
19 force from being as productive as possible and hindering
20 the deployment of their officers. Whilst it was felt
21 that [there] ... might create a substantial drag on
22 resources, there was very little data to confirm their
23 perception and estimate the scale of the impact."

24 Then there's a section below that that is entitled
25 "Mental ill health demand". If we look over to the

40

1 right-hand side of this page, there is a section
 2 entitled "Towards a more productive partnership with
 3 other agencies", and it says there:
 4 "Policing needs to be clearer with the public and
 5 partners where it will, and will not, accept
 6 responsibility from other agencies. Where another
 7 agency has already an established duty of care, police
 8 involvement should be limited to:
 9 "when there is real and immediate risk of death or
 10 serious injury, or
 11 "crime has occurred or is occurring, and there is
 12 a requirement to secure evidence, or
 13 "there is a requirement for policing powers."
 14 And then over to the right there's a section
 15 "Progress mental health demand on policing report
 16 recommendations", and it sets out there:
 17 "In November 2022, the Policing Productivity Review
 18 made eight recommendations in its Mental Health Demand
 19 on Policing report.
 20 "The first recommendation (to implement the Right
 21 Care, Right Person [...]) is now being implemented in
 22 every Home Office police force".
 23 So by the stage we've reached with this review,
 24 Right Care, Right Person is being implemented across the
 25 police forces for which the Home Office is responsible;

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1 can do, and arguably actually more appropriate
 2 potentially for the individual themselves as well.
 3 **Q.** Can we please bring on screen HOMF0000017. This is the
 4 National Partnership Agreement: Right Care, Right
 5 Person. And if we go over the page to page 3. It's
 6 over the page again. Thank you. And if we scroll down
 7 there, we see there essentially the test, so:
 8 "The threshold for ... police response to a mental
 9 health-related incident is:
 10 "to investigate a crime that has occurred or
 11 occurring; or
 12 "protect people, when there is a real and immediate
 13 risk to ... life of a person, or of a person being
 14 subject to or at risk of serious harm."
 15 Is that the test?
 16 **A.** Yes. That is.
 17 **Q.** Thank you. Then we go over, please, to HOMF0000020.
 18 This is an April 2024 response by the Home Office to the
 19 report that we saw a moment ago, the "Improving Police
 20 Productivity" report. So this is essentially the Home
 21 Office's response to that report, is it?
 22 **A.** Exactly. So the Home Secretary commissioned that report
 23 and then, as is usual practice in government, when it
 24 was produced, the Home Office then responded to it.
 25 **Q.** And there's a Ministerial foreword that we can see on

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1 is that right?
 2 **A.** That's correct, yes.
 3 **Q.** "In July 2023, NHS England, the police and government
 4 signed up to the National Partnership Agreement: Right
 5 Care, Right Person. [Which] ... sets the parameters
 6 ..."
 7 And I'll show you -- we've seen a number of times in
 8 this Inquiry but I'll show you documents shortly.
 9 At its core, though, from the perspective of those
 10 Chief Officers, they were looking towards saving police
 11 time in respect of dealing with mental health issues;
 12 would you agree with that?
 13 **A.** Yes, I would. In those circumstances where it was not
 14 felt necessary for the police to be involved, it's
 15 really important, I think, to emphasise that Right Care,
 16 Right Person, as originally designed and as implemented,
 17 has been deliberately intended to preserve those
 18 circumstances. I'm not saying this always works
 19 perfectly, but to preserve those circumstances in which
 20 it is necessary and appropriate for the police to be
 21 involved but to try to avoid the police being drawn into
 22 circumstances where it would be more appropriate for
 23 an alternative agency to be involved. Certainly more
 24 appropriate from the perspective of ensuring the police
 25 are doing the jobs that only warranted police officers

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1 page 3, please. And that begins:
 2 "Improving productivity across the public sector is
 3 a priority for this government. Maximising the value of
 4 every pound spent means focusing on outcomes that matter
 5 the most to the public. Nowhere is this more important
 6 than in policing."
 7 Then the third paragraph says:
 8 "The Review identified many opportunities for
 9 policing to improve productivity, with the potential to
 10 save 38 million hours of police officer time every
 11 year."
 12 So again, the focus here is quite heavily, certainly
 13 in this report, to the saving of police time.
 14 **A.** Yes, absolutely, explicitly so, with the intention that
 15 that saved time can then be reinvested in the things
 16 that matter to the public and to the management of
 17 things like serious offenders.
 18 **Q.** Then if we look at page 14, there's a section there on
 19 "Mental Health Demand and Policing". Halfway down.
 20 Thank you. If we scroll down we can see at the bottom
 21 of that page it says:
 22 "At the time of publication, a majority of police
 23 forces across England and Wales report having introduced
 24 at least one phase of the wider [Right Care, Right
 25 Person] approach."

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1 Do you think enough thought was given to retaining
2 access by the police to mental health expertise, mental
3 health assistance, perhaps to involving the police
4 appropriately in a multi-agency approach to mental
5 health?

6 **A.** I think this is an ongoing challenge. There are
7 a number of forces who have approached this, or forces
8 who have approached this in different ways. So some of
9 them have retained mental health expertise in control
10 rooms, so to advise call handlers when the calls come
11 in. Others have paired up, twinned, police officers
12 with mental health practitioners locally. Forces
13 approach this in different ways.

14 I think it is fair to say that as Right Care, Right
15 Person was implemented, there are lessons to be learned
16 about ensuring that the police maintain that very close
17 partnership working with mental health professionals and
18 are not, as it were, solely focused on responding to
19 those areas, but -- that you referred to previously, the
20 specific triggers, but maintain a good local
21 relationship with mental health professionals and others
22 locally to ensure that they understand the broader
23 context.

24 **Q.** Can we please bring on screen HOMF0000019. This is some
25 research and analysis that's been published jointly, I

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1 **A.** Yes, and that, I would say, has been the consistent
2 challenge identified in a collective way by the Home
3 Office, Department of Health and Social Care and other
4 agencies in seeking to manage RCRP.

5 But yes, the concern and the risk is that as the
6 police move away from things that they would previously
7 have responded to, the risk is that agencies who are, as
8 part of the RCRP National Partnership Agreement are
9 expected to, as it were, fill that gap, are unable to
10 do.

11 **Q.** We see there another section entitled "Unintended
12 consequences, risks and learning" and that says:
13 "A key risk identified by ICBs, LAs and the police
14 was potential gaps in services. These gaps could result
15 from a lack of clarity about who should respond to
16 certain calls or inconsistent decisions being made.
17 Decision making can be difficult for control room staff,
18 incidents are often not clear cut, and decisions are
19 based on information staff are provided with, which can
20 be incomplete."

21 So that's a second issue there, a separate issue.
22 It's not about the sufficiency of the resourcing to
23 address the callout; it's really the decision-making as
24 to who should be responding.

25 **A.** Yes, so there are two ways of thinking about gaps,

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1 think, by the Home Office and the Department of Health
2 and Social Care; is that right?

3 **A.** That's correct, yes.

4 **Q.** The date on that is 3 December 2024. If we could please
5 start on page 9, there's an "Executive summary" and it
6 says at the bottom of that page:
7 "This evaluation was conducted to understand how
8 [Right Care, Right Person] is being implemented and to
9 share findings to aid ongoing implementation, by
10 analysing evidence from a sample of police forces,
11 integrated care boards ... and local authorities ...
12 across England."
13 Then it has "Key findings" below, and I'd just like
14 to read to you from a section entitled "Barriers to
15 implementation". That's over the page, please. It says
16 there:
17 "The main barrier to [Right Care, Right Person]
18 implementation was identified as capacity and resourcing
19 limitations within health and social care for responding
20 to incidents that had been dealt with by the police
21 before the introduction of [Right Care, Right Person]."
22 So is the concern here that police are no longer
23 responding to certain incidents, but the gap hasn't
24 necessarily been sufficiently filled by health and
25 social care?

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1 I suppose. The first that I just described is the risk
2 that as the police do the right thing from the
3 perspective of the National Partnership Agreement and
4 don't respond to calls, that other partners are unable
5 to step into that, and then the second is the risk that
6 everybody thinks that somebody else is either dealing
7 with or is the appropriate agency to deal with, and
8 an individual case falls through the gaps.

