

# MDA No.: 1568

## Title: Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the Police and Crime Committee meetings on 22 November 2023 and 24 January 2024 the Committee resolved that:

*Authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output arising from the discussion.*

- 1.2 Following consultation with party Group Lead Members, the Chair agreed the Committee's report, *Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions in London*, as attached at **Appendix 1**.

### 2. Decision

- 2.1 **That the Committee's report, *Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions in London*, as attached at Appendix 1, be agreed.**

#### Assembly Member

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

**Signature:**



**Printed Name:**

**Caroline Russell AM, Chair of the Police and Crime Committee**

**Date:**

**13 March 2024**

### 3. Decision by an Assembly Member under Delegated Authority

#### Background and proposed next steps:

- 3.1 The terms of reference for this investigation were agreed by the Chair, in consultation with relevant party Lead Group Members under the standing authority granted to Chairs of Committees and Sub-Committees. Officers confirm that the letter and its recommendations fall within these terms of reference.
- 3.2 The exercise of delegated authority approving the Committee's report will be formally noted at the Police and Crime Committee's next appropriate meeting.

#### Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision:

Signature (Committee Services): L. Harvey

Printed Name: Lauren Harvey

Date: 12 March 2024

#### Financial Implications: NOT REQUIRED

Note: Finance comments and signature are required only where there are financial implications arising or the potential for financial implications.


Signature (Finance): Not required

Printed Name:

Date:

#### Legal Implications:

The Chair of the Police and Crime Committee has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signature (Legal): 

Printed Name: Rory McKenna, Monitoring Officer

Date: 14.03.24

Email: [rory.mckenna@london.gov.uk](mailto:rory.mckenna@london.gov.uk)

#### Supporting Detail / List of Consultees:

- Susan Hall AM
- Unmesh Desai AM
- Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM

#### 4. Public Access to Information

- 4.1 Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the FoIA, or the EIR and will be made available on the GLA Website, usually within one working day of approval.
- 4.2 If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.
- 4.3 **Note:** this form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

##### **Part 1 - Deferral:**

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

If yes, until what date:

##### **Part 2 – Sensitive Information:**

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA or EIR should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form? NO

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#### **Lead Officer / Author**

Signature: J. Roker

Printed Name: Janette Roker

Job Title: Senior Policy Adviser

Date: 12 March 2024

#### **Countersigned by Executive Director:**

Signature:



Printed Name: Helen Ewen

Date: 12 March 2024



**Police investigation of serious injury  
collisions in London**

Police and Crime Committee

**LONDONASSEMBLY**

## Police and Crime Committee



The London Assembly Police and Crime Committee is responsible for examining the work of the Mayor and his Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), to make sure that he is delivering on his promises to Londoners. It also investigates other issues relating to policing and crime in the capital, and routinely publishes the findings and recommendations from its investigations.

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## **Contact us**

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## Foreword



**Caroline Russell AM**  
**Chair of the Police and Crime Committee**

Campaigning to reduce the danger on our roads is what brought me into politics. It's an issue I care personally about, and I am so glad to have the Police and Crime Committee look at this in depth for the first time in the history of the Assembly.

No matter where in London we live, every Londoner should be able to pick up their child from school or pop out to the shops for a pint of milk and get home safely. But unfortunately, that isn't always the case.

When you or a loved one are the victim of a serious collision on London's roads, you expect that the Metropolitan Police will step in and conduct an investigation into your collision to the highest standards possible so you can get justice. We heard that while the hundred most serious collisions get a forensic investigation many serious collisions do not.

That's why as a Committee we are calling on the Met to develop an action plan for how it will ensure all officers who are involved in the investigation of serious injury collisions are equipped with the most up to date guidance and training. We believe the Met should also involve organisations that support road traffic victims in the design and provision of this additional training so that victims and their families can have the best possible experience after being involved in a collision.

Guests told us how important the quality of a collision investigation is, because without a good collision investigation, criminal prosecution is harder, and victims struggle to get the compensation they need to address the consequences of their injuries. Too often victims are having to advocate for themselves rather than focusing on recovery or mourning the loss of a loved one.

The Mayor, the Met, MOPAC, TfL, and the London Victims Commissioner must take action after reading our report so that victims of serious collisions and their families in London get the support they need and deserve.



## Executive summary

The Mayor's Transport Strategy sets out his goal for Vision Zero for London. It states that the Mayor's aim is for "all deaths and serious injuries from all road collisions to be eliminated from the streets by 2041".<sup>1</sup>

The number of people killed or seriously injured on London's roads has been on a downward trend over recent years. In 2022, there were 23,465 collisions reported to the police in London, compared to 25,637 in 2019.<sup>2</sup> These collisions resulted in 102 people being killed; 3,859 people seriously injured; and 23,246 people slightly injured in collisions on London's roads. Excluding 2020 and 2021 (which were affected by the pandemic), the number of people killed on London's roads in 2022 was the lowest year on record.<sup>3</sup>

The Metropolitan Police (the Met) has a key role to play in London in ensuring the safety of London's roads. It is the lead agency for collision investigation in London (outside the City of London) and is required to "investigate and establish the circumstances that have led to road deaths and life changing injuries".<sup>4</sup>

The Met's Roads and Transport Policing Command (RTPC), established in 2014, oversees policing on London's roads and transport network. It works in partnership with, and is jointly funded by, Transport for London (TfL) to tackle transport related crime, improve road safety, and reduce the number of traffic-related deaths and injuries.<sup>5</sup> The RTPC consists of several units and teams, including those responsible for investigating serious injury collisions.<sup>6</sup>

The Met's initial operational response to a serious injury collision is determined by whether the collision falls into one of the following categories:

- a life-threatening injury
- a life-changing injury
- a complex collision
- a high-profile investigation.<sup>7</sup>

Any injuries that meet these definitions are investigated by the Met's Serious Collision Investigation Unit (SCIU); or, if fatal or life-threatening, the Forensic Collision Investigation Unit (FCIU).<sup>8</sup> The majority of the other serious injury collisions are investigated by the Met's traffic prosecution department (MO10, based at Marlowe House), including those initially

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<sup>1</sup> Mayor of London, [Mayor's Transport Strategy](#), March 2018

<sup>2</sup> TfL, [Road safety dashboard](#)

<sup>3</sup> TfL, [Casualties in Greater London during 2022](#), September 2023

<sup>4</sup> College of Policing, [Investigation of fatal and serious injury road collisions](#), updated 7 September 2023

<sup>5</sup> MPS, [Information on Met Operations 8](#)

<sup>6</sup> MPS, [Information on Met Operations 8](#)

<sup>7</sup> MPS, Written information provided to the Police and Crime Committee, December 2023

<sup>8</sup> MPS, Written information provided to the Police and Crime Committee, December 2023

recorded and investigated by local response officers from Basic Command Units (BCUs).<sup>9</sup> Most serious injury collisions in London are investigated by police staff, rather than police officers.<sup>10</sup>

Serious injury collisions have a devastating impact on victims and their families. The Mayor's Vision Zero action plan highlights the importance of collision investigation by the police. It stresses that collision investigation "provides vital knowledge, for the development of effective road danger reduction measures and crucially to help bring justice for the victims of road collisions resulting from criminal negligence".<sup>11</sup> The Committee's investigation therefore considered how the Met is conducting these serious injury collision investigations in London; the experience of victims; and what can be learned. We found that the Met's leadership, and policies, are committed to a strong investigation service for serious injury road collisions; and that progress has been made in preventing collisions in London. However, the Mayor's 2022 target to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on London's streets has not been met. We welcome the Met's point that its RTPC has won prizes for its investigations, and that it is well resourced compared to elsewhere. However, we also found that for some Londoners, their experience of this service is falling short of the promises of the Met's policies, or what they hope and expect from serious injury collision investigations. This is particularly painful in cases where there has been serious injury or death. However, those involved in less severe, but still involving serious injuries, can also feel let down by investigations that have poor communications from the Met, or that end in 'no further action' (NFA), with decisions that are not clearly explained.

