Correspondence from the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) to the Public Audit Committee, dated 29 April 2014

Thank you for your letter of 23 April 2014 seeking clarification that the statement made to the Committee regarding the involvement of Police Scotland within the process of reviewing and assessing a suitable location for the SPA’s permanent headquarters.

I can confirm that the information provided to the Committee by the Chair is accurate.

Following decisions taken last year to focus the SPA on its governance, scrutiny, strategy and engagement responsibilities, it was confirmed that all maintenance functions in policing would sit under the direction and control of Police Scotland. As such all the estates professionals working within policing are members of Police Scotland staff, and therefore the analysis of options for the SPA was commissioned from, and carried out by, that professional resource. Professional support was also provided from the Scottish Government property division.

The ultimate recommendation put to SPA members was informed by that underpinning work but made by me as Chief Executive Officer of the SPA. This was considered by SPA members in public session and a formal decision made by them.

For your information, I include below a short summary of the process and the key parties who contributed to that.

At an SPA members’ meeting on 13 August 2013, SPA members agreed to the establishment of a short term working group to identify, assess, short-list and recommend accommodation options that had the potential to meet the requirements for a permanent SPA HQ.

The working group, which included representatives from the SPA, Police Scotland Estates Department and the Scottish Government Property Division, identified options from the existing police and wider public sector estates.

An initial long list of nineteen accommodation options was identified and a subsequent appraisal exercise, undertaken by Police Scotland and Scottish Government estates professionals, identified the preferred option as Pacific Quay, Glasgow.

At the SPA Public Board Meeting on 26 February 2014, members approved the recommended option to locate the SPA HQ within Pacific Quay.

I hope this information confirms and expands on the response given in oral evidence. I can confirm that Scottish Government approval for the move has subsequently been given and work is ongoing for staff to move by June of this year.
Correspondence from the Public Audit Committee to the Scottish Police Authority (SPA), dated 23 April 2014

At its meeting on 20 November 2013, the Public Audit Committee took evidence from you in relation to the above AGS report. At that meeting Mr Emery confirmed that in relation to the most suitable location for the SPA to reside from June 2014—

“we are looking—the Police Scotland property people are looking—at the most suitable place for the SPA to reside.”¹

The Committee would welcome your confirmation that the statement above is accurate and that it was the staff at Police Scotland who undertook the search for the most suitable place for the SPA to be based from June 2014. The Committee is aware from your letter dated 26 March that, subject to Scottish Government approval, by June 2014 the SPA will make its permanent headquarters at Pacific Quay in Govan.

Given the Committee is currently considering its draft report; the Committee would welcome a response from you by Tuesday 29 April. The Parliament’s normal practice is to publish relevant evidence that is sent to us on its website and we may also include it in the committee’s report.