

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



Department of  
**Justice**

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Our ref: SUB-1444-2016

Paul Frew MLA  
Chairperson, Committee for Justice  
Room 242  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
BELFAST  
BT4 3XX

7 October 2016

Dear Paul,

**POLICING AND CRIME BILL: PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE CONSENT MOTION:  
MARITIME ENFORCEMENT POWERS**

Thank you for your letter of 3 October regarding engagement with the PSNI in relation to the proposed Maritime Enforcement Powers Legislative Consent Motion for the Policing and Crime Bill. I regret that this has been a cause of concern to the Committee.

I understand that the original position attributed to the PSNI on this policy proposal was as a result of engagement between my officials and a chief inspector to whom they had been directed. Regrettably, on this occasion no formal correspondence was exchanged to confirm the position with the PSNI senior command.

I would like to assure the Committee that both I and my officials take such matters very seriously and are in regular contact with the PSNI, at a senior level, to work through issues of strategic importance. That said, we accept that we could have done better on this occasion.

To avoid recurrence, I have given clear instructions to my officials that, in future, all policy matters should formally be referred via the PSNI's Command Secretariat and that there

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should be proactive and formally recorded positions, established before such matters are presented to the Committee.

I would like to assure the Committee that lessons have been learned and we will do better in future.

A copy of this letter has been sent to the Chief Constable for his information.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claire Sugden".

**CLAIRE SUGDEN MLA**  
**Minister of Justice**



**NORTHERN IRELAND  
ASSEMBLY**

**MR PAUL FREW MLA, CHAIRPERSON  
COMMITTEE FOR JUSTICE**

**Ms Claire Sugden MLA  
Minister of Justice  
Department of Justice  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont Estate  
Belfast  
BT4 3SQ**

3 October 2016

Dear Claire

**POLICING AND CRIME BILL: PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE CONSENT MOTION –  
MARITIME ENFORCEMENT POWERS**

At its meeting on 29 September 2016, the Committee for Justice considered the attached correspondence from Assistant Chief Constable Alan Todd providing further information and clarification of the PSNI position in relation to the proposed Maritime Enforcement Powers Legislative Consent Motion for the Policing and Crime Bill and the extension of hot pursuit powers to the PSNI.

The Committee noted that, according to ACC Todd's letter, the original position attributed to the PSNI appears to have been as the result of an informal conversation between staff who were trying to be helpful in progressing the matter and the position was not fully considered at a senior level.

The Committee expressed concern and alarm that legislative proposals appear to be being developed in such a way and that the information provided to the Committee is not accurate and cannot be relied upon. The Committee is therefore seeking an assurance that any future legislation will be developed by the Department and other

justice organisations through formal discussions and formal channels at the highest level, and that any information provided to the Committee is accurate and reflects the final formal position of the PSNI or any other relevant justice organisation.

I would appreciate a response at your earliest convenience and, as indicated in my previous letter of 30 September, the Committee intends to again consider this proposed Legislative Consent Motion at its meeting on Thursday 6 October 2016.

Yours sincerely

**Paul Frew MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for Justice**

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