The findings of the Committee's investigation are set out in detail in this report, and include the following as a summary:

- A thorough police investigation is important to ensure justice for victims; increase understanding of the causes of collisions; and inform future preventative interventions.
- The Met investigates serious injury collisions in several different ways. This depends on the level of injury, and which units and teams are involved in the investigation.
- Investigations of serious injury road collisions need to be consistent and high-quality. There are inconsistencies in how the Met initially assesses serious injury collisions at the scene – this affects the quality of the investigation and compensation for injuries.
- Training for Met officers attending collision scenes needs to be strengthened. The Committee heard examples of officers not understanding the steps required when collecting information at the scene of the collision, or not collecting enough or the right evidence.
- The Met needs to build trust in its investigative processes. Some campaigners and guests told the Committee that there is a lack of public confidence in the Met undertaking a thorough investigation into serious injury collisions – the quality of investigation varies across the Met and campaigners have been asking for increased

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<sup>9</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office](#), 24 January 2024, pp1-2 and 18

<sup>10</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office](#), 24 January 2024, 24 January 2024, p7

<sup>11</sup> Mayor of London, [Vision Zero action plan](#), July 2018

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transparency, accountability and quality assurance for collision investigations in London. From the evidence we have heard during our investigation, it is clear that the Met needs to undertake efforts to regain the trust of Londoners in its investigative processes.

- Victims, families and lawyers often face barriers when trying to access information from the Met about their case or the investigation. This can often lead to victims, their families and those that represent them, chasing for information and becoming frustrated with the investigation process.
- Victims of serious injury collisions should be treated as victims of crime. Currently, they are not treated as ‘victims’ in the same way as an individual would, for example, if they suffered injuries from a violent offence; and they do not have access to the same support services.

The Committee makes 11 recommendations, which are set out below.

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## **Recommendations**

### **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.

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### **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.

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### **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.

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### **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.

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### **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.

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### **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.

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### **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 of 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.

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### **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).

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### **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.

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### **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.

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### **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.

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## **This investigation**

The Committee launched this investigation in October 2023. Through this investigation, we sought to understand the nature of serious injury road collisions in London; the Met's initial response and approach to investigating serious injury collisions; and how the Met is working to improve the police investigation of serious injury collisions.

We held two meetings on 22 November 2023 and 24 January 2024. For our first meeting, we heard from:

- Amy Aeron-Thomas, Traffic Justice Co-ordinator, Action Vision Zero
- Victoria Lebrec, Collision Investigation Campaign Coordinator, Action Vision Zero
- Jami Blythe, Development Manager, Brake
- Nick Simmons Chief Executive Officer, RoadPeace
- Rory McCarron, Senior Associate Solicitor, Leigh Day
- Dushal Mehta, Specialist Personal Injury Solicitor, Fieldfisher.

For our second meeting we explored these issues in greater depth with representatives from the Met. We witnessed the commitment and dedication from officers and staff in their approach to investigating serious injury collisions. In our second meeting, we heard from:

- Detective Chief Superintendent Andy Cox, OCU Commander, Transformation Programme and NPCC lead for Collision Investigation Programme, the Met
- Ross Morrell, Acting Detective Superintendent Roads and Transport, Serious Collision Investigation Unit (SCIU), the Met
- Superintendent Dan Card, North East BCU, the Met
- Commander Kyle Gordon, the Met
- Pauline Pateman-West, Head of Met Prosecutions, the Met

As part of the investigation the Committee also launched a call for evidence. We sought submissions from those who have experience of the Met's investigation of serious injury collisions; and how support to victims during the investigation could be improved. We received 22 submissions to our call for written evidence.

## Chapter one: Serious injury collisions in London

### Background

The Mayor's Transport Strategy sets out his goal for Vision Zero for London. It states that the Mayor's aim is for "all deaths and serious injuries from all road collisions to be eliminated from the streets by 2041".<sup>12</sup> Vision Zero includes the following targets:

- by 2022 – reduce the number of people who are killed or seriously injured by 65 per cent against 2005-09 levels
- by 2030 – reduce the number of people who are killed or seriously injured by 70 per cent against 2010-14 levels
- by 2041 – eliminate all deaths and serious injuries from road collisions from London's streets.<sup>13</sup>

In 2018, the Mayor published his *Vision Zero action plan – Taking forward the Mayor's Transport Strategy*.<sup>14</sup> The Plan reports that London's transport network has "become substantially safer in recent years, with significant reductions in the number of collisions and of the number of people being killed or seriously injured as a result".<sup>15</sup>

The Metropolitan Police website states:

*"The law defines a reportable road traffic collision as a collision involving a mechanically-propelled vehicle on a road or other public area which causes:*

- *injury or damage to anybody – other than the driver of that vehicle*
- *injury or damage to an animal – other than one being carried on that vehicle (an animal is classed as a horse, cattle, ass, mule, sheep, pig, goat or dog)*
- *damage to a vehicle – other than the vehicle which caused the collision*
- *damage to property built on, attached to, growing in, or otherwise forming part of the land where the road is.*"<sup>16</sup>

The Department for Transport (DfT) classifies injury severity using the Collision Recording and Sharing (CRaSH)<sup>17</sup> reporting system. It states that a "serious injury" encompasses a range of injuries including deep cuts and lacerations, to a fractured ankle, to a broken neck or back.<sup>18</sup> Many police services in England use the CRaSH system for recording reported road traffic collisions. Other police services use a variety of systems to report collisions, which can involve police officers using their own judgement to determine the severity of injuries at a crash, i.e., whether they are slight or serious.<sup>19</sup> Since 2016, the Met has used a reporting system called Case Overview Preparation Application (COPA).

<sup>12</sup> Mayor of London, [Mayor's Transport Strategy](#), March 2018

<sup>13</sup> Mayor of London, [Mayor's Transport Strategy](#), March 2018

<sup>14</sup> Mayor of London, [Vision Zero action plan](#), July 2018

<sup>15</sup> Mayor of London, [Vision Zero action plan](#), July 2018

<sup>16</sup> MPS, [Road safety – Collisions and incidents](#)

<sup>17</sup> CRaSH is a centralised system used by some police forces to record road traffic collisions. See: DfT, [Guide to severity adjustments for reported road casualties Great Britain](#), updated 28 September 2023

<sup>18</sup> DfT, [Guide to severity adjustments for reported road casualties Great Britain](#), updated 28 September 2023

<sup>19</sup> DfT, [Guide to severity adjustments for reported road casualties Great Britain](#), updated 28 September 2023

## Casualties in London

The number of people killed or seriously injured on London’s roads has been on a downward trend over recent years. In 2022, there were 23,465 collisions reported to the police in London, compared to 25,637 in 2019.<sup>20</sup> The 23,465 resulted in 102 people being killed; 3,859 people being seriously injured; and 23,246 people being slightly injured. Compared to 2021, this is a 2 per cent increase in the number of people injured, and an 11 per cent increase in the number of people who were killed or seriously injured, in road traffic collisions.<sup>21</sup> However, TfL has reported that during the pandemic in 2020 and 2021 the number of people killed or seriously injured on London’s roads dropped due to less traffic. In 2022, TfL reported a “reversion to more typical numbers and patterns of injury as travel has recovered following coronavirus restrictions”.<sup>22</sup>

The Mayor’s Vision Zero Strategy included a target to reduce the number of people who are killed or seriously injured by 65 per cent against 2005–09 levels by 2022. This target was not met: the number of people killed and seriously injured on London’s roads reduced by 38 per cent against the baseline. However, excluding 2020 and 2021, TfL has reported that the number of people killed on London’s roads in 2022 was the lowest year on record.<sup>23</sup>

## Investigating serious injury collisions – the importance of police investigation and guidance

Serious injury collisions have a devastating impact on victims and their families. The Mayor’s Vision Zero action plan highlights the importance of collision investigation by the police. It stresses that collision investigation “provides vital knowledge, for the development of effective road danger reduction measures and crucially to help bring justice for the victims of road collisions resulting from criminal negligence”.<sup>24</sup>

RoadPeace, the national charity for road crash victims, has said:

*“A good investigation is essential to achieving justice and reducing road danger – without this, law breaking escapes detection, fair compensation is hampered, prevention programmes are limited, victims suffer secondary victimisation, and public lack confidence in police interest in protecting them, thus deterring many from walking and cycling. It is the cornerstone for justice on our roads.”<sup>25</sup>*

At the Committee’s meeting in November 2023, Victoria Lebec highlighted the importance of police investigation in order to ensure criminal prosecution, civil compensation and to

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<sup>20</sup> TfL, [Road safety dashboard](#)

<sup>21</sup> TfL, [Casualties in Greater London during 2022](#), September 2023

<sup>22</sup> TfL, [Casualties in Greater London during 2022](#), September 2023

<sup>23</sup> TfL, [Casualties in Greater London during 2022](#), September 2023

<sup>24</sup> Mayor of London, [Vision Zero action plan](#), July 2018

<sup>25</sup> RoadPeace, [APPG Cycling Justice for Cyclists inquiry: RoadPeace response](#), January 2017



understand what is causing the crashes.<sup>26</sup> Jami Blythe added that investigations must be thorough so that there is no ambiguity around answers.<sup>27</sup>

