



Susan Hall
Chairman, Police and Crime Committee
The London Assembly
City Hall
Kamal Chunchie Way
LONDON
E16 1ZE

Thomas Naughton
Chief Superintendent
OCU Commander Roads and
Transport Policing Command
Metropolitan Police Service
Palestra House
197 Blackfriars Road
LONDON
SE1 8NJ

5th February 2025

Dear Susan,

I am writing to you in your capacity as Chairman of the London Assembly's Police and Crime Committee. In particular, I am writing in reply to the letter from Caroline Russell AM, former Chair of the Police and Crime Committee, dated 15 March 2024. Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee for their report on the police investigation of serious injury collisions. I note the report made a number of recommendations. For ease, I have set out our response to each relevant recommendation in the Annex to this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Naughton
Chief Superintendent

Annex

Recommendation 1

The Met should backfill vacant posts within its Serious Collision Investigation Unit as a priority, and provide an update on vacancy rates in the Unit to this Committee by December 2024.

The MPS accepts this recommendation and has actioned it. The recruitment process is live and we expect to achieve our full Budgeted Workforce Target by April 2025. As such, vacancy rates are falling and we expect them to continue to fall.

Recommendation 2

By 31 December 2024, the Met should review its guidance and training offered to police officers attending the scene of a collision, to ensure they understand what is required and that all necessary “basic checks” are being completed.

The MPS accepts this recommendation and a new training programme is being delivered across frontline officers. We will continue to review the new programme to ensure our officers are equipped with the skills and training needed for the job.

Recommendation 3

In response to this report, the Met should set out what oversight and performance measures it has in place to quality-assure evidence collected at the scene of a serious injury collision.

The MPS has considered this recommendation. For the avoidance of doubt, there is a robust quality assurance process in place. This is carried out by the Forensic Collision Investigation Unit (FCIU) and meets the requirements of the Forensic Science Regulator (FSR).

Please note, Forensic Collision Investigators (FCI) do not have the capacity to attend the scene of every serious injury collision. For those collisions where the threshold criteria for FCI attendance is not satisfied, Roads Policing Collision Scene Examiners (CSEs), who are equipped to photograph and measure the scene, can attend.

We are currently reviewing CSE equipment alongside the piloting of new AI technology. The new technology is capable of 3D scanning the scene without the need for an FCI, resulting in higher quality measurements.

Recommendation 4

The Met should develop an action plan for how it will ensure all officers involved in the investigation of serious injury collisions are equipped with the most up-to-date guidance and training. The Met should provide an update to this Committee on planned extra training for collision investigators by 31 December 2024. The Met should also consider how it can

involve organisations that support road traffic victims in the design and provision of this additional training.

The MPS has considered this recommendation. For the avoidance of doubt, all relevant officers receive appropriate guidance and training in line with their responsibilities. This is delivered by MP Learning and Development Command and external professional training bodies.

This includes:

- All MPS officers receive training covering how to report/investigate Road Traffic Collisions (RTC) during their initial police training.
- During their probationary period, any RTC report will be 'supervised' by an experienced supervisor to ensure it meets initial investigation requirements. To note, if it fails to meet requirements, the supervisor will set an action plan which will form part of the officer's ongoing learning.
- Officers in the Roads & Transport Policing Command (RTPC) receive additional technical training on collision investigation. This covers the initial capture of key evidence at the scene.
- RTPC officers are also trained to assess the roadworthiness of vehicles. This training is delivered in two parts: standard and advanced. It covers the theoretical and practical aspects of vehicle inspection, vehicle systems and vehicle components, allowing officers to make accurate assessments of a vehicle roadworthiness and legal compliance. Officers with advanced training are able to prohibit vehicles from road use.
- If a collision meets the threshold for investigation by the Serious Collision Investigation Unit, a full qualified/experienced detective will own the investigation. In accordance with The College of Policing (Authorised Professional Practice), these officers will be qualified through Professional Investigations Programme (PIP) 2 Level Investigators. In addition, Detective Sergeants receive training to become Evidential Review Officers.
- The RTPC training and development team is involved in the co-ordination, monitoring and compliance of training and other courses (e.g. driving courses etc.).

Recommendation 5

The Mayor should work with the Met to create information guides to distribute to victims and their families to ensure they know what service and minimum standards to expect from the Met during an investigation.

