

Police and CPS need to work closer together to secure justice

Published on 16 July 2021

Report finds that joint ownership of problems and solutions will build trust and secure justice for victims of rape

News 3 mins read

A joint inspection report between HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI) has found that police and prosecutors need to change their approach on rape and serious sexual assault cases to build trust and secure justice.

The inspectorates have jointly made a number of recommendations. These include that police forces and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) should work together to build a seamless approach to tackling these offences and that forces should work with local support services to provide bespoke assistance for victims.

'It is sadly not news to anyone that rape victims are too often denied justice. Many initiatives and reviews are in place to improve this, but their success will depend on joint ownership of the problems and the solutions by police and the CPS at national and local levels,' said Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary Wendy Williams and HMCPSI Deputy Chief Inspector Anthony Rogers.

'Successful cases rely on police and prosecutors working as a team.'

Rape and serious sexual assaults have a devastating impact on the lives of victims and we are determined to give police officers and staff the training and support they need to bring more offenders to justice.

This report makes it clear that improvements are needed in how rape cases are dealt with across the criminal justice system. Police and the Crown Prosecution Service are implementing a wide-ranging action plan which supports greater collaboration to improve the responses to rape and serious sexual offence (RASSO) cases.

The College is revising our guidance on RASSO investigations and we have developed specific training aimed at supporting each area of policing that deals with rape investigations, from first responders through to investigators and supervisors.

We have designed the current training on rape, including the specialist sexual assault investigators development programme (SSAIDP), and it is being reviewed to ensure it continues to build capability and expertise for police investigators. Officers are required to complete the training and provide evidence each year to remain registered as a SSAIDP investigator.

We are working with the Crown Prosecution Service to design joint training for officers and prosecutors which addresses the impact of trauma on victims, promotes improved decision-making and victim care.

We will consider the details of this comprehensive report and speak to our operational colleagues about the best way to take its recommendations forward.

Assistant Chief Constable Iain Raphael, College of Policing

- [Read the full HMICFRS report](#)

Tags

Operational policing Professional training