9 **Q.** If we go over the page, please, there's a section on
10 "Early perceived impacts of [Right Care, Right Person]",
11 and the police have reported:
12 "... a perceived reduction in demand, with less time
13 spent dealing with certain incidents and a perceived
14 reduction in calls from partner agencies."
15 So from a police perspective, it's well received?

16 **A.** Yes, that's correct.

17 **Q.** Then there's a section on "Police data monitoring" and
18 that essentially confirms that the police perceptions of
19 a reduction in demand were supported in fact by the
20 underlying data; is that right?

21 **A.** Yes. Sorry, yes, that's right.

22 **Q.** Thank you. Can we turn, then, to some analysis that's
23 been carried out by the -- an external organisation,
24 that's RLIT0000063. This is "Vulnerability & Policing
25 Futures Reach Centre" analysis. That, I think, is the

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1 University of York and University of Leeds initiative.
 2 A. That's right.
 3 Q. Is this a document you're aware of prior to the Inquiry?
 4 A. Not prior to the Inquiry but I've seen it as part of the
 5 preparation for the Inquiry, yes.
 6 Q. Thank you. If we turn over, please, to page 2, I'm
 7 going to read to you a section from that "Background"
 8 section. If we scroll down, it says there in the third
 9 paragraph:
 10 "A substantial body of evidence exists about police
 11 officers and mental health professionals responding
 12 together to people during mental health emergencies.
 13 However, police officers often encounter people
 14 experiencing mental distress in their routine work with
 15 no mental health professionals present and need to
 16 respond appropriately. This may involve making rapid
 17 decisions or de-escalating situations without defaulting
 18 to tactics of control and containment typically used
 19 when addressing criminal behaviour. The introduction of
 20 the Right Care, Right Person policy in England and Wales
 21 has made a considerable contribution to the reduction of
 22 regular contact with people with mental health problems,
 23 but has not eliminated it entirely."

24 Over the page it sets out a series of "Key
 25 findings". In relation to "Police capabilities and

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1 because of a partial understanding of Right Care, Right
 2 Person, an officer might conclude that this isn't
 3 something they need to be involved with.

4 Then more broadly, it's worth emphasising that Right
 5 Care, Right Person is, of course, a framework designed
 6 essentially to respond to calls coming into police
 7 control rooms. A lot of individuals with mental health
 8 difficulties that the police encounter are in public as
 9 part of the police patrolling or somebody flagging them
 10 over and things, and in those circumstances, as this
 11 research shows it's really important to ensure that
 12 officers have the best possible training and support
 13 they can for how best to respond dynamically in those
 14 circumstances.

15 Q. What is the Home Office doing to support that?

16 A. We're working with the College of Policing who are the
 17 right body to ensure that training and approved
 18 professional practice is kept up to date and, as I think
 19 I mentioned earlier on, the College of Policing are
 20 updating and are about to consult on changes to their
 21 approved professional practice in exactly that way.

22 Q. If we look at the third bullet point there:

23 "Police officers' access to mental health
 24 professionals or triage varies, which then impacts on
 25 decision-making."

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1 mental health" it says:

2 "Police regularly encounter mental health issues but
 3 lack formal expertise.

4 "There is variation in how officers identify and
 5 respond to mental health-related incidents.

6 "Police officers' access to mental health
 7 professionals or triage varies, which then impacts on
 8 decision-making.

9 "Officers often face confusion between behavioural
 10 issues and diagnosable mental illness.

11 "Decisions around mental health legislation ... or
 12 accessing mental capacity are complex and inconsistently
 13 supported."

14 And:

15 "The Right Care, Right Person policy has legitimised
 16 some police withdrawal from mental health calls,
 17 increasing officer hesitation to engage."

18 Are those issues recognised by the Home Office?

19 A. Yes, absolutely. I think the last one in particular is
 20 an area that we're especially concerned about, which
 21 I interpret to mean, in effect, it becoming more
 22 acceptable not to respond to something that would be,
 23 even under the Right Care, Right Person approach,
 24 an entirely appropriate circumstance for the police to
 25 become involved, the risk that, in those circumstances,

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1 Presumably there is a role for the Home Office there
 2 in respect of the triage facilities? We heard, for
 3 example some evidence suggesting that street triage
 4 teams are actually closing around the country because of
 5 Right Care, Right Person. Is that something you're
 6 aware of at all?

7 A. I am aware of that as a result of things that I've heard
 8 described to the Inquiry. I wouldn't see it as the Home
 9 Office's role, particularly to be involved in decisions
 10 made locally around the appropriate response. There may
 11 well be good reasons why a particular force believes
 12 that in their area maintaining, for example, a local
 13 Street Triage Team is less or more effective than having
 14 somebody with mental health expertise based in their
 15 control room. Those are decisions that are made by
 16 Chief Constables locally.

17 Having said that, the Police Reform White Paper
 18 makes clear that we want to move more towards a model of
 19 standardisation wherever it makes sense to do so, and
 20 this may be one of those areas, but we would need to go
 21 through, work with the College of Policing, the NPCC,
 22 partners and others, and it may be that the Home Office
 23 takes a stronger view, but at the moment our view is
 24 that it is appropriate for forces locally to make that
 25 decision.

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1 I'm not sure that Right Care, Right Person means
2 that it is less or more appropriate for a Street Triage
3 Team to be maintained and that's a decision for local
4 Chief Officers to make themselves.

5 **Q.** I think the first document I took you to today was the
6 Mental Health Crisis Concordat and that was all about
7 working together, inter-agency cooperation. Is there
8 a risk that Right Care, Right Person has taken away from
9 that?

10 **A.** No, I don't think so. I think Right Care, Right Person
11 definitely faces significant challenges in
12 implementation and we've discussed some of them over the
13 last few minutes. But I don't think it undermines the
14 principles in the concordat; I would say it reinforces
15 them. Right Care, Right Person only works well in my
16 view when it's underpinned by really good quality local
17 coordination. It can't be a situation where, the police
18 are simply saying, "We will now back away from these
19 things and someone else will have to pick them up." It
20 has to be a joint enterprise.

21 **Q.** Thank you. We've dealt, then, with the Uplift
22 Programme, we've dealt with Right Care, Right Person.
23 I'm going to deal now with a few small standalone
24 topics.

25 The first is data misuse by the police and others

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1 appropriate use of things like third-party messaging
2 apps at work and also access to data.

3 I should say one other thing, sorry, which is the
4 Home Office does have one other very important role, and
5 you may want to come onto this, which is in relation to
6 the oversight that we have of national police IT
7 systems. So we have responsibility, for example, for
8 ensuring that the Police National Computer and
9 subsequently LEDs has appropriate safeguards built into
10 it, so only those people that need to access information
11 are able to access it.

12 **Q.** You have mentioned something in your witness statement
13 called the instant messaging and social media misuse
14 working group.

15 **A.** Yes.

16 **Q.** Are you aware of how that works and whether it has
17 resulted in anything significant?

18 **A.** It is, as its name suggests, a working group established
19 across policing to develop an approach to managing the
20 risks that come from those devices. I'm not familiar
21 with the detail of what it's most recently done, but
22 I could easily write to the Inquiry afterwards if it
23 would be helpful.

24 **Q.** Thank you. A separate topic, oversight bodies. Has the
25 Home Office been kept up to date with the progress of

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1 and I said we'd come onto that. We've heard a lot of
2 about that during the Inquiry. What do you see as the
3 role of the Home Office in respect of that?

4 **A.** I think there are two. The first is that we are in the
5 process of significantly strengthening the national
6 vetting arrangements for police officers in England and
7 Wales. So we've introduced -- the government has
8 introduced -- legislation, for example, so that it is in
9 effect a form of automatic dismissal if someone fails
10 their -- if a police officer fails their vetting, and
11 because vetting is, in effect, a continual process. If
12 someone has their vetting withdrawn, there would be
13 a presumption of dismissal.

14 So there is an important role for the Home Office to
15 play there. I said earlier on, that arrangement is, if
16 you like, agnostic to the specific behaviours that could
17 prompt that, the withdrawal of their vetting, but
18 I would strongly expect some of the examples that you
19 have heard about in the Inquiry to be the kind of things
20 that would involve withdrawal of vetting.

21 Then the second is that the Home Office works very
22 closely with the College of Policing on development of
23 guidance and approved professional practice, and the
24 College of Policing and the NPCC have produced guidance
25 for Chief Officers and police officers about the

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1 the IOPC investigations relating to VC and the attacks?

2 **A.** We have, yes. Yes.

