FILE NOTE- PAUSING OF PUBLICATION OF CONDUCT REPORT

13 March 2026- 1400 hours.

I was approached by Director tom McMahon in the late morning raising significant concerns on behalf of the Chief Constable that publication of the assurance review into conduct could have an impact in relation to ongoing investigations. By this I understood it to be in relation to Chief Officer conduct matters.

I listened to his argument that the service believed that there were potential that the report could damage ongoing investigations without the investigations being named. He asked if we would pause the publication and I agreed to consider it if the Chief Constable formally requested it.

I have since received letters from both the Chief Constable and the SPA CEO, Chris Brown, seeking that the report publication is paused.

I discussed this issue with a core group of Brian McInulty, AIC, [redacted], Lead Inspector, [redacted], Inspection Support and [redacted], Media and Comms Manager. We explored issues as follows

1. Do we understand what the issues in relation to investigations are and how this report might cause an impact
2. Do these requests impact the independence of the inspectorate
3. What information do we think that PS/SPA have that is causing them concern over the publication of this report and how might this impact investigations.
4. Do we lose anything if we pause and allow representations to be made.

In answer to these points:

1. We don't currently understand what the issues are, how they might impact the investigations. **Action**- to seek to clarify with both SPA and PS the issues and to work to understand how they can mitigate the issues recognising that it is our intention to publish this report. Meet with the CC and SPA CEO.
2. The request is getting close to impacting our independence and the way in which it was initially pitched would have required a very robust response. The manner in which the request came in was more subtle and sought assistance in resolving potential future problems. This is an acceptable ask when pitched in this manner, doesn't compromise independence but if a more bullish tone had been taken it would have been rebuffed and rejected.
3. We can only speculate which investigations they are alluding to and will need to be able to discuss the issues more fully.
4. We do not lose anything by pausing with the exception of not publishing when we expect to which may cause consternation to those who were aware of the dates. Action- for CN to write to those that have been advised of the publication date to advise of a delay and provide clarity that this is a pause.

I have also spoken to Alasdair Hay, Chair SPA, Don McGillivray, Director SG and Chris brown to explain my rationale.



HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, 13 March 2026