*“In terms of the impacts on people’s lives, the collision investigation is incredibly important because without a good collision investigation, no criminal prosecution is possible; therefore, we are not deterring bad drivers or punishing bad drivers and we are also not able to get bad drivers off the roads with driving bans. If the police are not collecting evidence, no criminal prosecution is possible.”<sup>28</sup>*

**Victoria Lebec, Action Vision Zero**

In 2017, the All Party Parliamentary Group for Cycling and Walking (APPGCW) conducted an inquiry looking at cycling and the justice system. In May 2023, the APPGCW held a meeting at the House of Commons to revisit its work. In September 2023, it published its report *Road Justice*. The report made 10 recommendations, including a call for “consistently thorough investigation of serious collisions” and the “development of guidance based on best practice”.<sup>29</sup> In its report, it highlighted:

- the variability of crash investigations – including thresholds for the involvement of SCIU’s
- the wide range of rigour and professionalism of investigations both between and within police forces
- the importance of good investigations – resulting in safer roads and fairer deals for victims
- the impact of the way victims and families are treated during an investigation on well-being.<sup>30</sup>

Victoria Lebec told the Committee that TfL and the Met have an enforcement working group linked to Vision Zero that engages with Londoners about their enforcement activity. She suggested that there should be something similar to this for collision investigation; and added that, if the Met and TfL developed a strategy and action plan about how it plans to improve collision investigation, it would demonstrate that it is a priority for the Met.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p1

<sup>27</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p2

<sup>28</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p1

<sup>29</sup> APPGCW, [Road Justice](#), September 2023

<sup>30</sup> APPGCW, [Road Justice](#), September 2023

<sup>31</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p10

## Chapter two: Investigating serious injury collisions

### Who investigates serious injury collisions – the Met’s approach

The Met is the lead agency for collision investigation in London (outside the City of London). It is required to “investigate and establish the circumstances that have led to road deaths and life changing injuries”.<sup>32</sup> The College of Policing has published authorised professional practice (APP)<sup>33</sup> on the investigation of fatal and serious injury road collisions.<sup>34</sup> First published in 2013, and updated in September 2023, the guidance states:

*“The investigation provides an explanation to family and friends of what has happened to the deceased and/or seriously injured. It should also be used to identify preventive measures to reduce further deaths and serious injuries on the roads.”<sup>35</sup>*

The APP sets out that the police should ensure:

- there is an appropriate initial response and an investigation stage
- there is effective collision scene management
- an effective forensic collision investigation strategy is in place
- the investigating team has access to appropriate facilities, equipment and external expertise to perform their roles effectively
- there are agreements with partner agencies that clarify roles and responsibilities in relation to road death investigation
- specific roles and responsibilities are set out.<sup>36</sup>

RoadPeace has reported that the national APP on collision investigation for road deaths and life-changing injuries has been “diluted”. It stated: “In 2013, the Association of Chief Police Officers’ *Road Death Investigation Manual* (195 pages) was replaced by the shorter College of Policing’s *Investigating Road Deaths* (14 pages).”<sup>37</sup>

RoadPeace has also noted that there is no guidance for investigations where injuries are serious or slight, adding: “Guidance is advisory, there are no national standards. Each police service can set their own procedures.”<sup>38</sup>

Guests at the Committee’s meeting in November 2023 also highlighted that while there is guidance for fatal and life-threatening injury collision investigations, there is not enough guidance on serious injury investigations.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>32</sup> College of Policing, [Investigation of fatal and serious injury road collisions](#), updated 7 September 2023

<sup>33</sup> APP on policing is developed and approved by the College of Policing. Police officers and staff are expected to have regard to APP in discharging responsibilities.

<sup>34</sup> College of Policing, [Investigation of fatal and serious injury road collisions](#), updated 7 September 2023

<sup>35</sup> College of Policing, [Investigation of fatal and serious injury road collisions](#), updated 7 September 2023

<sup>36</sup> College of Policing, [Investigation of fatal and serious injury road collisions](#), updated 7 September 2023

<sup>37</sup> RoadPeace, [APPG Cycling Justice for Cyclists inquiry: RoadPeace response](#), January 2017

<sup>38</sup> RoadPeace, [APPG Cycling Justice for Cyclists inquiry: RoadPeace response](#), January 2017

<sup>39</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p6 and p11

The Met's RTPC was established in 2014. It oversees policing on London's roads and transport network. It works in partnership with (and is jointly funded by) TfL in order to tackle transport related crime, improve road safety, and reduce the number of traffic related deaths and injuries.<sup>40</sup> The RTPC consists of a number of units and teams, including those responsible for investigating serious injury collisions.<sup>41</sup> These include the following:

- SCIU: a team of trained detectives who investigate serious personal injury and fatal road traffic collisions.
- FCIU: a team of police officers and staff with forensic regulatory oversight. Forensic Collision Investigators attend all fatal road traffic collisions; and survey the scene and examine the physical evidence. They report their findings to the SCIU.
- Local Response Teams from BCUs.
- RTPC Roads Policing Teams.
- Met Prosecutions (MO10).

The Met investigates serious injury collisions in a number of different ways. This depends on the severity of the injury and which unit or team investigates.

In written evidence provided to the Committee, the Met explained that its initial operational response is determined by whether the collision falls into one of the following categories:

- Life-threatening injury: "An injury which has been the subject of a full and formal assessment by a medical practitioner and as a result of that assessment has been deemed to be, on the balance of probability, a critical and high risk to life."
- Life-changing injury: "An injury which has been the subject of a full and formal assessment by a medical practitioner, and as a result of that assessment, is expected to result in the loss of a limb or is likely to result in permanent significant physical impairment or disability which will prevent that person from being independent."
- Complex collision: "A serious personal injury collision where the perpetrator has failed to stop at the scene is still untraced and the on call RTPC Detective Inspector (DI) has deduced that the investigation will require specialist knowledge and dedicated RTPC resources."
- High-profile investigation: "A serious personal injury collision that has the potential for major media coverage that could influence public confidence as decided by the on call RTPC DI."<sup>42</sup>

Any injuries that meet these definitions are investigated by the SCIU; or, if life-threatening, the FCIU.<sup>43</sup> The Met told the Committee that the SCIU conducts around 100 investigations each year.<sup>44</sup> The majority of the others are investigated by police staff at MO10, including those passed to it that were initially recorded and investigated by local response officers from BCUs.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> MPS, [Information on Met Operations 8](#)

<sup>41</sup> MPS, [Information on Met Operations 8](#)

<sup>42</sup> MPS, Written information provided to the Police and Crime Committee, December 2023

<sup>43</sup> MPS, Written information provided to the Police and Crime Committee, December 2023

<sup>44</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office](#), 24 January 2024, p1

<sup>45</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office](#), 24 January 2024, p18, pp1-2

Victoria Lebec said that, in her experience, the cases investigated by the SCIU are more comprehensive than those investigated by BCUs or MO10.<sup>46</sup>

## **Staffing and resources**

Guests at the Committee's meeting in November 2023 suggested that the Met does not have the level of resources needed to meet the demand serious injury investigation is placing upon it. For example, Nick Simmons said: "More resource is needed and more specially trained officers, that is an absolute given."<sup>47</sup> He added that RoadPeace would argue: "There is just not enough resource for this particular area."<sup>48</sup>

However, Detective Chief Superintendent Andy Cox later told us that, in terms of life-changing injuries, it did have enough resource, and that this was "way above anywhere else in the country".<sup>49</sup> The Met said it has four detective inspectors, 16 detective sergeants and 56 detective constables allocated to serious injury collisions.<sup>50</sup> Commander Kyle Gordon highlighted that this is a "significant resource to be dedicated to road traffic collisions that just does not exist anywhere else in the UK".<sup>51</sup> However, he added: "I would love to see greater capacity to be able to provide even more of a service to those crashes that do not make it to the threshold of the SCIU."<sup>52</sup>

At the Committee's meeting in January 2024, Commander Gordon highlighted the vacancy rate in the SCIU at that time – three detective sergeant vacancies (out of 16 allocated) and 15 detective constable vacancies (out of 56 allocated). These are notable gaps, but he also added that, if you compare these vacancies to some of the vacancy rates elsewhere in the Met, they are actually "quite healthy".<sup>53</sup>

The Committee was pleased to hear that the vacancies are not impacting on investigations.<sup>54</sup> However, in its written evidence, the Met reported that the number of detective constables in the SCIU will be impacted by planned departures as a result of retirements, promotions and officers transferring to other units in the Met.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p7

<sup>47</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p10

<sup>48</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p30

<sup>49</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office](#), 24 January 2024, p9

<sup>50</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office](#), 24 January 2024, p9

<sup>51</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office](#), 24 January 2024, pp9-10

<sup>52</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office](#), 24 January 2024, p7

<sup>53</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office](#), 24 January 2024, p10

<sup>54</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor's Office](#), 24 January 2024, p13

<sup>55</sup> The Met, Written information provided to the Police and Crime Committee, December 2023

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### **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.