3 **Q.** They seem, from evidence we've heard, to take quite
4 a considerable amount of time. Is this something the
5 Home Office has given any consideration to, whether it
6 be reform, funding, change of leadership or something
7 else?

8 **A.** So the -- there are two things that we've been doing.
9 The first is that I oversee on a regular basis something
10 called the Senior Steering Group, Senior Oversight
11 Group, I think, that I chair, that oversees the IOPC.
12 There's another for the College of Policing and another
13 for HMICFRS. And that involves an assessment of the
14 pace at which the IOPC is dealing with cases in the
15 round. We also receive specific updates, either to me
16 or to the Policing Minister, in relation to individual
17 cases, but the oversight group I mentioned refers --
18 oversees the performance of the IOPC in general.

19 In the Police Reform White Paper, there are two
20 important changes that the government has said that it
21 will bring in. The first is that it is relatively
22 unusual that the IOPC does not have a chair. The
23 College of Policing, for example, has a chair that
24 chairs the Board on which Sir Andy Marsh, as the Chief
25 Executive, sits and the government has said that it will

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1 appoint a chair for the IOPC.
 2 So that's a significant shift. And the second is
 3 that the White Paper says that we will -- the government
 4 will work with the IOPC to see whether there are other
 5 ways in which bereaved families, survivors and others
 6 impacted by specific cases can be kept better informed
 7 of progress and the pace at which investigations have
 8 concluded.
 9 **Q.** We've heard about the HMICFRS inspecting performance.
 10 We've heard about HMCPSI inspecting the CPS.
 11 College of Policing, setting standards and guidance. Is
 12 there a place for a national body that inspects, even
 13 investigates, tracks progress, monitors recommendations?
 14 **A.** Yes. So the -- I think some of that may -- some of that
 15 role -- some of the roles you've just described may fall
 16 to the National Police Service when it's established. I
 17 could certainly imagine, for example, a role for the
 18 National Police Service to track whether forces in
 19 England and Wales are appropriately responding to the
 20 recommendations from Public Inquiries. So yes, I think
 21 there absolutely is a role for that.
 22 **Q.** In terms of the results of Public Inquiries, including
 23 this Inquiry, what assurance can you give that
 24 recommendations will be implemented?
 25 **A.** The -- I can give you the assurance that on the previous

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1 **A.** I don't, I'm afraid, off the top of my head. But I can
 2 certainly let you know.
 3 **Q.** Thank you. Well, I won't ask you any more details about
 4 it, I'll just ask you one more general question about,
 5 as it were, access to sensitive material, because you
 6 say in your statement, no need to bring it up, but
 7 essentially the disadvantages, advantages and technical
 8 challenges of restricting access are operational
 9 decisions for policing.
 10 Obviously, data misuse has been an important issue
 11 at certain times in this Inquiry. Given, as it were,
 12 the increased profile of data misuse over the past
 13 couple of years, is government feeding into those
 14 operational decisions so far as safeguarding data is
 15 concerned?
 16 **A.** Yes, absolutely. But both in the sense of ensuring that
 17 we're working with the police, that the range of police
 18 bodies involved in this issue to ensure that it's being
 19 treated seriously. But also, as I mentioned earlier,
 20 because we have responsibility for the oversight and
 21 maintenance of the national police IT systems, and one
 22 of the things that we are really investing in as part of
 23 the replacement of the Police National Computer and the
 24 improvements to the Police National Database are what's
 25 known as role-based access controls. So ensuring that

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1 Public Inquiries on which I have worked on the response
 2 to the Manchester Arena Inquiry, for example, that civil
 3 servants and Ministers take very seriously the
 4 obligations that come to us from recommendations. We
 5 track them methodically and make sure that we're doing
 6 everything we can to meet both the letter and the spirit
 7 of those recommendations.

8 **MR BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr Clarke. Those are all my
 9 questions.

10 There are questions from Core Participants.

11 **THE CHAIR:** Yes.

12 **MR BLAKE:** Chair, I'm in your hands as to whether we take
 13 those questions now or.

14 **THE CHAIR:** I think we'll take those questions and then we
 15 will move on and take a break after that.

16 Mr Moloney.

17 **Questioned by MR MOLONEY**

18 **MR MOLONEY:** I only really want to ask you about
 19 safeguarding data, Mr Clarke, and you were just asked by
 20 Mr Blake about the social messaging and social misuse
 21 working group, and you don't know a great deal about it,
 22 but you've dealt with it in some detail in your
 23 statement.

24 **A.** Yes.

25 **Q.** Can I just ask you, do you know when it was set up?

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1 only those individuals who have a need, an operational
 2 need, to be able to access sensitive data are able to do
 3 so.

4 **MR MOLONEY:** Thank you very much.

5 **THE WITNESS:** Thank you.

6 **THE CHAIR:** Yes, Ms Cartwright.

7 **Questioned by MS CARTWRIGHT**

8 **MS CARTWRIGHT:** Good afternoon, Mr Clarke. I ask questions
 9 on behalf of the survivors.

10 Can I just seek some practical clarification about
 11 the work that the Home Office are doing in respect of
 12 the Code of Practice, please.

13 Can we display, please, WITN0372001. It's your
 14 paragraph 237 on page 94.

15 Thank you.

16 You tell us that the:

17 "... [Department of Health and Social Care] is

18 leading work to modernise the Mental Health Act ..."

19 You tell us that:

20 "The ... Bill received Royal assent ..."

21 And then talk about the Codes of Practice. You say:

22 "This process will provide an opportunity to help

23 ensure that the guidance sets out expectations on

24 information sharing and multi-agency working so that

25 clinicians make appropriate decisions based on relevant

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1 information, including that held by the police and
 2 others."
 3 Can I ask, does that include, obviously, the new
 4 threshold for section 2, Section 3, and the new
 5 definitions, will that ensure that all relevant
 6 information as to risk and likelihood of harm is also
 7 communicated to ensure appropriate decisions on
 8 detention?
 9 **A.** Yes, absolutely. So we're working with the DHSC at the
 10 moment on the development of those Codes of Practice and
 11 I would absolutely expect those issues to be included in
 12 that, yes.
 13 **Q.** Thank you. Can I then move on to the next topic and
 14 it's the last matter that Mr Blake dealt with, which is
 15 implementation of recommendations and learning.
 16 You obviously deal in your statement with issues
 17 such as JESIP, the joint doctrine, M/ETHANE, and
 18 Operation Plato. I'm not going to deal with what the
 19 evidence has shown within this Inquiry, but can we just
 20 look at, for example, at some of the recommendations in
 21 the Manchester Arena report --
 22 **A.** Yes.
 23 **Q.** -- and you've obviously identified that you've been part
 24 of the group that has implemented the recommendations.
 25 Can we please just display INQY0000020 at page 62,
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1 from the Grenfell Tower Fire and Manchester Arena
 2 attack, and then over the page:
 3 "In light of this, in April 2021, the Homeland
 4 Security Group ... took on greater strategic oversight
 5 of JESIP."
 6 Can I ask then, practically, when these are common
 7 themes coming up, how are the Home Office ensuring that
 8 the local police have proper training on these concepts
 9 and issues so that they're match fit or ready to deal
 10 with major incidents and Operation Platos?
 11 **A.** So the Home Office's role is an oversight of the system
 12 as a whole, in this case the joint emergency services
 13 approach rather than the provision of direct training,
 14 which would be provided by the appropriate organisation,
 15 so to ambulance personnel or Fire and Rescue Service
 16 personnel. But the whole point in some ways of JESIP is
 17 to be able to bring together that learning collectively,
 18 so the Home Office has a role in taking that learning
 19 and propagating it more broadly.
 20 We've also strengthened, in the last couple of
 21 years, the role that the Home Office plays in both
 22 tracking the recommendations related to JESIP that came
 23 out of the Inquiry into the Manchester Arena attack, and
 24 also, between now and 2027, we're going out to
 25 individual blue light agencies, so to the police, fire
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1 please. Thank you. Obviously, this was the second
 2 report from November 2022, paragraph 10.11, just on
 3 JESIP, please. It says:
 4 "JESIP's origin can be traced back to the Prevention
 5 of Future Deaths report by Lady Justice Hallett,
 6 following the inquests into the deaths caused by the
 7 terrorist attack on 7 July 2005. That report, and
 8 others which followed, identified that there were
 9 repeated failures by the emergency services to work
 10 together effectively. Despite this, many of the
 11 problems that JESIP was created to resolve recurred on
 12 22nd May 2017."
 13 Then perhaps just another example over the page,
 14 please, at 10.17. We can see the issue flagged again
 15 about:
 16 "... M/ETHANE messages is a structured and
 17 consistent method for responder agencies to collate and
 18 pass on information about an incident."
 19 Obviously, you deal within your witness statement,
 20 perhaps that's just the context to the question, please,
 21 if we can go back to your witness statement,
 22 WITN0372001, your paragraph 65, please, on page 22.
 23 Thank you. You give some update about information
 24 that the Home Office received regarding the need for
 25 support for JESIP, and then the further learning emerged
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1 and rescue and ambulance service, to ensure that they
 2 are doing what they need to do to meet both the letter
 3 and the spirit of the recommendations.
 4 The specific training needs to be developed and
 5 delivered by the right agency, but we have a role, along
 6 with our colleagues and government, to ensure it's done
 7 appropriately and effectively.
 8 **Q.** Thank you. Can you assist, if we look on the next
 9 paragraph, obviously the report was November 2022. We
 10 know the attack in Nottingham was 13 June 2023. But you
 11 tell us that the strategic oversight of JESIP included,
 12 in 2024, that three-year JESIP transformation programme.
 13 So was anything done in terms of dissemination or the
 14 requirement for local forces to implement the
 15 recommendations before 2024?
 16 **A.** I'm sorry, do you mean was anything done to ensure that
 17 forces were responding to the Saunders recommendations
 18 prior to that?
 19 **Q.** Yes.
 20 **A.** So I am almost certain that we had -- that we, the Home
 21 Office, had contacted forces in advance of that, but
 22 I would need to check to be absolutely sure.
 23 **Q.** I'm not going to go to the paragraphs of the Manchester
 24 Arena Report that dealt with the failings in respect of
 25 Op Plato, but can we just look at what you say about
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1 Operation Plato, please, at paragraph 207 of this
2 statement, page 85. Sorry, 208, thank you. And then
3 obviously you identified again the learning from the
4 Manchester Arena Inquiry Report and Op Plato's police
5 protocol and that the further recent edition, which went
6 live again a year after the Manchester Arena Report.

