

News Release

ISSUED ON BEHALF OF HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE
OF CONSTABULARY

August 26, 2008

RECOMMENDATIONS TO HELP POLICE DEAL WITH DOMESTIC ABUSE

A number of recommendations aimed at helping the police improve the way they deal with crimes and victims of domestic abuse are contained in a report published today.

The report, from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), recommends that:

- The setting up of a national database of perpetrators and victims is urgently addressed by all forces.
- the domestic abuse officer role is reviewed in line with the identified good practice in this report.
- all forces work together (with the Scottish Police Services Authority (SPSA) where appropriate), to develop a common approach to training and support for officers.
- all forces adopt a model of victim risk assessment and risk management as soon as possible, whilst working towards implementing a single core model across Scotland, and that forces focus on ensuring the quality of the information gathered.
- forces review and reinforce their quality assurance practices and processes for recording domestic abuse incidents.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary Mr Paddy Tomkins said:

"Domestic abuse has the highest rate of repeat victimisation of any crime, even though only a proportion of all incidents are reported to the police.

"Every call represents an opportunity to identify a pattern of abuse and an opportunity to intervene to prevent further or escalating acts of violence in the future.

"That's why effective record-keeping and ease of access to information are key to an effective response to domestic abuse. We believe that a national database of victims and offenders

would help the police to better respond to potential domestic abuse cases.

“We found many examples of good practice across Scotland and this report is designed to help make sure that all forces can learn from that.

“In particular the role of the Domestic Abuse Officer varied between forces and we’d like to see all forces review their own posts against this good practice to make sure we have consistency across Scotland.

“I hope these recommendations can help our police forces to respond more effectively and consistently to potential incidents of domestic abuse, and ultimately help make sure that fewer Scots end up suffering this crime.”

NOTES FOR NEWS EDITORS

1. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (commonly known as the Police Inspectorate or HMICS) is responsible for inspecting the eight Scottish police forces and five police services. HMICS operates independently of the police forces, police authorities and the Scottish Government and exists to monitor and improve the police services in Scotland.

2. The Prevention of Domestic Abuse Report is available from: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Justice/Police/>. Advance copies for the media are available from the Scottish Government press office on the number below.

3. Mr Tomkins will be available for broadcast interviews between 14:30 and 15:30 on August 26, 2008. To reserve a slot please contact 0131 244 2939.

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