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## Chapter three: The collision scene

The scene of a collision can be a challenging environment for police and investigators. It is common for the police to be the first emergency service to arrive at the collision scene. Police officers need to assess the scene; ensure it is preserved; put diversion routes in place, if needed; and, if there are serious injuries, ensure medical staff can carry out essential work to treat these people. In addition, police need to collect and preserve evidence to support any investigation and prosecution. Our investigation considered how the Met manages these complex scenes.

### Scene management – assessing injury severity

At the Committee’s meeting on 22 November 2023, some guests highlighted concerns that there can be inconsistencies in how serious injury collisions are assessed and recorded at the scene. Dushal Mehta said that it is often difficult for police to understand if a collision is a serious injury collision. For example, a victim may have a head injury that’s not visible and obvious, but could be a brain injury.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, Victoria Lebec said that when police attend the scene of a collision, they record what they believe to be the most serious injury that the victim has suffered. She explained:

*“That is before someone will have been treated or gone to hospital to have a full assessment of what injuries they have. Therefore, an injury will be recorded as either a slight, serious, or a fatality, based on the most serious injury the officer understands that person to have sustained.”<sup>57</sup>*

She also highlighted that there is a lot of room for error with this approach as it doesn’t anticipate the developing or long-lasting effects of injuries sustained.

At its meeting in January 2024, the Committee asked the Met how it minimises the risk of error when recording the severity of injuries at a collision. Superintendent Dan Card explained:

*“Because of the way injuries are recorded, you do get some anomalies. For example, if you fall off your pushbike or you fall off your motorcycle and you were to break a finger, that would be considered a serious injury because it is a broken bone. However, you might not necessarily have a life-changing injury because of it. Therefore, it is sometimes slightly more difficult and nuanced to pick out the exact level of injuries when we talk about serious injuries because people automatically think that is going to be something significant.”<sup>58</sup>*

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<sup>56</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p5

<sup>57</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p5

<sup>58</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p2

The Met said that identifying the severity of injury is a challenge as officers “are not medical experts”.<sup>59</sup> Acting Detective Superintendent Ross Morrell told us that the Met does recognise that injuries may not be immediately visible, or may evolve. He said:

*“I often describe it as sort of like sports injuries that people walk off and are fine, and then later discover that something is wrong, the same can happen with people that go to hospital. They go to hospital and are OK, and then a week later there is complication and something changes.”<sup>60</sup>*

## **Collecting evidence at the scene of a collision**

The degree of evidence collected at the scene of a collision is critical in determining the path, and outcome, of the police investigation.

Our guests told us that Met officers do not always have an understanding of the steps required and the range of information and evidence that needs to be collected at the scene of a serious injury collision. We heard how this generally depends on the individual that attends the scene,<sup>61</sup> and while there are “some exceptional individuals”, this is not universally the case.<sup>62</sup>

*“On a personal level, I know how challenging it is to want to do the very best job that I can when I am investigating a collision. Even if it is a less serious collision, as a police officer I wanted to meet those minimum standards that were important to me. However, I know also how challenging it is to try to do that when you are standing at a busy road with lots going on. You also have a radio dispatcher in your ear, asking you to go to another incident around the corner where somebody’s life is at risk.”<sup>63</sup>*

**Jami Blythe, Brake**

Guests at the Committee’s meeting in November 2023 highlighted that there is room for the Met to improve the evidence it collects, including victim and witness statements. Rory McCarron told the Committee that, in his experience, “very basic information is lost at that initial stage”.<sup>64</sup> This includes capturing witness statements and video evidence. He added:

*“Basic things like photographs of the scene, positions of vehicles, positions of where people would have been travelling from. Where did the victim end up when a collision has occurred. Even things that a lot of police officers have these days is body-worn cameras, they could turn their camera on straight away when they get to the scene and gather that information and give it to Marlowe House. That is where the determination*

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<sup>59</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p18

<sup>60</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p4

<sup>61</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p12

<sup>62</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p21

<sup>63</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p13

<sup>64</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p8

*of whether a prosecution is going to happen or not, all that information is passed over to Marlowe House.*<sup>65</sup>

These sentiments were echoed in written evidence the Committee received from the Institute of Traffic Accident Investigators. It explained that, where there is not a forensic collision investigator in attendance, limited information is gathered:

*“Rarely are photographs taken, nor body worn camera footage available. Scene measurements are not taken, and since the introduction of an electronic Collision Report Book/Form a sketch plan is not drawn. CCTV is often not recovered, and where it is, it is often a mobile device screen recording which makes any forensic analysis of such footage extremely challenging.”*<sup>66</sup>

The Met acknowledged issues in evidence collection at the scene of serious injury collisions and how it is passed onto investigators. Pauline Pateman-West told the Committee that there are sometimes gaps in the information being passed to MO10 from officers that attend the scene of a collision. This can include missing witness statements and gaps in CCTV.

*“There are sometimes gaps. It is complex on-scene management. We have identified on occasion where we have witness details missing. My case managers will look at body-worn video evidence to ensure that the details that are on the COPA record match what the officers at scene have recorded. If there are gaps, they will task the Officer in the Case (OIC). We also look to see what checks were made regarding CCTV. On the COPA record, there should be indication of what on-scene investigations regarding that were made. If it says no CCTV, we will do supplementary checks just to make sure. If there is learning then we pass that back to the OIC as well. For us, having the ability to look at body-worn video evidence has bridged some of that gap. Where we see themes then we pass that through the Criminal Justice’s box at BCUs to say, ‘Learning for future.’ If we identify there are themes with specific boroughs, then we will inform their Senior Leadership Team. We are also looking at going out to BCUs to talk to frontline officers about some of the issues that we experience just to improve standards as well.”*<sup>67</sup>

**Pauline Pateman-West, Metropolitan Police Service**

We received written evidence from citizens who had been affected by collisions and who commented quite negatively about their personal experiences. One respondent to the Committee’s call for evidence told the Committee that they were disappointed in the Met’s response to them as a road crash victim. They said that this “did not inspire any confidence in achieving justice” for them as a road crash victim, and added: “Police officers who came to the site of the crash failed to record eye witness details who may have shed light on the mechanism of the crash and its aftermath including the colour of the pedestrian light.”<sup>68</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p7-8

<sup>66</sup> Written evidence, Institute of Traffic Accident Investigators

<sup>67</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, pp18-19

<sup>68</sup> Response to written call for evidence



One respondent to the Committee’s call for written evidence was very critical of the way the Met conducted the investigation into her collision. She described her experience as “beyond appalling” and said:

*“[The Met] drove past me whilst I was dying on the street, wound down the window and proceeded to leave when someone told them an ambulance had been called. Some other officers then appeared at the hospital because the hospital called them. They tried to question me and force me to say the accident was my fault. The doctors were horrified and sent the police away. The police then proceeded to write up a totally made up report about what happened, essentially trying to cover their backs for all the errors they had made.”<sup>69</sup>*

During our investigation many of our guests told the Committee that Met officers attending the scene of a collision needed more guidance and minimum standards for their work. Rory McCarron suggested to the Committee that there “should be some sort of guidance or training for police officers in London to understand what they are looking for when they attend the scene”. He added that he is “not convinced that one officer to the next knows exactly what they are looking for”.<sup>70</sup> Similarly, Dushal Mehta said that a minimum standard is needed to help officers do a good job.<sup>71</sup>

*“We do not expect forensics to be there on all collisions; it is just not feasible, and resources are not there. The borough officers often want to be able to do a good job and there is clearly a massive gap here; that they just do not have a minimum standard. When you were asking about what should be on the checklist, as Rory has said, it is witness details, CCTV, even seizing the bike or taking pictures of the vehicle, which to all of us here would seem pretty routine but is not done, or photographs of the scene. It is making sure that if footage is obtained it is securely retained – unfortunately, it does go missing quite a lot – and measurements, etc. This is basic stuff that if they knew they had a checklist, they would automatically do.”<sup>72</sup>*