7 Again, would there have been dissemination to local
8 forces about the importance of the findings that the
9 Manchester Arena Inquiry report had identified in
10 respect of Operation Plato?

11 **A.** Yes, it would have done, yes.

12 **Q.** Thank you. Can I ask you, just picking up on the
13 question Mr Blake asked you, you obviously referenced
14 the recommendations that will arise from this Inquiry
15 report?

16 **A.** Yes.

17 **Q.** But do you have any view as to whether there's a role
18 now for Inquiries themselves to monitor their own
19 recommendations?

20 **A.** I think that's a -- I think ultimately that's a matter
21 for the Inquiry Chairs to discuss with government
22 Ministers at the time. I can certainly see benefits in
23 doing so, but I'm not sure I'm best qualified to offer
24 a view.

25 **MS CARTWRIGHT:** Thank you for answering my questions.

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1 framing to those kind of investigations, and I know that
2 the Direction General of the IOPC would want to -- for
3 the organisation to be able to do their best in those
4 circumstances.

5 **THE CHAIR:** Yes. Thank you.

6 **THE WITNESS:** Thank you.

7 **THE CHAIR:** Right. Well, we'll take a break now and start
8 again at 3.25. Thank you.

9 (3.12 pm)

(A short break)

11 (3.25 pm)

12 **MS LANGDALE:** Chair, may I call, please, the Minister of
13 State for Policing and Crime, Sarah Jones MP.

14 **THE CHAIR:** Yes.

SARAH JONES MP (sworn)

Questioned by MS LANGDALE

17 **MS LANGDALE:** You've prepared a statement dated 19 May 2026.

18 Can you confirm the contents are true and accurate as
19 far as you're concerned?

20 **A.** Yes, it is.

21 **Q.** Can we have on the screen, please, witness statement
22 WITN0454001, pages 3 and 4. While we do, can you tell
23 us something about your Parliamentary career?

24 **A.** I became a Member of Parliament in 2017, had some Shadow
25 roles in the front bench, also spent a lot of time

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1 **THE WITNESS:** Thank you.

2 **THE CHAIR:** Yes. Thank you.

Questioned by THE CHAIR

4 **THE CHAIR:** Just one matter. In terms of the oversight of
5 the IOPC, it's an incident which occurred now in 2023,
6 and there are a number, as you know, of investigations,
7 none of which have been concluded yet. Apart from, as
8 you say, the general oversight, is there any move to set
9 a timetable for any of these investigations?

10 **A.** Well, we monitor at a macro level the rate at which the
11 IOPC is concluding investigations. I'm very conscious,
12 as the DG of the IOPC themselves said to the Inquiry,
13 that these have taken longer than I think anyone would
14 have wanted. So we do monitor both at a general level
15 and also at the level of specific cases, through
16 conversations. I think it would be entirely reasonable
17 to set a principle that these should be resolved as fast
18 as possible, recognising that there may be complex cases
19 where it may take longer.

20 **THE CHAIR:** For example, this Inquiry had a two-year start
21 to finish delivery of report timetable. Is there any
22 reason why the IOPC couldn't have something like that?

23 **A.** I must admit, I was about -- actually, I was about to
24 offer Public Inquiries as a parallel, potentially.
25 I don't think it is unreasonable to at least offer that

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1 working on knife crime, setting up the All Party
2 Parliamentary Group on knife crime. When there was
3 a change of government in 2024, I became the Minister of
4 Industry and then subsequently the Minister for Policing
5 last September.

6 **Q.** We see at page 3 and 4 in front of us, "White
7 Paper: 'From local to National: A New Model for
8 Policing'", and you set out at paragraph 9 the proposals
9 for modernising policing, and at paragraph 10 you say:
10 "These are major and radical reforms. They are
11 necessary: trust in the police has been falling and
12 there is an unacceptable level of variation in standards
13 ... around the country."

14 Why is it do you say that trust has been falling?

15 **A.** I think there are a number of things that have happened.
16 In the first instance, neighbourhood policing has
17 reduced and there has been an epidemic, as we would call
18 it, of everyday crime that people feel is not being
19 responded to in the way that it should, and that has
20 impacted on people's view of policing.

21 Secondly, the nature of crime has changed and all
22 too often the criminals are ahead of us. We are not
23 keeping pace in terms of technology and the types of
24 crimes that are being occurred and the complexities of
25 those crimes.

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1 I think, thirdly, there's been a series of scandals,
 2 if you like, in terms of policing in the last few years
 3 around the murder of Sarah Everard, for example, and
 4 what happened there. And that has dented confidence.
 5 And I think finally, there is undoubtedly a postcode
 6 lottery in terms of some aspects of policing where some
 7 forces are very good at some things and less good at
 8 others, and some forces are the other way round, and
 9 that has meant that you don't know that you'll get the
 10 same policing standards across all of England and Wales.
 11 **Q.** And why do you think it's taken so long for these major
 12 reforms that are required to come forward, to be brought
 13 forward?
 14 **A.** Well, we were -- I was Shadow Policing Minister for
 15 three years and Yvette Cooper was the Shadow Secretary
 16 of State. We spent a very long time in that time
 17 looking at what the nature of the reforms needed to be.
 18 They are very complex. We don't want to undertake them
 19 lightly, we want to make sure we do the right things.
 20 And when we came into government there was a lot of
 21 work to develop with policing, and that's really
 22 important. There are a lot of policing organisations
 23 that we are taking on this journey with us and others to
 24 try and make sure we do the right things.
 25 We haven't just done the policing reforms; there's

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1 structures that we need across regional policing, the 43
 2 structures that we have at the moment, what needs to
 3 happen to those, and Lord Bernard Hogan Howe is doing
 4 that review for us and that will be done by the summer.
 5 So we do the legislation and then we will start the
 6 implementation.
 7 There are some things that we are working on as we
 8 go and not everything needs legislation. So we are
 9 working on those issues at the moment.
 10 **Q.** Do you agree that victims' rights, experience and
 11 safety, should be central to the thinking behind reform?
 12 **A.** Yes, absolutely. There's no point doing the reform
 13 unless it has the outcomes that we want to see. It is
 14 large and substantial and will take up a lot of time and
 15 effort, both across policing and elsewhere, and we need
 16 to make sure we are both mindful of what victims need
 17 and expect, and that we are delivering the outcomes that
 18 they need and expect in terms of catching the criminals
 19 and keeping people safe, and there was a lot of work
 20 across a raft of areas to make sure we do that.
 21 **Q.** The White Paper doesn't cast light on the long-term
 22 approach to protecting, funding and delivering Victim
 23 Support services, does it?
 24 **A.** Well, victim services that are commissioned through the
 25 Ministry of Justice and done locally by Police and Crime

