



David Linden MSP
Convener
Criminal Justice Committee
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29 September 2026

Dear Convener

Annual Report 2025-26

I am pleased to share the HM Inspectorate of Prosecution Annual Report 2025-26 with you. [Annual Report 2025-26 | HM Inspectorate of Prosecution in Scotland](#) Our report sets out the value of our inspection work along with my ongoing priorities for the inspectorate during my time in office and also highlights our scrutiny activity over the year.

Along with publishing our joint inspection with His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMICS) on '*Citing witnesses in the sheriff court*' in March, this year we have focused on implementation of four previous inspections.

I was delighted to be invited to give evidence to the Criminal Justice Committee in March this year about the state of the criminal justice system and challenges for the new parliament. This was an opportunity for IPS to put on record our reflections, achievements and concerns and I am very keen to foster ongoing engagement with the Committee.

I thought that it would be helpful to provide an overview of our work.

The oldest inspection which we continue to implement is '*Management of criminal allegations against the police by COPFS*' which was published five years ago, in 2021. One recommendation now remains outstanding.

Our annual report provides a detailed assessment of all outstanding recommendations, however an overview is set out in the tables below. As is our usual practice for our most recently published inspections, we did not assess the '*Responding to enquiries: service delivery through National Enquiry Point*' inspection in the Annual Report last year. This is to allow COPFS an opportunity to consider the recommendations, prepare an action plan and to hopefully commence progress before we assess and report on implementation of an inspection. Similarly, we will not publish a full assessment of implementation of the '*Citing*

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witnesses in the sheriff court' inspection until our next annual report.

These tables are also a useful 'snapshot' to show the length of time the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) can take to implement our recommendations.

I am, however, able to advise that there has been some progress in relation to implementation of both the '*Joint review of diversion from prosecution*' and '*The prosecution of domestic abuse cases at sheriff summary level*' inspections over the last year particularly given the concerns I voiced in last year's annual report that there was no clear practical difference to the experience of victims of domestic abuse in summary cases following publication of our inspection report on domestic abuse.

'Joint review of diversion from prosecution', published February 2023

Status	2024/25	2025/26
Achieved	0	2
Substantial progress	0	8
In progress	13	3
No longer accepted	1	1

'The prosecution of domestic abuse cases at sheriff summary level', published April 2024

	2024/25	2025/26
Achieved	2	9
Substantial progress	8	10
In progress	27	22
Not achieved	10	1
Superseded	N/A	5





'Responding to enquiries: service delivery through National Enquiry Point', published January 2025

Achieved	3
Substantial progress	4
In progress	6
Not yet started	8

I have noted your interest in our *Focused follow-up inspection: communication with victims of domestic abuse in summary cases*. We hope to publish it by the end of the year. This inspection concentrates on improving the service provided to these victims by COPFS; we will assess and report on whether the prosecution service is providing basic information, timeously, at key stages of summary domestic abuse cases.

I would be pleased to discuss our work with the Committee in more detail should it be of assistance.

Yours sincerely

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