**Dushal Mehta, Fieldfisher**

Victoria Lebrech supported the need for the Met to provide some “minimum standards for officers” attending the scene of a collision. She expressed that these should not be resource intensive, but include things such as witness statements, taking photographs and turning on body-worn camera footage. She concluded: “We think these are low-hanging fruit that should be possible to do and that would improve people’s access to justice; both criminal justice and

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<sup>69</sup> Response to written call for evidence

<sup>70</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p7

<sup>71</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p13

<sup>72</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p18

civil justice.”<sup>73</sup>

At the Committee’s meeting in January 2024, the Met confirmed that it has an “investigation of road traffic collisions frontline checklist”. Superintendent Dan Card told the Committee that this is a checklist of “Have you done X? Have you done Y?”<sup>74</sup> Similarly, Acting Detective Superintendent Ross Morrell highlighted that the SCIU has introduced new advice, similar to an investigation plan, for officers from the SCIU and BCUs attending serious injury collisions. He added that this is in line with the Met’s response to murders, and that the Met now treats all serious road injury collisions in the same way as murders.<sup>75</sup> Detective Chief Superintendent Andy Cox added:

*“As somebody that has worked on murder investigation and crash investigation, I recognised the two were seen very differently in terms of priority and skill set. Yet they are exactly the same investigating the death of somebody often in criminal circumstances and often needing all the same expertise, specialisms and excellence, to really lead to an effective investigation, supporting crash victims and their families, and ultimately bringing offenders to justice.”<sup>76</sup>*

The Committee also explored how the Met is ensuring consistency in investigation at the scene of a collision. Superintendent Dan Card confirmed that once a report is recorded on COPA it is supervised by the officers’ line manager to ensure the “basic checks” have been completed. However, he highlighted that there are a number of competing demands on these officers and it is not possible to do a “brilliant job” every time. He added:

*“What I can say is the officers are working extremely hard, they have a checklist centrally, are trained, therefore we are trying to increase that standard and improve that consistency on them. It is then checked by their line manager, it is checked by Pauline’s team [MO10] as it arrives, so we have several stages of checking before we make a decision.”<sup>77</sup>*

Supporting this, Acting Detective Superintendent Ross Morrell said that the Met is not where it would like to be at this point in time, but it is getting better, due to its commitment to the Mayor’s Vision Zero action plan.<sup>78</sup>

*“What we have done recently is introduced new advice that, when any of my teams are deployed, every time they are deployed, they will give the BCU officers a structured, written advice if we are not taking on the investigation ourselves, in line with what we do with murders now. All serious road traffic accidents are treated the same as murders now. We give the advice because we were aware that some officers might not know what*

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<sup>73</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p10

<sup>74</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p18

<sup>75</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p4

<sup>76</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p5

<sup>77</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p10

<sup>78</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, pp11-12

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*to do and generally might be a bit concerned or worried as they have not dealt with something like that before, therefore we now have the written advice, it goes to the officers at scene, the BCU commanders and the investigation lead on the BCU.”<sup>79</sup>*

**Acting Detective Superintendent Ross Morrell, Metropolitan Police Service**

## **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.

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## **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.

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<sup>79</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p4

## Chapter four: Investigations – quality and transparency

### Quality of serious injury investigations

The quality of a serious injury investigation will determine its outcome. The Mayor’s Vision Zero action plan states that SCIU investigators “apply the very highest standards in collision investigation to determine culpability and to help ensure that learning from collisions that result in fatal and serious injuries on London’s road network is captured and acted on”.<sup>80</sup> It adds:

*“[SCIU] officers collect and preserve evidence and manage the scene in line with all relevant best practice. There is an opportunity to extend this good practice to other Roads and Transport Policing Command teams, including those first on the scene and those investigating less serious collisions.”<sup>81</sup>*

During our investigation, some guests told us that the quality of investigation of serious injury collisions was variable. Nick Simmons told the Committee that members of RoadPeace typically felt let down by the lack of police investigation or the quality of the investigation.<sup>82</sup>

In response to the Committee’s call for written evidence, we heard about issues ranging from a lack of communication and detail provided during the investigation, to a lack of evidence (especially CCTV footage) collected at the scene. One respondent said that, in her experience, the Met “had no interest in uncovering the truth of finding the driver who was responsible for the crash”.<sup>83</sup>

One respondent to the Committee’s call for evidence described his experience with the Met, he said:

*“The initial report included an interview with the driver, not with me and was written and sent to my lawyer four months later and still did not include any input from me.”*

<sup>80</sup> Mayor of London, [Vision Zero action plan](#), July 2018

<sup>81</sup> Mayor of London, [Vision Zero action plan](#), July 2018

<sup>82</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p11

<sup>83</sup> Response to written call for evidence

*“The police did not interview me in person, just asked me to fill in their standard collision report.*

*“I find it hard to believe that there was no CCTV on this busy London street.*

*“The driver admitted he was at fault in texts to me which I sent to the police. This didn’t seem to count for anything.*

*“The police seemed to accept that the dashcam footage was unavailable despite the driver stating in a text to me that he had this.”<sup>84</sup>*

One respondent to the Committee’s call for written evidence described their experience and explained why they believe serious injury collisions are not adequately investigated by the Met. They said:

*“No they are not adequately investigated, firstly it’s because [named victim’s] case was not considered and treated from the start, as serious as her injuries were that resulted in her death. The investigation from the start should have matched the critical condition she was left in from the moment of the collision. We still have a number of unanswered questions, we don’t know if the road was closed, photographs taken, witness details and statements at the scene, CCTV investigated and gathered instantly.”<sup>85</sup>*

Amy Aeron-Thomas suggested that there is a lack of public confidence in the police undertaking a thorough investigation into serious injury collisions. She said:

*“I am not sure how the police are able to prove that they do thorough investigations, something we are always asking them. It is not going to be offences brought to justice because not all crashes involve culpability [...] It would be a really useful thing to do for the police to tell us how they can prove they are doing thorough investigations in serious injury collisions and give the families, victims and public confidence in them.”<sup>86</sup>*

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<sup>84</sup> Response to written call for evidence

<sup>85</sup> Response to written call for evidence

<sup>86</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p22

*“It is quite heartbreaking when I go to speak to a victim at hospital or later on to explain to them that they need to be careful about putting their weight and confidence into the police in doing a thorough investigation when quite possibly that may not happen. I hear quite frequently victims tell me, ‘It is OK, there are witnesses, they would have seen it and given the details to the police.’ While I do not want to sound overly critical of the police, quite often information is not there, and justice is not served for that victim when they really want to see [...] If an investigation is not conducted properly that has a material impact on the victim, what really counts for them in their long-term future.”<sup>87</sup>*  
**Rory McCarron, Leigh Day**

When asked about whether the Met believes that Londoners have confidence in the Met’s investigation of serious injury collisions, Detective Chief Superintendent Andy Cox said: “I cannot answer the confidence issue, but what I can say is do I have confidence, yes.” He explained that the Met has won the National Collision Investigator of the Year Award, has a “significant amount” of resources for fatal and life-changing injury investigations and has the “skills, the capacity, the training in place at that top end of collision investigation”.<sup>88</sup>

However, we also heard about the inexperience that exists within the Met’s workforce. Commander Kyle Gordon said:

*“One of the challenges we face is of course, with the volume coming through and a very young, inexperienced workforce predominantly on frontline emergency response teams, it is a constant battle of education and enhancement. We are looking at better ways of ensuring that the emergency response teams and investigations they pick up on do provide a better victim service.”<sup>89</sup>*

## **Training**

Training is one way the Met can ensure its officers are well equipped to build the trust of Londoners in serious injury collision investigations. However, during our investigation, guests expressed concern about the level of training Met officers involved in the investigation of serious injury collisions receive. For example, Victoria Lebrech said: “I am not exactly sure in terms of what training Marlowe House receives or exactly what training borough officers receive, but there needs to be more.”<sup>90</sup> In addition, Nick Simmons suggested that the training is “insufficient, and it is poor, not just with the MPS but across the country”.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p3

<sup>88</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p22

<sup>89</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, pp21-22

<sup>90</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p18

<sup>91</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p18

The Met wrote to the Committee to update it on the training officers involved in the investigation of serious injury collisions receive, which the Met said is dependent on their role. For example, BCU officers receive training on investigation and reporting collisions during initial training at Hendon.

