



SCOTTISH POLICE  
AUTHORITY  
ÙGH DARRAS POILIS NA H-ALBA

# Policing Issues Advisor Analysis



- Our Advisor Analysis highlights and draws key insights from a range of relevant publications. These insights and subsequent commentary have been developed to provide a national context to key issues and support oversight.
- The theme covered in this document is:
  - **Inspections:** A summary of the HMICS Annual Report 2022-23.
  - Please contact [SPAStrategyandPerformance@spa.police.uk](mailto:SPAStrategyandPerformance@spa.police.uk) with any specific questions or feedback on topics you would like to be included in future editions.



# Inspections Thematic

## Annual Report 2022-23

### HMICS, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023, [Link here](#)

#### Context

- HMICS has published its annual report for the period of 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. This report covers how HMICS has undertaken its statutory function and provides an assessment on the overall state of policing in Scotland and on the performance of the SPA.

#### Summary/Findings

- The report acknowledges that policing as a whole has faced considerable challenges over the 2022-23 reporting period. The Chief Inspector of Constabulary (CIC) notes that 'Police Scotland is an outstanding operational organisation able to deal with everything from community issues, through major and complex crimes, to political challenges and major events' and describes the service as 'world-leading'.
- The CIC notes the [statement](#) made by the then Chief Constable Sir Iain Livingstone that Police Scotland is institutionally discriminatory. Whilst the processes at Police Scotland's disposal when addressing allegations levelled at an individual are compliant with equality legislation (e.g. tribunals and internal investigation), the report notes that these processes take place behind closed doors and therefore provide limited opportunity for Police Scotland to demonstrate how seriously it takes such allegations.
- In addition, whilst Police Scotland has publicly stated its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, the CIC states: 'Since many of these issues crop up again, I am concerned that the lessons from tribunals and other hearings are not being acted upon'.
- The CIC suggests that Police Scotland could be "more proactive" in describing its work on [Policing Together](#), the [VAWG Strategy](#) and the [Your Voice Matters](#) programme.
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is also an area of focus in the report's introduction, with inspections conducted during the reporting year having highlighted a need for CPD in areas such domestic abuse, hate crime, equality and diversity, and diversion from prosecution.

# Inspections Thematic (continued)

## Summary/Findings (continued)

- Forensics toxicology provision and the resultant impact on the analysis of drug driving samples is discussed, noting that this area was not originally within the scope of the planned inspections for the reporting year but was added at the request of the SPA.
- The report highlights the workplan and thematic areas that will be reported in coming months, such as [organisational culture](#) (which includes vetting), healthcare in custody, and the impact of mental health demand on policing.
- Despite the challenges noted by HMICS, the positive work of the SPA and Police Scotland is also recognised. The CIC notes that Police Scotland has "certainly demonstrated" its commitment to improving the wellbeing of people and places.
- Further evidence of the value provided to the public includes the assessment that the SPA takes best value "very seriously" through the governance process provided by Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC). However, Police Scotland's commitment to best value was found to have room for improvement.
- The report includes a summary of the eight reports of scrutiny activity undertaken by HMICS during 2022-23. This includes joint reviews conducted with other partners such as the [joint review of diversion from prosecution](#) and the joint inspections of services for [children and young people at risk of harm](#), and [adult support and protection](#), led by the Care Inspectorate.
- The report closes with an assessment of the activities conducted in 2022-23 and the follow-up work undertaken by HMICS. This includes the number of recommendations discharged by HMICS in this year (42 from inspections completed between 2015 and 2021), as well as the further recommendations made for Police Scotland, the SPA and Scottish Government during this year's inspections (45 in 2022-23).
- By the end of March 2023, 84 recommendations were outstanding, the oldest of which was made in 2015. In addition, SPA Forensic Services has one outstanding recommendation from 2017, and Police Scotland has one from 2018. No recommendations that were directed towards the SPA Corporate Function and Board are currently outstanding.

# Inspections Thematic (continued)

## Previous Oversight by the Authority

- All HMICS reports are presented to the relevant committee, with resultant improvement plans then presented and progress with actions tracked.
- This HMICS Annual Report was presented and discussed at the [Authority Board meeting](#) on 24 August 2023, with the Scrutiny Plan considered by [Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee](#) on 2 August.
- At the May 2023 Board meeting, Police Scotland presented [an update](#) on Policing Together. At this meeting, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Independent Review Group (EDI IRG) also presented its [interim report](#).
- Updates on the recommendations for Police Scotland and the SPA are regularly reported to ARAC. The most recent update was provided at the meeting in [August 2023](#).
- SPA Forensic Services provides regular updates to Forensic Services Committee on forensic toxicology, with the most recent update brought to [August 2023 committee](#).
- Previous monthly digests have covered HMICS reports, including [forensic toxicology provision](#) and [healthcare provision in custody](#).

## Future Oversight by the Authority

- August People Committee will consider the output and next steps commitments on [Policing and trauma](#), following the April 2023 conference hosted by the Authority.
- An update on Mental Health, Vulnerability & Policing is being presented at September 2023 Policing Performance Committee (PPC).
- The Authority will continue to oversee progress on Policing Together, with a [new oversight group](#), to be chaired by Authority Board Member Tom Halpin, agreed at the August Authority meeting.
- Future HMICS reports will be considered by relevant committees, with the forthcoming inspection on organisational culture likely to be considered by People Committee.

## External Sources

- Yahoo! News - [Police 'must show how it will tackle discrimination and violence against women'](#) – 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023