

Appendix B

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

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Thomas P Winsor

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary

15 January 2014

Dear Adrian,

HMIC's new programme of regular force inspections

As you know, in a Written Ministerial Statement laid on Wednesday 18 December 2013, the Home Office announced its decision "*to fund a new annual programme of [HMIC] all-force inspections*". I promised to keep you updated on our plans in relation to this programme; this letter forms the first of these updates.

Until now, HMIC has principally fulfilled its core function of inspection and reporting on the efficiency and effectiveness of forces in England and Wales (as required by section 54(2) of the Police Act 1996) by monitoring data provided by police forces. However, my fellow HMIs and I consider that such an approach carries the risk that potential problems may be missed. The recent mid-Staffordshire NHS case – in which the absence of regular, on-the-ground inspection resulted in the Care Quality Commission failing to identify severe shortcomings in the provision of services because, on the surface, the health trust was performing reasonably well – has been very much in mind during these deliberations. The HMIC Board therefore considers that routine and regular inspections are the most reliable basis for sound, thorough and comparative assessments of police efficiency and effectiveness.

The new programme of annual all-force inspections will proactively assess how well each force:

- cuts crime;
- provides a service that is fair; and
- provides value for money.

Unlike previous annual assessments of police performance (such as the Policing Performance Assessment Framework), our new approach will regularly examine what is happening on the ground in forces. Data analysis will be used to support, rather than make, judgments about how well forces are performing.

I am conscious of our responsibility to keep the burden we place on forces to a minimum. To this end, HMIC will increase the amount and extent of its consultation with the police service in developing both the overall programme, and the inspections within it. We will do this by:

- asking the HMIC Reference Group (which includes representatives of ACPO, APCC, the College of Policing, the Home Office and HM Treasury) to meet more frequently for the period of our change programme; and
- putting in place plans to give all forces and PCCs the opportunity to discuss concerns in relation to potential inspection burden, be fully informed about its likely effect, and – most

importantly – to work with us to help find a solution in which proportionate demands on forces are balanced with achieving the aim of increasing public understanding of how their police are performing.

More details on the programme, and the associated consultation exercises, will be sent to you soon. Should you have any questions about this work, please feel free to contact me, or HMI Stephen Otter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas P Winsor', written in a cursive style.

Thomas P Winsor
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary