

HMICFRS

policesupercomplaint@hmicfrs.gov.uk

Our ref: MOPAC301121-D3912

3 December 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

We would like to thank the Inspectorate for their honest and thorough investigation into the "Safe to share? Report on Liberty and Southall Black Sisters' super-complaint on policing and immigration status".

We clearly note that the outcome of the super complaint upholds the view of Liberty and Southall Black Sisters, namely that harm is currently being caused to the public interest, and that this needs to be addressed. We also note that the super complaint outlines that the NPCC guidance on the sharing of immigration data of survivors has been inconsistently adopted.

Alongside the Mayor of London and the Victim's Commissioner for London, I have used the recommendations from this report to further highlight the need for legislation to protect migrant survivors. While the Domestic Abuse Act does not address these needs, we will continue to lobby for this legislative change.

Response to recommendations:

Recommendation 1. To Chief Constables

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) currently follow the guidance as set out by the College of Policing and immigration data for survivors of domestic abuse are not routinely shared. The MPS policy is that a victim's residency status is not disclosed, we, as the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), will continue to work together with specialist VAWG service providers and survivors to ensure that this is the lived experience of the system.

Recommendation 2. To the Home Office

I will continue to lobby for the aforementioned legislative change and look forward to the forthcoming Home Office report on its considerations and conclusions, including their equality impact assessment, in response to this super-complaint report.

Recommendation 3. To the Home Office and the National Police Chiefs' Council

I look forward to receiving and contributing to the development of a safeguarding protocol between the Home Office and the police service to guide responses to all migrant victims and witnesses of crime by the police service, the Home Office and other law enforcement agencies as relevant.

MOPAC works closely with local 'by and for' organisations who support victims with insecure immigration status to understand and respond to the realities of victims' and witnesses' experiences.

Recommendation 4. To chief constables

I am working with the MPS to ensure we take steps to ensure that all migrant victims and witnesses of crime are effectively supported through safe reporting pathways to the police and other statutory agencies.

Recommendation 5. To chief constables and police and crime commissioners (or equivalents)

MOPAC works closely with local 'by and for' organisations who support victims with insecure immigration status, this commissioning specific programmes of work that specifically work with survivors with no recourse to public funds. For example, in response to the lockdown, MOPAC commissioned 50 units (providing 92 bedspaces) of which 24 of these units were ringfenced for persons with no recourse to public funds. This provided the possibly life-saving respite and access to care that these survivors needed to be able to escape abuse. This support built up positive networks and experiences with statutory agencies, including the police.

Recommendation 6. To police and crime commissioners (or equivalents)

MOPAC regularly shares updated information on specialist victim support organisations with the Police. This information is cascaded to all relevant officers within the MPS. MOPAC ensures this information is supplemented with performance data.

Recommendation 7. To the Home Office

I welcome the national improvements in developing the recording and assurance processes related to sharing information with the police.

I specifically emphasise how important it is to understanding and differentiating the appropriate range of actions in individual cases, including compliance with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime. Assessment of whether immigration action has been taken or not in cases is not solely about whether an individual has been successfully deported – the process of the investigation itself is of key concern

**Recommendation 8. To all recipients of recommendations from this investigation
This letter satisfies recommendation 8.**

I would like to thank Liberty and the Southall Sisters for shining a light on this incredibly important issue, further I commend the Domestic Abuse (DA) Commissioner's report and call for 'immigration abuse' to be recognised. I am disappointed that the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 failed to ensure migrant women and their children are protected. I have repeatedly written to the Home Secretary specifically calling to abolish the no recourse to public funds policy and to adopt a 'firewall' in regard to sharing victims' personal details with immigration officials. It is important to remember that without a clear firewall between police and immigration enforcement, dangerous and violent offenders will continue to use the threat of deportation to control their victims.

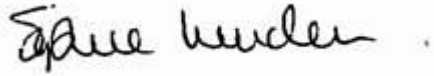
We would like to take this opportunity to highlight that the overall response to women and girls needs to be consistently viewed through an intersectional lens. We must be continually conscious that justice options allows equal access to justice and support, irrespective of a persons individual differences and circumstances.

MOPAC

MAYOR OF LONDON
OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME

In London, we continue to strive for positive change to tackle violence against women and girls (VAWG). Myself and the Mayor will ensure that the forthcoming refresh of London's VAWG strategy is informed by the outcomes of your recent inspections and thematic reports into VAWG alongside the essential steer by survivors and sector experts.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sophie Linden', followed by a period.

Sophie Linden
Deputy Mayor for Policing And Crime