



Dame Sara Thornton DBE QPM
Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner
5th Floor, Globe House
89 Eccleston Square
London, SW1V 1PN

Tel: +44 (0) 20 3513 0477
Email: shelley.perera@iasc.independent.gov.uk

Monday 18 November 2019

Dear Sir Tom,

Thank you for meeting with me on 5 November to discuss the vital role HMICFRS has in promoting improvements in the policing response to modern slavery and human trafficking.

Over the last few years there have been significant increases in the number of crimes being recorded by police forces – in 2018/19 there were 5,059 across the UK which is an increase of 118% on the number recorded two years earlier. The number of offenders prosecuted also increased in 2018 but the rate of increase was not as great as the increase in crimes recorded. This matters because all too often the traffickers, whether they are running county lines or running brothels, regard the risk as low and the rewards high. That must be reversed so that the risk is high and the reward low.

Last month I wrote to Chief Constables to raise my concern that the number of offenders referred to the CPS for charging advice or decision is falling sharply and my fear is this will lead to fewer prosecutions and convictions over the next few years. I asked they take steps to reassure themselves:

1. That modern slavery and human trafficking is treated as serious organised crime in their force.
2. The full range of powers in the Modern Slavery Act are being used to tackle the criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults as they are trafficked along county lines. (Slavery and Trafficking Risk and Prevention Orders for example).
3. Their officers have the right expert advice and support to help them to investigate modern slavery and human trafficking and present strong cases to the CPS.

I also recently met with David Bolt, Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, where we agreed Borders and Immigration inspection activity would be worthwhile. There is a live inspection on the disruption and prosecution of perpetrators of modern slavery, with particular attention on the management of intelligence and connectivity into the wider law enforcement response.

Having now discussed this with you I believe we are in agreement that there could be huge value in HMICFRS conducting joint inspection activity to achieve an 'end to end' review of the whole system; comprising not only the police, Immigration and Borders but the Crown Prosecution Service too.

I would really appreciate your support in this.

Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner