

BEV HUGHES
**DEPUTY MAYOR
OF GREATER
MANCHESTER**

Rt Hon Priti Patel,
Secretary of State for the Home Department
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

1st February 2021

Dear Home Secretary

SUBJECT: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Crime and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) inspection of Pre-charge bail and released under investigation: Striking a balance.

I write in response to the recent HMICFRS thematic report that reviewed the police and Crown Prosecution Service's (CPS) responses to pre-charge bail changes and the use of released under investigation (RUI).

I note that the report has found some encouraging improvements within the police service to risk assessment processes and for the recording and analysis of bail and RUI data.

It is important that the potential consequences and impact of the decisions made are properly understood. Whilst released under investigation aims to provide a proportionate and efficient approach to managing suspects in police custody, care must be taken to ensure that where appropriate, victims are still offered the required protections that pre-charge bail can provide, through the course of the investigation.

The report highlighted inconsistent practice nationally in respect of how decisions are made, how data is recorded and, the level of communication with victims and suspects regarding an ongoing investigation. I am pleased that the Home Office is already responding to this issue and is seeking to make positive changes in this regard. I support the report's recommendations for policing's national bodies to work together to provide assistance and direction to frontline policing.

The report makes two recommendations specific to policing and I can respond to these as follows:

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Recommendation - Forces should develop processes and systems to clearly show whether suspects are on bail or RUI. This will help them to better understand the risk a suspect poses to victims and the wider community and will help to increase safeguarding.

This is an important point, firstly to ensure that the police collect the data required, but secondly, that the police have structures and processes in place to enable the effective analysis of that data.

In Greater Manchester, officers have the capability to identify whether suspects are on bail or RUI, with the data uploaded to the Police National Computer once the suspect is released. Local bail managers maintain a detailed understanding of all suspects currently on bail and can remind officers when applicable bail periods are due to end.

Overall bail and RUI data is monitored centrally, to provide a clear picture on the numbers of people on bail and RUI, with the capability to break the data down further if required.

Recommendation - Forces should record whether a suspect is on bail or RUI on the MG3 form when it is submitted to the CPS. This should be regularly checked and any changes in bail or RUI provided to the CPS. The CPS should work with the police to ensure this information is provided.

Police Officers are required to include whether a suspect is on bail or RUI as part of the narrative on the Pre-Charge Decision Document (MG3). Whilst the Crown Prosecution Service locally state that this information is generally received, there is no official data available at present to report on this.

In Greater Manchester, officers within the Criminal Justice Units check that all pre-charge files have details of bail and RUI on the MG3. If the case is resubmitted following an action plan, officers will ensure that any change of status on the resubmitted pre-charge decision (PCD) or MG6 is included to inform the CPS.

Yours sincerely



**Baroness Beverley Hughes
Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester
Policing, Crime and Criminal Justice**

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