Roads Policing Officers receive:

*“further technical training in collision investigation – the Collision Scene Examiner Course. This includes initial scene investigation and management, photography, scene planning and drawing. This is colloquially known as ‘Al Lite’. This is the initial capture of key evidence at the time but not at a level of forensic collision investigation (FCI). This training is in order to gather better evidence at collision scenes and subsequent proceedings. Evidence will also be used by an FCI should there be a later downturn in the condition of a casualty. Roads Policing Officers also receive further training in Standard and Advanced Vehicle Examination covering theoretical and practical aspects of vehicle inspection, vehicle systems and vehicle components. This allows officers to make accurate assessments of roadworthiness and legal compliance.”<sup>92</sup>*

SCIU officers are fully qualified and experienced detectives, trained in Professionalising Investigations Programme level 2. The Met has said:

*“Although no bespoke collision investigation training is available, additional skillset enhancements will include, Family Liaison Officer (FLO), advanced exhibits qualified, advanced interview techniques, advanced disclosure and Disaster Victims Investigation (DVI). Detective sergeants can receive training to become Evidential Review Officers.”<sup>93</sup>*

At our meeting in January 2024, the Met said that while it believes “there are no specific gaps” in training, it is working to enhance training within BCUs across the Met.<sup>94</sup> Amy Aeron-Thomas also told us that TfL and the Met are working on improving training.<sup>95</sup>

Commander Kyle Gordon explained that officers are not trained in isolation. He said: “When they are taught scene management to do with a rape, a domestic incident, a serious assault,

<sup>92</sup> MPS, Written information provided to the Police and Crime Committee, December 2023

<sup>93</sup> MPS, Written information provided to the Police and Crime Committee, December 2023

<sup>94</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p15

<sup>95</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p18

that is building on the training that they will get about scene management of a road traffic collision.” He added:

*“A probationer officer coming out gets a tutor, so when they attend road traffic collisions, that tutor will enhance and build upon the learning that they get. The investigation then goes through the Sergeant and Pauline’s team who will give feedback in terms of the investigation. There is an iterative learning cycle around all of that. I am not trying to gild the lily, but I do think it is an important distinction to make that, rather than simply say here is a very narrow look at what they get, and that is the only thing that they get, that enhances this, the investigation and scene management and the victim care that they would get for all offences can all come to bear on any incident such as this.”<sup>96</sup>*

Acting Detective Superintendent Ross Morrell acknowledged that not all officers involved in the investigation of serious injury collisions have the specific knowledge required to ensure a thorough investigation. He said: “My teams hold that specific knowledge, but elsewhere it is limited.” In response to this gap, he explained that the Met is looking to set up, across the 12 BCUs, 12 “enhanced supervisors that will get specific training with regards to investigation of road traffic collisions and an additionality of two active investigators in each BCU”. This means that each BCU will have three people (one supervisor and two practitioners) dealing with the serious injury collisions that fall outside the SCIU’s remit and do not fall into the Met’s Prosecutions Team at Marlowe House. He added: “They will have that training and we are looking at having a two-year rotation to upskill those, make sure we have not had anyone drop off and fill those gaps. It is something we are addressing.”<sup>97</sup>

The Met also told the Committee about work the SCIU is doing to pass on good practice. For example, Acting Detective Superintendent Ross Morrell said:

*“This time last year we did not have it in place. What used to happen is our team is deployed, it would be assessed, we would say, ‘Look, it is not within our remit,’ and we would leave. That no longer happens. We provide the officers with structured investigation plans. Those investigation plans, they go to the officers that were on the scene, the duty officer that is controlling the scene, the Inspector that is controlling the investigations, and the BCU Commander. They all get that, and it is clear advice, a step-by-step investigation plan of what needs to be conducted.”<sup>98</sup>*

The training set out by the Met above is encouraging, but we note that it does not match the experience and views of external guests, or some members of the public who wrote to the Committee. It is therefore particularly important that the Met follows up and implements the additional training it said it was working on.

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<sup>96</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p20

<sup>97</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p14

<sup>98</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p15



## **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.

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## **Transparency and accountability**

Action Vision Zero has been campaigning for “increased transparency and accountability with serious injury collision investigation in London”. It has said:

*“There is a lack of transparency with collision investigation, including how and who investigates, the outcomes and how investigations are quality assured. This does not inspire confidence in the police and needs to be corrected.”<sup>99</sup>*

TfL’s Vision Zero Enforcement Dashboard was published on 9 March 2023.<sup>100</sup> It includes data from TfL, the Met and City of London Police. The dashboard provides a statistical overview of roads policing and enforcement activity in London, including the outputs of road traffic enforcement action taken by the police. It also reports on arrests, notice of intended prosecution, traffic offence reports, fixed penalty notices issued by the police at the roadside and letters to speeding motorists. The dashboard is updated monthly.<sup>101</sup>

Amy Aeron-Thomas suggested that there has been some improvement in transparency and accountability in the investigation of serious injury collisions with the introduction of the Vision Zero Enforcement Dashboard. However, she also said that she expected “so much more by now”, adding: “There is so much more that could be done.”<sup>102</sup> Similarly, Nick Simmons said: “There is a better inclination towards transparency, but it still needs to be drastically improved.”<sup>103</sup>

Victoria Lebrec suggested to the Committee that the Met should introduce a serious injury collision victim satisfaction survey to help with transparency and accountability, improve the support it provides to victims and inform the Met where improvements in the investigation processes are needed. She also advocated for the benefit of a guide or information leaflets for victims outlining what they can expect from the police investigation process. She said:

*“That would help to almost hold the police to account but also mean that victims know that they should have a point of contact and they should be able to find out if the police*

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<sup>99</sup> Action Vision Zero, [APPG: Cycling & Walking: Justice Inquiry Collision Investigation](#), May 2023

<sup>100</sup> Mayor’s Question Time, [Road crime enforcement dashboard](#), 23 February 2023

<sup>101</sup> [Vision Zero Enforcement Dashboard](#)

<sup>102</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p20

<sup>103</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p20

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*have gone to get the CCTV evidence and that kind of thing. That is quite an easy, practical thing that would help on that front in terms of the communication.”<sup>104</sup>*

## **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.

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The Committee asked the Met about the systems it has in place and the policies, processes and guidance to assure the quality of serious injury collisions. While the Committee heard that the Met has standard operating procedures that are administered, and that it operates within the Victims’ Code of Practice, it recognises that there are gaps in understanding victim satisfaction. Pauline Pateman-West told the Committee:

*“As part of the Victim Programme Board we are looking at post-charge surveys going out to victims. That is just looking at it holistically [...] and I have said that we can extend that for road traffic collisions as well. That is something that we are looking into. We also work with the Vision Zero action plan Advisory Group, understanding accounts from the victims and seeing where there are gaps and how we can bridge those.”<sup>105</sup>*

*“There are a couple of things that could be done to help transparency and accountability. The first thing is satisfaction surveys should be sent to victims of collisions and that could just be a very short survey to understand victims’ impressions of the quality of the investigation and how they were kept informed. That would be so useful because then in a few years’ time we would be able to answer this question much better to say whether victims are being more satisfied with how their collisions are being investigated. It would provide helpful data and would give a really good understanding of what is happening at the moment for victims.”<sup>106</sup>*

**Victoria Lebec, Action Vision Zero**

## **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.

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<sup>104</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, pp21-22

<sup>105</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p21

<sup>106</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p20

## **No further action**

If the police believe that there is insufficient evidence to take a case forward it will issue an NFA notice. During our investigation, guests highlighted that there is a lack of clarity around serious injury collision investigations that result in NFA.

Amy Aeron-Thomas told the Committee that limited information is provided to victims when an investigation results in NFA.<sup>107</sup> She said:

*“We have pushed for that, and this goes back years. TfL had done a review of seriously injured cyclist collisions, I believe in 2014 in the City of London, looking at NFAs to see whether it was because there was not enough evidence collected at the scene or the fault of the victim. That never got published, but that would be very revealing to look at the reasons for NFA, which is the same as any kind of crime investigation.”<sup>108</sup>*

Victoria Lebec explained that in order to improve accountability and transparency, more needs to be done around investigation outcomes being reported and reasons for NFA.<sup>109</sup> Rory McCarron added that, in his experience, many investigations result in NFA due to a lack of evidence. He explained:

*“I understand not all of the officers at Marlowe House are police officers, but they have a standard protocol, driven by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Apparently now they have been told that unless there is CCTV or independent witness evidence of a collision taking place, they will not prosecute the person who has caused the collision. That simply cannot stand; that simply cannot be acceptable. When you have a vehicle pulling in or out of a junction across a cycle lane, knocking a cyclist off their bike, there are going to be places where there is not CCTV or independent witness evidence, but the mechanics of how a collision occurs should be enough for a prosecution.”<sup>110</sup>*

The lack of information that is provided to victims in investigations that result in NFA is concerning. Providing more detail on why an NFA decision was taken would help increase transparency and accountability in serious injury collision investigations and increase public confidence in the Met undertaking a thorough investigation.

