



SCOTTISH POLICE
AUTHORITY
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LETTER SENT BY E-MAIL ONLY

Audrey Nicoll MSP
Convenor
Criminal Justice Committee
The Scottish Parliament

17 November 2025

CE-113-2025

Dear Convener

FURTHER INFORMATION: SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY BENCHMARKING COMPARISONS

The Authority attended an evidence session on Wednesday 5 November 2025 relating to Pre-Budget Scrutiny. I am writing to provide additional information as requested in relation to our benchmarking of the Scottish Police Authority's oversight functions and funding against others in the UK. This relates to a question asked by Mr Jamie Hepburn MSP during the Committee.

The Authority has an ongoing programme of corporate benchmarking, which we use to compare our approaches and performance to other similar organisations in the UK and beyond.

In 2023 we undertook an exercise with other policing oversight bodies to build a shared understanding of how statutory responsibilities, core functions, governance arrangements, workforce and budget compare.

We received 14 detailed responses from our peers, which enabled us to make comparisons across participating organisations. We know from this analysis that the Scottish Police Authority compares positively in terms of staff to force ratios and efficiency against overall policing spend, in the context of the range of different functions delivered by each organisation.

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This information was presented to our Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee and discussed by our Members in [August 2024](#). It should be noted that the figures exclude Forensic Services, as this function was not provided by any other comparator organisation. The results of the analysis are summarised in the paper considered, with our closest comparators highlighted this is set out in the table annexed to this letter.

In relation to the commitment made in our submission to “drive further efficiencies in our own activities”, I would like to reiterate that we will provide evidence of this to the committee as it becomes available.

I trust this addresses the Committee’s further enquiries. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require more information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CB', followed by a wavy line.

CHRIS BROWN
Chief Executive

Overview of Benchmarking Responses

Police Oversight Organisations (Force overseen)	Employer of police officers & staff	Recruiting senior officers	Complaints about senior officers	Conduct issues of senior officers	Oversee complaints and conduct processes	ICVS	Ranks defined as senior	Non-exec Board	staff per 10,000 Police Officers	budget per staff member £m	budget as % of force budget
Scottish Police Authority (Police Scotland)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	ACC and above	Yes	27.7	0.11	0.4%
British Transport Police Authority (British Transport Police)	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		ACC and above	Yes	40.9	0.21	0.7%
Policing Authority (Ireland) ¹ (Garda Síochána)		Yes			Yes		Superintendent and above	Yes	26.0	0.09	0.2%
Northern Ireland Policing Board (Police Service of Northern Ireland)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	ACC and above	Yes	89.6	0.10	0.7%
Avon and Somerset OPCC (Avon and Somerset)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Chief Constable	No	90.9	0.36	2.2%
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough OPCC (Cambridgeshire Constabulary)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Chief Constable	Yes	92.1	0.08	0.7%

¹ This exercise pre-dated the Policing Authority's change to the Policing and Community Safety Authority (Ireland)

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Police Oversight Organisations (Force overseen)	Employer of police officers & staff	Recruiting senior officers	Complaints about senior officers	Conduct issues of senior officers	Oversee complaints and conduct processes	ICVS	Ranks defined as senior	Non-exec Board	staff per 10,000 Police Officers	budget per staff member £m	budget as % of force budget
Cheshire OPCC (Cheshire)		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Chief Constable	No	54.2	0.08	0.4%
Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly OPCC (Devon and Cornwall)		Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Chief Constable	No	88.2	0.07	0.6%
Durham and Darlington OPCC (Durham Constabulary)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Chief Constable	Yes	314.3	0.12	3.4%
Dyfed-Powys OPCC (Dyfed-Powys Police)		Yes	Yes			Yes	Chief Constable	Yes	134.9	0.13	1.8%
Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Greater Manchester Police)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Chief Constable	No	57.6	0.96	4.5%
Lincolnshire OPCC (Lincolnshire Police)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Chief Constable	No	173.5	0.57	8.0%
Thames Valley OPCC (Thames Valley)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Chief Constable	No	84.0	0.27	2.0%
Wiltshire and Swindon OPCC (Wiltshire Police)		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Chief Constable and Chief Officer Group	No	317.2	0.06	1.6%