



Home Office

Home Secretary

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BY EMAIL ONLY

18 October 2021

Dear Tom,

Inspection of police capability and capacity to vet and monitor officers and staff

Thank you for your letter of 30 September. I am grateful for reassurance that HMICFRS' current inspection activities will examine some of issues of grave concern raised by the circumstances of Sarah Everard's abduction and death.

That such a brutal crime was carried out by a serving police officer has shocked this country and will have damaged confidence in policing. It is critical that the public, and particularly women and girls, can be assured that police forces are doing everything they can to prevent individuals who are unsuitable to serve the public from joining policing, and that forces are ever vigilant for signs of behaviour that indicate that individuals are not fit to serve.

To this end I wish to accept your offer to determine whether systemic improvements might have highlighted the dangers presented by the murderer of Sarah Everard but, moreover, I am commissioning you, under my powers in the Police Act 1996 s54(2B), to undertake a broader, thematic inspection to provide an assessment of current vetting and counter-corruption capacity and capability in policing across England & Wales – to include forces' ability to detect and deal with misogynistic and predatory behaviour.

Such an inspection should include, but not be limited to, consideration of current vetting (and re-vetting), arrangements for transferees, whistleblowing arrangements, the work of counter-corruption units and, where relevant, wider Professional Standards Departments.

You will understand I am sure, the need for swift findings so as to inform the newly established non-statutory inquiry on the issues pertaining to the Couzens case that we recently announced.

I would therefore be grateful if you can report your emerging findings to me by the end of this calendar year and a final report, with recommendations, in the early part of next year. In order that this work can inform the inquiry, I would be grateful if you would share your findings with its Chair (to be announced in due course).

I would be grateful if your team could speak to my officials and the IOPC as soon as possible in relation to formalising the terms of reference of the thematic inspection.

Rt Hon Priti Patel MP