



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Justice Sub-Committee on Policing

David Crichton
Vice Chair
Scottish Police Authority

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By e-mail

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Dear Mr Crichton

Metropolitan Police Service's review of the former Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency

I am writing to you regarding the recent peer-review undertaken by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) into Police Scotland's Anti-Corruption Unit's investigation of the former Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency's (SCDEA) Special Operations Unit. This matter was considered by the Justice Sub-Committee on Policing at its meeting on Thursday 5 December.

The Sub-Committee noted that, on 27 November, the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) Board met in Aberdeen and considered an executive summary of the MPS's report which was drafted and provided by Police Scotland and which was presented by the Chief Constable of Police Scotland. The Board agreed:

- That the Chief Constable would provide a copy of his statement in written format for publication on the SPA's website;
- To ask HMICS to provide an update to the SPA Board on the action plan for implementing the recommendations within its previously published strategic review of undercover policing. HMICS was also to be asked to consider if its recommendations are still relevant, in light of the issues identified with the former SCDEA, and whether there are any other relevant issues; and
- The SPA would publish a list of the bodies that have oversight of covert policing on its website.

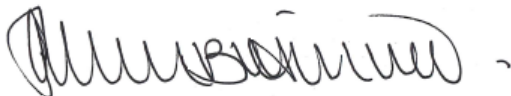
As indicated at the SPA Board meeting, there is significant parliamentary and media interest in this issue. In the view of the Sub-Committee, it is therefore essential that it is subject to robust scrutiny. In our opinion, there are a number of questions which remain unanswered and further scrutiny by the SPA is required. We would be grateful, therefore, for a response to the following:

- Whether, in the SPA's view, the review of what was alleged to have occurred at the SCDEA has been sufficiently transparent to ensure public confidence in the current use of covert policing operations by Police Scotland?
- Whether Police Scotland and/or the SPA plans to publish the Metropolitan Police Service's report in full, or in redacted form?
- Whether by the time of its Board meeting in Aberdeen, members of the SPA's Board had the opportunity to consider the full content of the Metropolitan Police Service's report? If not, was any request made by the SPA Board or former Chair to see the report?
- Whether the SPA intends to take additional evidence from the authors of the Metropolitan Police Service's report and not just hear from the Chief Constable of Police Scotland?
- Whether the SPA considers that all of the issues relating to this case have been addressed, including consideration of the questions which the media have indicated remain to be answered?
- Whether the SPA has, or intends, to make any report to the Scottish Ministers and/or Scottish Parliament on its review of this case?
- Whether HMICS is able to adequately consider whether any additional policing covert operation issues have arisen, in light of the issues identified with the former SCDEA, without access to the Metropolitan Police Service's report?

In our view, the above questions remain unanswered and it would therefore be appreciated if you could please confirm whether the SPA considers this case closed or whether it intends to undertake any further scrutiny.

A response by Monday 16 December would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely



John Finnie MSP
Convener, Justice Sub-Committee on Policing