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1 a raft of other policies that we have implemented and we
 2 are implementing to ensure we can improve policing, but
 3 we wanted to get this right, so we announced that we
 4 would end Police and Crime Commissioners last year, and
 5 then in January this year we published the White Paper.
 6 **Q.** We'll go to the White Paper.
 7 **A.** Yeah.
 8 **Q.** There are no timetables currently set for the rollout of
 9 the proposals in the White Paper, are there? What's
 10 your expectation, roughly?
 11 **A.** The legislation is required to set up these reforms, and
 12 that was announced in the King's Speech. So that will
 13 be published this year and we hope will be concluded
 14 next year. We will then be in a position to set out the
 15 National Police Service, which is one of the major parts
 16 of the reform, which will grow over time.
 17 In the initial stages we will set it up and bring
 18 together organisations like the College of Policing, the
 19 National Digital Service, the Blue Light Commercial,
 20 which is how we procure things across policing. Some of
 21 these things will come together and when we've said in
 22 the next Parliament we will bring together Counter
 23 Terror and the National Crime Agency as well.
 24 Alongside that there is a review at the moment,
 25 which is going to be concluded in the summer, of the

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1 Commissioners is very much part of our thinking. We are
 2 abolishing Police and Crime Commissioners and we are
 3 working on the package of what they will be replaced by.
 4 That will form part of the legislation, and victims
 5 commissioning, in terms of services and supporting
 6 victims, is very much part of that.
 7 And there are lots of other pieces of work like, for
 8 example, the work that we are committed to: the
 9 £115 million on police AI, where actually AI and new
 10 technology has a role to play in supporting victims and
 11 making sure they get the information that they need in
 12 a timely manner. So there are lots of aspects where we
 13 need to make sure victims are at the heart of how we're
 14 thinking.
 15 **Q.** And do you accept funding intended for victims' services
 16 shouldn't be diluted or absorbed into other spending
 17 priorities?
 18 **A.** Yes.
 19 **Q.** Can we have a look, then, please, at the White Paper
 20 HOMF0000108, page 19, this is the Executive Summary,
 21 paragraph 47. We see at paragraph 47:
 22 "We have a policing structure ... last reformed in
 23 the 1960s, when the basis of the current 43 force model
 24 was established. Smaller police forces lack the ability
 25 to deliver effective specialist services and to manage

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1 major incidents. Many of them lack financial
2 resilience."

3 What's the analysis which underpins the conclusion
4 that the 43 force model is outdated and insufficient?

5 **A.** I don't think there would be many people who would say,
6 across policing, that if you were starting from this --
7 from ground zero, you would create this model of 43
8 forces. You have 43 different ways of doing things.
9 That means, for example, you have 43 data controllers,
10 and I know data and information sharing is a very
11 important part of what you are looking at. Having those
12 43 does not necessarily make for good policing when it
13 comes from working across forces.

14 We know that a lot of crime, a lot of serious
15 organised crime, a lot of exploitation, bears no
16 attention to boundaries and happens across different
17 parts of the country, and working together is a more
18 effective means of policing.

19 There are some forces that are very large, there are
20 some that are very small. They have different levels of
21 financial resilience, and they have different standards
22 as well, and there are lots of areas where forces are,
23 over a long period of time, not performing in some
24 aspects to the standards that we would want.

25 So we want to see not just a review of the

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1 we have a police force that is curious about what is
2 happening and joins the dots and asks the right
3 question, and making sure we have a culture where those
4 curiosities and different opinions and different views
5 and way of working together is harnessed, is really
6 important.

7 **Q.** An investigative mindset?

8 **A.** Yes.

9 **Q.** Page 83 and 84, if they can go on the screen, please.
10 We see at paragraph 281:

11 "In policing, getting the right information into the
12 right hands at the right time can mean the difference
13 between life and death. Information is the currency of
14 good policing ... it must be fully utilised to keep the
15 public safe. ... means getting the latest technology
16 into the hands of highly skilled officers and staff,
17 enabling access to up to date and accurate data. It
18 means fully exploiting the potential of the AI
19 revolution, while staying through to the Peelian
20 principles of policing by consent."

21 If we go to 84, we see the penultimate bullet point:

22 "Work with policing to define specific national
23 standards for police data and data quality requirements,
24 and where appropriate, mandate these."

25 **A.** Mm.

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1 43 forces, but also, how do we make sure when HMICFRS
2 says that something needs to change, we know that it
3 will change, and when the Home Secretary asks for
4 information on what all the forces are doing, we have
5 that information to hand in the Home Office.

6 **Q.** And refers here at paragraph 47 to "... local IT systems
7 [working] ... in silos", as you have said.

8 That clearly will impact on efficiency.

9 Do you also agree leadership, training, supervision
10 and culture are critical? Getting the right people in
11 the first place and promoting the right people?

12 **A.** Absolutely.

13 **Q.** And we've seen reference in other documents to
14 teach-first approach, to recruit police officers via
15 a similar scheme; is that the intention?

16 **A.** We obviously work very closely with the
17 College of Policing on how the police are recruited.
18 We're also -- we've asked Lord Blunkett and Lord Herbert
19 to do a piece of work looking at policing leadership
20 across all of the different levels of policing, and
21 looking at do we need different direct entry routes into
22 policing to make sure we get the right people coming
23 into the service?

24 I think a lot of the issues you are grappling with,
25 a lot of the issues I see are around how do we make sure

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1 **Q.** And if we can go, please, to 89 and 90 on the screen, we
2 see on page 89 "Spotlight on data-driven policing". In
3 the second box, as you've already referred to:

4 "Police data is often kept within individual
5 force systems, making it hard to use effectively. At
6 local level forces need to be able to integrate their
7 systems so that officers can access everything they need
8 easily without having to log into multiple systems, and
9 nationally key data needs to be shared and used widely.

10 "We are working with the NPCC to deploy new
11 technology to integrate data both locally and
12 nationally."

13 If we look, please, at page 90 in the last box,
14 "Data Sharing":

15 "This includes ... that [the] police have the
16 confidence and can identify an appropriate legal basis
17 to share data with other partners where this is in the
18 public interest, and simplifying the internal processes
19 for reaching such decisions.

20 "We will also require all police forces to share
21 data into designated national datasets to reflect their
22 vital importance in ensuring that all police forces have
23 the information they need to carry out their functions."

24 So clearly identifying the two issues, isn't it?
25 One, databases making it easier to share information;

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1 and, secondly, the legal confidence within the police to
2 know when it's important to share information in the
3 public interest.

4 **A.** Yes, absolutely.

5 **Q.** Do you think there should be clear and simple national
6 guidelines, whether in a Code of Practice or otherwise,
7 identifying the circumstances in which data can and
8 should be shared internally and externally?

9 **A.** So we're envisaging that in the police reform
10 legislation that we're working on now there will be
11 a mandated requirement to share, in the first instance,
12 data with the national systems and also what data needs
13 to be shared and how that kind of system can work.

14 I think, as you say, there are two sort of sides to
15 the challenge here, one is have we got the right systems
16 that are easy to use and speak to each other, and we are
17 lucky that there is a lot of new AI technology that
18 helps us look across different datasets and read across
19 them with an AI model across the top. But the second
20 thing is people feeling they have the confidence to, and
21 understand the law well enough, and the confidence to
22 share that data and we're looking at that. It's a live
23 discussion in the Home Office.

24 So for example, what is the role of the
25 Home Secretary in mandating some of that data sharing?

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1 that's done and through what forums.

2 There are forums that exist where these things are
3 shared more freely and, to my mind, where there is close
4 communication and confidence in each other, data sharing
5 is much better. So where we have, for example, MAPPA
6 structures, so where you have structures where someone
7 is being convicted and is -- needs to be dealt with by
8 multiple organisations, they come together, they look at
9 what to do with that person, and they manage that
10 person.

11 If you look at the new duty to reduce serious
12 violence that was in the Police Crime Sentencing and
13 Courts Bill a few years ago, there is a duty there and
14 organisations come together and they share data and
15 share information.