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<sup>107</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p15

<sup>108</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p15

<sup>109</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p14

<sup>110</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p14

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## **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 of 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.

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## Chapter five: Victims and families

### Communication with victims and families

Serious injury collision investigations can have a profound impact on victims and their families. However, they can often take a long time, and victims report frustration with the process, and particularly that communication with the Met during this time can be limited.

The Committee heard examples of limited information being shared between the police and victims and their families, in particular in relation to timelines and investigation updates. Nick Simmons said that communication with victims needs considerable improvement.<sup>111</sup> Dushal Mehta told the Committee that he believed that the interaction between police and victims has deteriorated and worsened over time.<sup>112</sup>

Rory McCarron told the Committee that borough police are often very good at communicating with victims and keeping them informed as they collect evidence and progress the initial investigation, which is “both good and helpful”.<sup>113</sup> However, the Committee was concerned to hear that once the investigation is passed to MO10 it is difficult to get updates and information. Rory McCarron said that borough police collect all the information, then give it to Marlowe House “and then it is like barriers up”. He added:

*“You cannot get anything out of them and that line of communication is cut off, because it has gone elsewhere and that officer who was investigating is no longer in charge of that and it has now gone to Marlowe House, unfortunately.”<sup>114</sup>*

*“There is not much liaising between the police and families in terms of timelines and where they are. Often, it is a case of families chasing, ‘You said it was with the CPS for a charging decision. What next?’ and not getting that information back. That will come back to resourcing. They have got a lot to do, but perhaps it would be helpful to have a dedicated person perhaps in Marlowe House, who can report back to families once the police investigation is completed. Often, the frustration lies with the length of time it takes between an investigation being completed and a CPS decision being undertaken or being made. I often find that is a frustration from families.”<sup>115</sup>*

**Dushal Mehta, Fieldfisher**

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<sup>111</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p16

<sup>112</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p24

<sup>113</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p21

<sup>114</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p21

<sup>115</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p21

Some respondents to the Committee’s call for written evidence shared their personal experience of how the Met investigated the serious injury collisions that they, or a member of their family, had been involved in. Some of these responses painted a grave picture of how the Met is communicating with families. For example, a respondent whose mother died as a result of her injuries following a collision said:

*“No one gave us information on the process, they were never clear on timelines. We asked if we should get legal support, the Met advised that if there was to be a prosecution it would be down to the Crown, the Met advised us that we didn’t need legal advice or support. I assumed that because the collision resulted in my mother’s death, there would be some sort of prosecution, of which there isn’t in this case and my solicitor who I have since instructed has informed me that it would have been better for me if I had appointed him and had legal representation from the start. In my opinion the Met have let me down here and misinformed me [...] From the start, everything that occurred in the investigation was requested and therefore instigated by me. For example, my conversations with the unit were to inform them of how severe my mother’s injuries were, there was a serious lack of understanding from the Met of how critical her condition*

*was and how impactful this collision was on her life.” No information has ever been given to us from the Met regarding being a victim or accessing information. Since having instructed a solicitor we are still waiting for the police to disclose the witness statements and information regarding their decision and this case, that we are entitled to. We have had face-to-face meetings with the Police and numerous phone and email communications and still we are waiting for disclosure.”<sup>116</sup>*

Another respondent described the communication they had with the Met as “very poor”. They said:

*“They failed to record my phone number [...] I was the one who had to follow up with the Met and locate my case manager and keep calling and emailing them to gain more information in the investigation process and timeline. The communication was from my side to them and not the other way around.”<sup>117</sup>*

<sup>116</sup> Response to written call for evidence

<sup>117</sup> Response to written call for evidence

Victoria Lebec described the frustration victims often feel when the police do not keep them informed, which makes them feel like the police are not investigating. She added that, for some victims it's not about the justice outcome. "It is more about feeling like what has happened to you has been taken seriously."<sup>118</sup> This was echoed by Fieldfisher in its written evidence, which described the reluctance of the police to share evidence collected to support any criminal proceeding as a "frustrating challenge for those acting on behalf of seriously injured clients who are pursuing claims against defendant drivers and their insurers".<sup>119</sup>

*"Keeping a victim updated as to what is going on is hugely important for them. Sometimes, there will not be a prosecution and victims will accept that if a relatively good investigation has been conducted. What I see day-to-day is sometimes victims are taken off to hospital and they do not even have a reference number, they do not have a point of contact and they do not know what is going on with their investigation.*

*"Quite frequently, I have to tell clients to call 101 and track down the reference number to track down the police officer for them to be able to give a statement to the police. That should never happen. As soon as a collision happens, [it should be] badge number, police officer, point of contact and reference number given straight to the victim so that when they are capable of doing so, they can speak to the police.*

*"Quite frequently, when the police come to a conclusion, they will not contact the victim, other than sending them a letter saying, 'Not enough evidence, sorry.' There needs to be a human element for a phone call to explain to that victim exactly why, unfortunately, a prosecution could not have been brought in this circumstance."<sup>120</sup>*

**Rory McCarron, Leigh Day**

In contrast, Stewarts Law reported to the Committee that its experience of receiving information from the Met was a positive one. It said that the Met is very responsive to requests for information about the stage of their investigation and when charging decisions have been made or presented to the Crown Prosecution Service. However, it added:

*"We do find this information has to be requested on a regular basis and is not necessarily volunteered. This can be a problem when it comes to court hearings as it is often necessary for us to attend but we and the victims are not always given much or any notice of when these are listed."<sup>121</sup>*

Our guests highlighted the importance of having a dedicated officer to update victims and their families on the investigation. FLOs are often appointed to victims and their families by the police following a collision leading to fatal or life-threatening injuries. They act as an investigator with specialist skills in family liaison. Jami Blythe stressed:

*"Their role as an FLO absolutely has to be an investigative one. That is what is directed by the College of Policing; they are not deployed to a family to provide practical and*

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<sup>118</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p17

<sup>119</sup> Response to written call for evidence, FieldFisher

<sup>120</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p17

<sup>121</sup> Response to written call for evidence, Stewarts Law

*emotional support. Their role is purely investigative and that is for many important reasons.*<sup>122</sup>

At its meeting in January 2024, the Met told the Committee that every criminal investigation involving a fatal collision is allocated a FLO.<sup>123</sup> However, there is not a single point of contact or a FLO for other serious injury collision investigations. Nick Simmons told the Committee that ensuring every victim and family of a serious injury collision had access to a FLO would be a very effective way forward.<sup>124</sup>

## **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).

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## **Police reports and information**

Following a serious collision, the initial recording of vital information is imperative. The College of Policing APP states:

*“Upon notification of a collision involving a road death(s) or life changing injury, the following should be recorded:*

- *dangers at the scene*
- *name, home address and telephone number of the informant*
- *first account of the informant*
- *location of the scene and possible entry and egress points*
- *vehicle identification*
- *details of other people present at the scene*
- *first description of suspect(s)*”.<sup>125</sup>

Brake, the national road safety charity, has reported:

*“Victims are not automatically entitled to see any of the police reports. You may be able to get a copy after any criminal proceedings have finished, or if there is no criminal prosecution. If you wish to see a copy of the report or parts of it, you or your solicitor can ask the police. You may have to pay for it. If you are using a solicitor to make a claim for financial support, your solicitor may be able to reclaim the charge as part of the claim.”*<sup>126</sup>

The Committee heard that victims, families and lawyers often face barriers when trying to access police reports from the Met. In written evidence, the Institute of Traffic Accident

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<sup>122</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p25

<sup>123</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 5 – Question and Answer Session with the Mayor’s Office](#), 24 January 2024, p23

<sup>124</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p21

<sup>125</sup> College of Policing, [Investigation of fatal and serious injury road collisions](#), updated 7 September 2023

<sup>126</sup> Brake, [Serious injury in a road crash – Section 9: the decision to bring prosecution or not](#)



Investigators said obtaining the requisite information is often very difficult following a collision.<sup>127</sup>

This frustration was reiterated by guests during the Committee’s first formal meeting in November 2023. Guests highlighted a lack of consistency around what the Met does and doesn’t disclose, despite national guidance. The Committee was concerned to hear that staff at Marlowe House are often unaware and have to be reminded of what they can or can’t share.<sup>128</sup>

Dushal Mehta highlighted how the information provided by the police can be “hit and miss”. He said:

*“What we get [...] is we get drip-fed what they have rather than just telling us at the outset, ‘This is what we have. This is what you can obtain. This is how much you need to pay.’ They must be absolutely infuriated with the number of letters and calls that they get from solicitors. Frankly, we are taking up more of their time than needs to be the case. If there was just a conjoined approach - as I said earlier, we are all on the same side - just to say, ‘This is what we have, Dushal. This is what I can give to you at this stage, and this is what you need to pay to get it.’ it would be a lot easier. But there is a difference in terms of who you get. We have spoken earlier about some borough police or Marlowe House police officers being very forthcoming and very good. Equally, you will have others who do not actually know what they can and cannot provide.”<sup>129</sup>*

## **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.

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## **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.

