

Justice Committee

Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill

Supplementary written submission from the Scottish Police Federation

Corroboration

Thank you for the opportunity to give evidence to the Committee on 3 December 2013.

Some members of the Committee considered that the Scottish Police Federation (SPF) had changed its position and I would like to ensure that our position in relation to 'corroboration' is clear.

The SPF has never supported a position which would allow the evidence from one single source to be sufficient to secure conviction. We do not believe that this is the intention of the Bill and further believe that sufficient safe guards are in place to ensure this could not happen.

The SPF has always believed that much of the duplication of largely non contentious evidence to satisfy the law in relation to corroboration is unnecessary and wasteful of time and money.

We are persuaded by debate and discussion on this issue to support the removal of the general requirement for corroboration in the knowledge that there will still be a requirement for a sufficiency of corroborative evidence across the evidential chain to satisfy the burden of proof. The SPF believes that this will not only improve the efficiency of the criminal justice system but more importantly will provide easier access to it for the victims of crime.

The police will always gather and report all available evidence to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) irrespective of the outcome of this Bill. It is a matter for COPFS and the Courts to determine the sufficiency and quality of this evidence.

I trust this clarifies our position.

David Ross
SPF Vice Chairman
5 December 2013