16 So it has to be the right data in the right way, but
17 to my mind looking across quite a lot of what you've
18 looked at, if people are regularly communicating with
19 each other and have confidence, and you might have
20 suggestions as to what forums that should happen in, the
21 data sharing is much more likely to be happening.

22 **Q.** The fragmented police database system, doesn't it,
23 prevents markers being put on in respect of an
24 individual being seen by other area forces?

25 **A.** Yes.

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1 So just to give an example there's a recommendation in
2 Louise Casey's Inquiry that we should report the
3 ethnicity more than we do at the moment of people who
4 are committing crimes. Is that something the
5 Home Secretary could mandate? And then how it's
6 implemented, happens locally.

7 So these are very live conversations at the moment,
8 but the unit that we've set up, the National Data
9 Integration and Exploitation Service, has got
10 £80 million over three years to help us get the right
11 data in the right places, and then we're looking at
12 guidance and legislation for giving people confidence.

13 **Q.** And the guidelines do need to be clear, concise --

14 **A.** Yes.

15 **Q.** -- and simple, don't they?

16 **A.** Yes.

17 **Q.** And police officers and staff should receive training
18 about them?

19 **A.** Yes.

20 **Q.** Do you think there should be a national system
21 established which ensures police and other bodies share
22 all appropriate information with mental health services?

23 **A.** I think there is clearly -- well, an issue that came to
24 the fore through a lot of the evidence you've already
25 taken in terms of how people share information and how

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1 **Q.** So the national overview would assist with that,
2 wouldn't it?

3 **A.** Yes. We have data on how many Section 135s and
4 Section 136s we have, that's quite clear. But some of
5 the other data that we would perhaps want to be able to
6 look at and monitor is not there yet in the way we would
7 want it to be.

8 **Q.** Nottingham University has an information-sharing
9 agreement with the local police force which wouldn't
10 permit for the sharing of information nationally with
11 all forces. Is it an intention that your department
12 would undertake work with universities and other sectors
13 to provide a framework for national sharing of risk
14 information where it's appropriate to do so?

15 **A.** So through the new data service, we are looking at what
16 do we need to do nationally and what do we need to do
17 locally? What do we mandate and what do we not? So
18 that is a question that we would be looking at through
19 part of that deliberation as we move through the
20 legislation.

21 **Q.** Do you agree that the length of time it would take for
22 the reforms to be effected and effective means there
23 will be need to have political support through a number
24 of parliamentary terms to ensure a full rollout in
25 getting to where you'd like to be?

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1 **A.** Some of the work we're doing now and will be done by the
2 end of this Parliament, so the work we are doing on the
3 data exploitation and integration, the work on AI, the
4 legislation setting a framework for live facial
5 recognition, all of these things will be done. The
6 workforce strategy area. There are lots of aspects of
7 the White Paper that will be done by the end of
8 Parliament and we're hoping, on the force mergers, that
9 we will have done one pathfinder merger, so we will have
10 set the precedent and learnt the lessons from that
11 process.

12 The two major elements that come after the next
13 election are the wider force mergers and then bringing
14 the Counter Terror and the National Crime Agency into
15 the National Police Service, and those are for after
16 Parliament. So we would hope to work across all parties
17 so that whoever is in Government at that point, that
18 work is taken forward.

19 I think what will be really important is making sure
20 we keep working with policing partners and others to
21 make sure everybody is moving in the same direction and
22 we have a lot of police input embedded in the department
23 to make sure we get this right.

24 **Q.** So data sharing within the police nationally, obviously
25 extremely important, and also data sharing across

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1 people who are violence fixated, which is another
2 category of people who need better monitoring, we need
3 better information sharing, but we haven't quite got it
4 right yet.

5 **Q.** Independent advocacy and support for victims. Is the
6 case for state funded independent advocacy greater in
7 circumstances where there's been a serious crime
8 committed by someone who's mentally unwell with
9 a history of violence and who has been in the care of
10 the state, whether detained or in the community?

11 **A.** I think we need to do everything we can to make sure the
12 victims are getting the advocacy and the support that
13 they need and clearly there were issues in this case
14 where that didn't happen in the way that it should have
15 done.

16 So again, any recommendations on what should be done
17 in this space, whether that's for the Ministry of
18 Justice or for the Home Office, would be very welcome.
19 I'm aware that we need to make sure and we're trying to
20 do that through better policing systems, more timely
21 systems, more timeliness in the IOPC -- you know, all of
22 these processes are quicker, but also people given are
23 more information as they go along. And of course
24 advocacy is an important part of that as well.

25 **Q.** Have Ministers taken a view on the recommendations made

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1 numerous agencies. What, if any, reforms are being
2 invested in to ensure improved multi-agency data
3 sharing, physically data sharing?

4 **A.** Well, I think again this is an area that I know you're
5 really interested in, and I think we would be really
6 interested in the recommendations that you have. And
7 I've seen some of the suggestions from Rob Griffin in
8 this space.

9 We have the MAPPA system where people come together.
10 We have the domestic abuse, the MARAC system, where
11 people come together and share data. I know there's
12 lots of recommendations here that we would, you know,
13 welcome your sort of recommendations on around if, for
14 example, somebody stops taking their medication, who
15 needs to know, how does that data get shared at a local
16 level and, indeed, what do we need to do at a national
17 level?

18 I think we're all aware that there are -- there were
19 systemic failings in this case that meant that people
20 weren't talking to each other, and responding in the way
21 that they should have been. So I am obviously very
22 interested in understanding what we do to fix that, and
23 MAPPA exists for people who are already convicted, so
24 what do we do in the space of people who aren't?

25 There is a lot of work going on in the department on

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1 to government by the House of Lords committee on
2 statutory inquiries that there should be a standing
3 committee in Parliament to oversee the response to
4 Inquiry recommendations?

5 **A.** Yes. As I understand it, that is a sort of
6 Parliamentary decision. So it isn't a decision for
7 Ministers. But what I would say, as a sort of working
8 Minister, is that when you first become a Minister,
9 there are certain things that are told to you that are
10 your responsibility, things that you know you'll have to
11 do. So you'll have to answer written questions within
12 three days. You have to respond to letters. You have
13 to go to Select Committee and give evidence when you're
14 required.

15 I think it would be helpful for Ministers to be also
16 told, "And you are responsible for these recommendations
17 that this body, whether it's a Parliamentary body or
18 not, that this body has given to you to be responsible
19 for, and you, as the new Minister, have to hold those
20 and make sure that you are checking that they are being
21 implemented."

22 And I think that -- although in the Home Office we
23 are -- we have a register of recommendations and when
24 they are being implemented and what the progress is,
25 having a system where Ministers are responsible for them

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1 I think would be actually very helpful.

2 **Q.** In what way is it proposed that the National Police
3 Force will have a greater ability to set mandatory
4 national standards on training, technology, and
5 professional practice than the existing
6 College of Policing?

7 **A.** The National Police Service will bring together the
8 College with lots of other national systems, and will be
9 able to look across the whole piece, and establish and
10 set clearer, simpler, training systems. At the moment,
11 the College does really good work and I work very
12 closely with the college, but it is still down to the 43
13 forces to do the training and to use different providers
14 and to use different ways to train. I think we don't
15 need 43 different ways of training officers, we need
16 really good training that works for everybody, depending
17 on what the training is, and that should be set
18 nationally and the College is sort of on the way there
19 but not quite, and it comes down to what we can mandate
20 and what we can ensure all the forces have to do.

21 **Q.** Can you tell us something about the Law Enforcement Data
22 Service? Plans in place to replace the PNC with this.
23 Tell us about that.

24 **A.** Yes, well, as you know, the PNC is just a couple of
25 years younger than me, and has been around for a very

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1 What actions will be taken in respect of leaders of
2 police chiefs who fail to ensure satisfactory standards
3 within their organisation? What do you envisage by
4 this?

5 **A.** Well, we are designing the legislation at the moment to
6 describe this properly, but it -- basically in 2012,
7 when Police and Crime Commissioners were set up, the
8 whole policing system was delegated to Police and Crime
9 Commissioners and the Home Office and the Home Secretary
10 stepped back and took away some of the powers that they
11 had previously and also stopped developing things like
12 the data and the information that actually we need to --
13 in order to understand what's happening on the ground.