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## **Victims of road crime should be treated as victims of real crime**

The Committee heard about the importance of treating victims of serious injury collisions as victims of real crime. Nick Simmons told the Committee: “Road crime is not treated like a real crime, and we [victims of serious injury collisions] are not necessarily perceived as being real victims. They are victims but not of a crime.”<sup>130</sup> He added that RoadPeace is campaigning to

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<sup>127</sup> Written evidence, Institute of Traffic Accident Investigators

<sup>128</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p20

<sup>129</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p23

<sup>130</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p26

have road crime treated like a real crime; and for the Victims' Commissioner to support it in that process.<sup>131</sup>

Jami Blythe also highlighted that the Victims' Code of Practice (which "focuses on victims' rights and sets out the minimum standard that organisations must provide to victims of crime")<sup>132</sup> does not specifically reference road victims. She said:

*"If road victims were included in the Victims' Code, the standard setting around communication and accessing support and all of the rights that victims of crime have would bring road victims in line with that."<sup>133</sup>*

Dushal Mehta said: "There needs to be an appreciation that road victims are victims of crime in the same way that knife victims are."<sup>134</sup>

## Accessing support

As victims of serious injury collisions are not always treated as "victims of crime" they can face difficulties in accessing support.

While the Committee welcomes the work TfL and the Mayor have done to improve support for victims of collisions, it also heard about the limited support for victims of serious injury collisions. Nick Simmons suggested to the Committee: "Support is poor and drastically needs to improve."<sup>135</sup>

In September 2023, TfL and MOPAC announced a new victim support service in partnership with Brake and RoadPeace to improve support for those affected by road traffic collisions in London. TfL has stated that the one-year pilot will "significantly improve support for victims of the most serious road traffic collisions in London"; "provide an enhanced level of support delivered by dedicated, trained staff and volunteers for those affected by the most serious road traffic collisions"; and "those eligible for support will be offered direct referral from the police, removing the onus of seeking out support".<sup>136</sup>

TfL also states the following:

- Caseworkers recruited by Brake will provide "trauma-informed, emotional and practical support for each victim and their family, including help navigating the justice system, advocacy and help accessing specialise services if needed".
- RoadPeace will provide "longer-term aftercare support [...] specialising in support from people with experience of the devastation caused by road traffic collisions, via

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<sup>131</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p26

<sup>132</sup> Ministry of Justice, [The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales and supporting public information materials](#), October 2005, updated February 2024

<sup>133</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p30

<sup>134</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p30

<sup>135</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p25

<sup>136</sup> TfL, [TfL and MOPAC announce new victim support service with Brake and RoadPeace to improve support for those affected by road traffic collisions in London](#), 18 September 2023

dedicated London support groups, a telephone befriending service and an eight-week trauma support programme for families bereaved by road deaths”

- Support will be in-person as well as over the phone and online.<sup>137</sup>

This new victim support service is expected to ensure that all bereaved and very seriously injured road victims in London who are dealt with by the SCIU will have a referral made to them for support. However, this would only support victims with the most life-changing injuries, only 3 per cent of those seriously injured.<sup>138</sup> Similarly, Nick Simmons told the Committee at its meeting in November 2023:

*“Everyone involved in the project acknowledges it does not go far enough. It is a start; it needs to be improved and we hope that will happen. There is a fine line here because we are excited about the benefit and the services that we can deliver, but we would like to do more, and we need to do more.”<sup>139</sup>*

## **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.

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<sup>137</sup> TfL, [TfL and MOPAC announce new victim support service with Brake and RoadPeace to improve support for those affected by road traffic collisions in London](#), 18 September 2023

<sup>138</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p25

<sup>139</sup> Police and Crime Committee, [Transcript of Agenda Item 6 – Police Investigation of Serious Injury Collisions](#), 22 November 2023, p26

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## Committee activity

### Background

The Police and Crime Committee agreed the following terms of reference for this investigation:

- understand the nature of serious injury road collisions in London
- examine the Met's initial response and approach to investigating serious injury collisions
- explore how the Met, MOPAC, TfL and other partners are working together to improve police investigations of serious injury collisions.

The investigation involved two formal meetings, held with the following guests:

#### **Formal Committee meeting, 22 November 2023 – guests:**

- Amy Aeron-Thomas, Traffic Justice Coordinator, Action Vision Zero
- Victoria Lebec, Collision Investigation Campaign Coordinator, Action Vision Zero
- Jami Blythe, Development Manager, Brake
- Nick Simmons Chief Executive Officer, RoadPeace
- Rory McCarron, Senior Associate Solicitor, Leigh Day
- Dushal Mehta, Specialist Personal Injury Solicitor, Fieldfisher.

#### **Formal Committee meeting, 24 January 2024 – guests:**

- Detective Chief Superintendent Andy Cox, OCU Commander, Transformation Programme and NPCC lead for Collision Investigation Programme, the Met
- Ross Morrell, Acting Detective Superintendent Roads and Transport, SCIU, the Met
- Superintendent Dan Card, North East BCU, the Met
- Commander Kyle Gordon, the Met
- Pauline Pateman-West, Head of Met Prosecutions, the Met.

The Committee also received written evidence from 22 respondents and a letter from the Met.

## Other formats and languages

If you, or someone you know needs this report in large print or braille, or a copy of the summary and main findings in another language, then please call us on: 020 7983 4100 or email [assembly.translations@london.gov.uk](mailto:assembly.translations@london.gov.uk)

### Chinese

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Email 与我们联系。

### Vietnamese

Nếu ông (bà) muốn nội dung văn bản này được dịch sang tiếng Việt, xin vui lòng liên hệ với chúng tôi bằng điện thoại, thư hoặc thư điện tử theo địa chỉ ở trên.

### Greek

*Εάν επιθυμείτε περίληψη αυτού του κειμένου στην γλώσσα σας, παρακαλώ καλέστε τον αριθμό ή επικοινωνήστε μαζί μας στην ανωτέρω ταχυδρομική ή την ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση.*

### Turkish

Bu belgenin kendi dilinize çevrilmiş bir özetini okumak isterseniz, lütfen yukarıdaki telefon numarasını arayın, veya posta ya da e-posta adresi aracılığıyla bizimle temasa geçin.

### Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਸੰਖੇਪ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਉਪਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਡਾਕ ਜਾਂ ਈਮੇਲ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

### Hindi

यदि आपको इस दस्तावेज का सारांश अपनी भाषा में चाहिए तो उपर दिये हुए नंबर पर फोन करें या उपर दिये गये डाक पते या ई मेल पते पर हम से संपर्क करें।

### Bengali

আপনি যদি এই দলিলের একটা সারাংশ নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে ফো করবেন অথবা উল্লেখিত ডাক ঠিকানায় বা ই-মেইল ঠিকানায় আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করবেন।

### Urdu

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کا خلاصہ اپنی زبان میں درکار ہو تو، براہ کرم نمبر پر فون کریں یا منکورہ بالا ڈاک کے پتے یا ای میل پتے پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

### Arabic

الحصول على ملخص لهذا المستند بلغتك،  
فارجاء الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو الاتصال على  
العنوان البريدي العادي أو عنوان البريدي  
الإلكتروني أعلاه.

### Gujarati

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