The MPS has considered this recommendation. Following a fatal collision, the Family Liaison Officer (FLO) will discuss with the bereaved family if they want to be referred to the National Road Victim Service (NRVS), who are able to provide a Caseworker program. The program offers specialist advice/guidance and advocates on the family's behalf, supporting them through the trauma.

At the initial visit, the family is also given an A5 binder supplied by Brake. This contains useful information, such as what happens next and other practical assistance. In addition, if there are young children affected by the bereavement, the family is given an illustrated book and help guide (written by Brake). This helps support children through their grief.

For families affected by serious personal injury, there is also an A5 booklet. This is designed to provide assistance and support. These families can also be referred to the NRVS.

In addition to the above, we understand TfL has developed their new 'Commitment of Openness', which will be sent to victims and families affected by incidents on the TfL network.

Recommendation 6

The Met should work with MOPAC, and the London Victims' Commissioner, to introduce a satisfaction survey for victims of serious injury collisions in 2025-26; and publish the results of this survey

The MPS has considered this recommendation. The MPS has introduced the 'My Met Service' which gives the public the opportunity to feedback on their experiences, good and bad. At present, this service is not available for serious injury collisions. However, RTPC is scoping the possibility of extending this service to victims affected by collisions/families of victims. This work will continued throughout 2025. This will include collaboration with the London Victims' Commissioner.

Recommendation 7

The Met should review its standard operating procedures and guidance to increase the amount of information that victims receive in serious injury investigations that result in no further action (NFA).

The Met and TfL should establish a joint review serious injury collisions that result in NFA decisions in 2023-24, to ensure that these decisions were appropriately quality-assured and well communicated to the victims involved. In response to this report, they should share the terms of reference for this review.

The MPS has considered this recommendation. The MPS and TfL have agreed to work together to explore a joint review of serious injury collisions that result in NFA. However, please note this will require further consideration for a number of reasons. In particular, TfL does not have a lawful basis to review Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) decision-making. Further, we must be mindful of the wishes of the victim's family (i.e. they may not want to review).

Recommendation 8

The Met should ensure every road crash victim that has life-threatening or life-changing injuries, and their family, has access to a dedicated family liaison officer (FLO).

The MPS has considered this recommendation. FLOs are a limited resource. It is important to highlight not all officers in the Serious Crime Investigators Unit want to be an FLO (the role can be demanding, especially emotionally). As such, the course is voluntary. This means FLO deployment is limited to families of fatal collision victims, which is in line with College of Policing Recommendations. In a small number of serious injury collision cases, where the victim suffers life threatening injuries or there are complex judiciary proceedings, a FLO deployment can be considered but this will only be in extremis.

Recommendation 9

The Met should improve training, and associated guidance, provided to investigative officers and staff about what information they can disclose to victims, families and lawyers during the investigation of a serious injury collision. It should provide the Committee with an update on how it has improved this information training by 31 December 2024.

The MPS has considered this recommendation. Please note, the decision to share information with a victim or family during the course of an investigation is extremely difficult to capture in written guidance as it will depend on a number of critical factors. As such, the investigating officer reserves the right to make a decision in this regard.

Training on family liaison, victim contact, media management and decision making does form part of the PIP2 detective training. In addition, when a case is led by a Senior Investigating Officer (SIO), for example, in a Category A fatal investigation, there will be enhanced knowledge as the SIO will have undergone accredited SIO training. As part of the Family Liaison Strategy, the SIO will document all decisions on contact and information sharing.

In cases where decision-making must sit at a more senior level, perhaps due to sensitivities or political factors, a Gold Commander will be appointed.

For these reasons, we do not consider it possible to standardise information sharing practice (i.e. it must be considered on a case by case basis).

Recommendation 10

By 31 December 2024, the Met should explore the possibility of developing a standardised process and an online portal for victims and families of serious injury collisions to request information.

The MPS has considered this recommendation. However, at the present time, we do not have the resources necessary to pursue this suggestion further.

Recommendation 11

The Committee welcomes the announcement of the new victim support service. In response to this report, MOPAC and TfL should provide the committee with a written update on the latest status of the pilot, and any learning so far.

By 31 December 2024, MOPAC and the London Victims' Commissioner should also carry out a review of the support offered to victims and families of all serious injury collisions and identify a set of actions to ensure support is available in every case.

We do not believe this recommendation is directed to the MPS.