14 So we are putting back, because we're getting rid of
15 Police and Crime Commissioners, we're putting back that
16 power for the Home Secretary to have the power to
17 dismiss. I mean, this will be very clearly set, there
18 will be a process that you will have to go through and
19 it will have to meet certain criteria. It won't be
20 a situation where the Home Secretary can come in and
21 take a disliking to somebody and get rid of them. It
22 won't be like that, it will be assessing
23 -- (*overspeaking*) --

24 **Q.** Is it about accountability?

25 **A.** It's about accountability --

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1 long time and needs replacing.

2 It is an incredibly important dataset, and its
3 functionality, as you would imagine, is not what it
4 should be.

5 We are replacing it with a system that is cloud
6 based, that can be updated over time, that is much
7 easier to use, the training for it is much quicker
8 because it's much more intuitive and easy to use.

9 At the moment, the two systems are double running so
10 you can use either, because we didn't want a cliff edge
11 where we turned the old system off and then have
12 a problem with the new one. So they are double running
13 at the moment and my understanding is about a third of
14 forces are using the new system, and we will see the
15 final implementation of going over completely to the new
16 system by quarter one next year. But that work is going
17 well.

18 **Q.** Can we have, please, HOMF0000108, page 33, back to the
19 White Paper, A new system of local police governance,
20 and reference on this page in the box, bullet point
21 three:

22 "Improve the process of appointing, suspending and
23 dismissing Chief Constables so that it is fair,
24 transparent and has the confidence of the public and
25 policing."

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1 **Q.** Similar for the NHS and those for the Police, that
2 senior people in organisations take responsibility and
3 are accountable for the actions of the organisation?

4 **A.** Yes, it is about accountability. It's not the only
5 thing we are changing. We are introducing through the
6 new system with HMICFRS, working with them and our new
7 performance regime that forces will be put into one of
8 four categories. If they are in the special category
9 four, which is the sort of equivalent of special
10 measures category, then there will be turnaround teams
11 sent in to help them improve and do the things that they
12 need to do.

13 So the powers that we are giving to the
14 Home Secretary is one part of how do we hold people to
15 account? Because, of course, by removing the Police and
16 Crime Commissioner, you're taking away a democratically
17 elected body, you have to make sure you've got real
18 accountability to replace that. So having boards at
19 a local level, having a board for the National Police
20 Service which will be a very -- the commissioner for the
21 National Police Service will be a very powerful
22 position. There has to be accountability for what they
23 do as well.

24 **MS LANGDALE:** Thank you, Minister. Those are my questions.
25 There will be some more.

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1 **THE CHAIR:** Yes, Mr Moloney.

2 **Questioned by MR MOLONEY**

3 **MR MOLONEY:** Minister, I ask questions on behalf of the
4 bereaved families, and you met two of them last
5 October --

6 **A.** Yes.

7 **Q.** -- Dr Kumar and Mrs Webber, and they discussed their
8 experiences, as one thing, with the IOPC with you.

9 When -- there's been some delay, to put it mildly --
10 when the IOPC have concluded their investigations, will
11 be learning you can draw from the experiences of these
12 families inform any future consideration of how the
13 IOPC operates going forward?

14 **A.** Yes. I think timeliness is a huge issue for the IOPC.
15 There is a big programme of work going on to transform
16 the way it operates and there is progress being made,
17 but there is a long way to go on timeliness.

18 I think there are also issues which the IOPC would
19 acknowledge, I think, as well of how families are
20 supported and taken on the journey which at the moment
21 is quite a complicated one in terms of the
22 IOPC processes and how they work and how they are
23 explained. I think we've said in the White Paper we
24 need to look at this and we are going to do more on
25 timeliness.

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1 **THE CHAIR:** Yes, Ms Cartwright.

2 **Questioned by MS CARTWRIGHT**

3 **MS CARTWRIGHT:** Good afternoon. I ask questions on behalf
4 of the survivors.

5 Can I just deal with two aspects of your statement
6 where you give some indication about the reforms that
7 are coming in. Can we look, please, briefly at your
8 paragraph 28, WITN0454001, at page 9, please. Thank
9 you. You tell us that the:

10 "The Government proposes to take a more active
11 leadership role within policing, to improve performance
12 across forces."

13 Then, obviously, give a bit more detail about how
14 that's going to work. Has there been any thought as to
15 how that's going to operate so as not to trespass on the
16 independence of police forces when it seems this is
17 a step change for the Department?

18 **A.** Yes, a lot of thought, with colleagues in policing as
19 well. The police protocol sets out the sort of
20 relationship at the moment between the Home Office and
21 Police and Crime Commissioners and policing and we are
22 rewriting that to reflect the new system where we don't
23 have Police and Crime Commissioners, but we do have
24 a more significant role for the Home Office. So that
25 will be rewritten.

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1 But I think, from my meeting with the families,

2 I think there are lots of lessons that we can learn from
3 this process, yes.

4 **Q.** Would -- and you've mentioned there the provision of
5 assistance, as it were, to families navigating the
6 IOPC process, because it is quite complex, isn't it, and
7 would that be something, perhaps, that the independent
8 advocacy support that Ms Langdale King's Counsel has
9 just asked you about might be able to assist bereaved
10 families with in the circumstances of this type that are
11 presented in this case?

12 **A.** Yeah, it could well be. I also think some of the
13 processes within the IOPC that are complex can be
14 explained in different and better ways, and perhaps the
15 processes themselves can be simpler.

16 But yes, I think I need help understanding some of
17 the processes, everybody needs help understanding some
18 of the processes, so that suggests that some of those
19 could be simpler, but also that people need support when
20 they are in a situation of extreme vulnerability because
21 they've suffered extreme bereavement, you know, even
22 more so, of course, you need to make sure you've got
23 somebody there who can support you through that, through
24 that journey.

25 **MR MOLONEY:** Thank you very much, Minister.

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1 Of course, operational independence is really
2 important, and we need to maintain that, but I think
3 that is perfectly possible to do with a more robust Home
4 Office that understands the data that I can see, and set
5 standards that a Government, I think it is the right
6 role for a Government to set the strategic direction for
7 our public bodies and to set the standards and to work
8 with the National Police Service to make sure those
9 standards are implemented. But you can do that by
10 ensuring, at the same time, that a police chief is
11 responsible for his people and what they do and how they
12 investigate crime.

13 **Q.** Thank you. Then, if we perhaps look at the next
14 paragraph, you indicate that there's going to be these
15 new powers for the Inspectorate to ensure that
16 recommendations from reports are implemented. Can
17 I just pause there: are you referencing the
18 recommendations in the Inspectorate reports rather than
19 the reports more broadly?

20 **A.** That's recommendations from HMICFRS in particular, yeah.

21 **Q.** Will it be wider? Will it go to sort of other Inquiry
22 recommendations and reports, or is that simply intended
23 to be for the Inspectorate reports?

24 **A.** In the new structure, the HMICFRS will chair a body that
25 will look at both the inspections and the performance

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1 data that we're going to hold in the Home Office with
2 lots of different aspects of data that tell us lots of
3 different things about how police forces are operating
4 and make the decision about what -- whether that force
5 should be put into special measures or whether it needs
6 other interventions. So that particularly relates to
7 that process.

8 I think what we were talking about earlier was what
9 do we do about other recommendations from other bodies?
10 We hold, in the Home Office, a dataset of those
11 recommendations from different Inquiries, and we need to
12 make sure we are implementing those. I think there's
13 a stronger role for Ministers to be sort of given that
14 as a job to do when you first become a Minister that you
15 have to hold these recommendations and make sure that
16 they're implemented.

17 **Q.** Thank you, and I think you've also identified at
18 paragraph 29 that the Department must also identify the
19 need, in severe failures, for the dismissal of Chief
20 Constables on performance grounds. Again, another step
21 change, would you agree?

22 **A.** It is, it is, but it's going back to a system that is
23 not dissimilar to what we had before Police and Crime
24 Commissioners were introduced in 2012.

25 **Q.** Thank you. And then finally can I just ask you about

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1 **Q.** Can I ask then, in terms of the forces that are already
2 using now the LEDS system, is there good capture of how
3 it is working practically to understand obviously any
4 recommendations this Inquiry will make in terms of how
5 it works alongside how the system is now operating in
6 practice?

7 **A.** So the old system is a sort of green screen of sort of
8 what that looks like something from a different era.
9 The new system is an easier to operate system that looks
10 like something that people are used to dealing with when
11 they're searching databases.

