

Committee for Justice  
Committee Clerk  
Room 242  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

21 December 2016

Dear Sir or Madam

**COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE NEED FOR STALKING LEGISLATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide evidence to the Committee for Justice pertaining to the review of the need for stalking legislation in Northern Ireland (the Review). The Information Commissioner has responsibility in the United Kingdom for promoting and enforcing the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) and the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003, as amended (PECR).

Whilst it is not for the Commissioner to comment on the need for legislation in this area, we would stress the importance of compliance with data protection law in the development of any new proposals. As the Committee progresses with any subsequent work arising from the Review, it may also be beneficial to consider the new data protection requirements relating to the General Data Protection Regulation (the GDPR) which will commence on 25 May 2018.

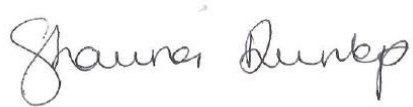
We would further advise that adopting a privacy by design approach to the development of new legislation can help with compliance of data protection law as well as identify possible privacy risks to individuals from the outset, particularly whereby the processing of personal data relates to victims and witnesses.

We have accepted the invitation to attend the seminar on 19 January, and would be pleased to engage and advise on data protection compliance as required going forward.

**ico.**

Information Commissioner's Office

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shauna Dunlop". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small mark above the 'a' in Shauna.

**Shauna Dunlop**  
**Regional Manager Northern Ireland**