12 So my understanding, what I'm told, is that the
13 implementation is going well, that people are preferring
14 to use it, that it is a third of forces-ish, or a third
15 of the time is being used on that rather than the old
16 PNC system. And it can change and get better over time
17 as well. So I think, touch wood, I think that this
18 transition is going well and will be successful.

19 **MS CARTWRIGHT:** Thank you.

20 **THE CHAIR:** Yes, Mr Straw.

21 **Questioned by MR STRAW**

22 **MR STRAW:** Minister, I represent VC's family.

23 There is just one issue. You've discussed already
24 the implementation of public Inquiry recommendations.
25 We've heard some evidence that there have been other

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1 the full implementation of the LEDS and essentially the
2 decommissioning of the PNC. If we could just look,
3 please, at your paragraph 45, which is on page 16,
4 please.

5 You've obviously been able today to give us a bit
6 more detail about when PNC is going to end and full
7 implementation of the LEDS. I think you're now saying
8 it would be quarter 1 next year.

9 **A.** Yes.

10 **Q.** So would that be by the spring of 2027?

11 **A.** Yes.

12 **Q.** And I think the last update I think you provided to
13 a question had been it should have been fully
14 implemented by 2026. Is there any risk that there will
15 be further drift in respect of the full implementation
16 of the LEDS?

17 **A.** It has shifted from the end of 2026 to the beginning of
18 '27 for reasons I can write to the Inquiry about if that
19 will be helpful, but they're not catastrophic reasons,
20 and the updates that I get regularly from the team are
21 that they are confident that that should be the point.

22 We want to make sure -- we have to make sure we get
23 it right because it's such an important piece of -- it
24 holds everything that policing needs to do its job so we
25 have to get it right.

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1 types of recommendations, so Coronial recommendations,
2 things like that, that have been repeatedly made but
3 apparently not led to much action being taken.

4 Would you support some form of mechanism for
5 monitoring the implementation of recommendations from
6 other types of Inquiries like Coronial inquests?

7 **A.** Yes, I would.

8 **Q.** You would, okay. And do you have any thoughts of the
9 form that that should take, or is there work being done
10 about that at the moment?

11 **A.** I think the Cabinet Office is looking at, in the round,
12 all of the recommendations from Inquiries and how we
13 should pull those together. I think we can have simple
14 databases, which is helpful, of course of what are we
15 supposed to -- what are we supposed to implement and has
16 it been done? And that is helpful and a good first
17 step.

18 But the second step is what is then the process of
19 making sure those things get done? And it might be the
20 Inquiry has suggestions for that, but it is certainly
21 the case that there are recommendations from -- I mean
22 it's great that we have Inquiries, they tell us a huge
23 amount, and we change a huge amount as a result, and
24 from Coroners' reports as well, but there are some
25 things that aren't done in the way that they should be

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1 and we need to be better at that.

2 **MR STRAW:** Thank you very much.

3 **THE WITNESS:** Thank you.

4 **THE CHAIR:** Yes, Ms Patry? No? Thank you.

5 **Questioned by THE CHAIR**

6 **THE CHAIR:** I just wanted to ask you a couple of points.

7 You've already mentioned, in the sense, the
8 fragmentation of bodies which deal with perhaps people
9 of concern in different ways, so MAPPA, MARAC. We've
10 got FTAC and STAC.

11 **A.** Yes, all of the acronyms.

12 **THE CHAIR:** All of those. Is there any difficulty in, in
13 a sense, in actually joining up into a much larger set
14 of principles which covers all of these concerns, even
15 though the groups may be smaller?

16 **A.** It could be that we need to do more in that space. As
17 I said before, my experience talking to local police
18 officers going out on response, or national police
19 leaders, is that where organisations have a good
20 communication, where they talk to each other, where they
21 build trust, that's the key part of this, and where they
22 all have the curiosity to ask the right questions at the
23 right time. But it may well be that there is a better
24 way of nationally sharing information.

25 I know that historically, as you'll know, the

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1 to do. I think when it comes to these issues, they are
2 difficult, and the police aren't health professionals
3 and they never will be, and obviously each -- in each
4 case, depends on the crime, depends on the condition
5 that the person has and their capacity to understand
6 what they're doing, and that is always going to be,
7 I think, complicated, which is why all these agencies
8 need to be talking together as much as they can to share
9 the best understanding they possibly can, but training
10 is enormously important in that space, of course. And
11 I think you took evidence from the College of Policing
12 about this.

13 **THE CHAIR:** Yes.

14 **A.** Of course, there is sort of training when you first
15 become an officer and then there are other training that
16 you can do. So maybe the National Police Service has
17 a role to say, "Well, actually you must do that
18 training".

19 **THE CHAIR:** Yes. Just in relation to LEDS, does that cover
20 not only the Police National Computer but the Police
21 National Database as well?

22 **A.** No. So there was, as I understand it, over the last
23 number of years, a programme where they wanted to bring
24 the two together and it became very expensive, very
25 difficult, and it didn't work and so the plan was

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1 Department of Health will worry about sharing
2 information with the police because they'll think people
3 won't come forward with their condition. You know,
4 there are all kinds of cultural issues that stop us. So
5 maybe there's more we could do at the national level to
6 break down those barriers as well.

7 **THE CHAIR:** Because there may be people who have elements of
8 each of those groups, but not, perhaps, meet the entire
9 criteria.

10 **A.** Yes.

11 **THE CHAIR:** But still -- and therefore then fall between the
12 gaps?

13 **A.** Yes, absolutely. Yes.

14 **THE CHAIR:** The other thing is in relation to training in
15 relation to the police and mental illness. We've had a
16 lot of information in the Inquiry about people's
17 understanding of things like capacity and also liaison
18 and diversion away from the courts where there's
19 a mental illness in the background.

20 Is part of the new approach to the National Police
21 Service to increase awareness and training in that
22 respect?

23 **A.** We want to standardise training and make sure it's as
24 excellent as it can be. So to that extent, there would
25 be mandated national training that everybody would need

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1 changed. And I think the nature of AI does mean that we
2 don't have to have one big national system. We can join
3 these things up better.

4 So at the moment, the Police National Computer is
5 translating over to LEDS and then the Police National
6 Database is coming in-house in the Home Office. So
7 we're bringing it in-house and it will be, I think by
8 around the end of the year, and that will enable us to
9 have more control over it and to extend the number of
10 licences. Because you have to have a licence in order
11 to look at that database. So to extend the number of
12 licences, to improve it a bit, and then in the long
13 term, we need to sort of work out how we go forward with
14 that.

15 **THE CHAIR:** The other systems which are used by different
16 police forces, and we've had NICHE in this Inquiry, so
17 for example, if you are a constable trying to find some
18 information out, would you still have to look at LEDS,
19 the Police National Database, and NICHE?

20 **A.** It depends what it is you need. The Police National
21 Database has a sort of very known and well understood
22 set of information, not just where the people --
23 warrants, but, you know, missing people and information
24 about whether they have insurance for cars. There's a
25 lot of vehicle information on there and the new LEDS

100

1 system is easy to look at.
2 You may want to look at the other system if you are
3 dealing with a bigger, more complex crime, and you need
4 to look across and beyond different forces and the
5 information that you have in NICHE. But what I think AI
6 will give us -- and I'm not an expert, but these are,
7 you know, the conversations I have with people who are
8 experts -- is a tool that can look across all of them
9 and help you draw out the things that you need. So you
10 don't need to have separate -- you don't need to have
11 one system, but you can have a tool that pulls out what
12 you need from the different systems to make it much
13 easier to use.
14 **THE CHAIR:** Is that working at the moment on the -- when
15 you're doing dual running?
16 **A.** So at the moment we don't have that AI system across the
17 top. We have the Police National Computer and Police
18 National Database.
19 **THE CHAIR:** No, but I mean in terms of the LEDS trial?
20 **A.** The LEDS trial, yes, it seems to be, from what I've
21 heard, working quite well. I get obviously regular
22 updates on how it's going and the latest I had was about
23 a third are using it, that the feedback is good.
24 **THE CHAIR:** May I ask for an update around September?
25 **A.** Yes, of course.

1 **THE CHAIR:** Thank you. Good. Thank you. Well, we'll
2 finish there and start again tomorrow. Thank you.
3 **(4.11 pm)**
4 **(The hearing adjourned until 10.00 am the following day)**
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