



## Rt Hon Alun Michael JP FRSA

Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales  
Comisiynydd yr Heddlu a Throseddu De Cymru



Rt Hon Theresa May MP  
Home Secretary  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

cc: Drusilla Sharpling  
HM Inspector of Constabulary  
Wales and Western Region

15 August 2013

Dear Home Secretary,

### **HMIC Inspection Findings: South Wales Police Stop & Search Report**

As required within Section 55(5) of the Police Act 1996, I am writing to provide you with my response to the recently published findings in relation to the South Wales Police that were used to inform the HMIC national review '*Stop and Search Powers: are the police using them effectively and fairly?*'

Stop and search enables the police to combat street crime and anti-social behaviour, and prevent the occurrence of more serious crime, but from my own background, working in the most diverse community in Wales, I am acutely aware that it must be used effectively and fairly. It is therefore right to carefully monitor the way the power is used to make sure this is happening. The Chief Constable shares my views on this issue from an operational perspective.

I welcome the South Wales report, which acknowledges the force's strong and visible leadership and commitment on stop and search at the strategic level. Use of the stop and search power is under the personal scrutiny of Assistant Chief Constable Julian Kirby who has developed a comprehensive agenda for dealing with stop and search. I am kept apprised of progress and I am in the process of developing governance arrangements to include the oversight of this important police power.

The report acknowledges that the most recent Census data for South Wales shows an improved picture regarding proportionality rates for stop and search. I am encouraged by these statistics and I will continue to monitor the proportionality rates personally.

The report highlights a number of issues to which I will pay particular attention, including:

- The need to ensure that the new mobile data system which is being used to record stop and search also enables an improvement in data quality and provides the means to monitor the effectiveness of stop and search with confidence.
- The need for improvement in the rates of completed stop and search forms that evidence sufficient grounds for search.



## Rt Hon Alun Michael JP FRSA

Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales  
Comisiynydd yr Heddlu a Throseddu De Cymru



- The need for supervisors to monitor and where necessary challenge their officers in their use of stop and search to require compliance.
- The need for an ongoing system of community engagement and community involvement in the oversight of stop and search, building on the previous oversight work of the Independent Advisory Group and Police Authority.
- The need for force information on stop and search to be easily accessible to the public on the force website, and for copies of stop and search records to be easily available.

The Police Authority carried out a series of dip sampling processes of completed stop and search forms prior to the Police & Crime Commissioner elections. This involved a number of independent community members, thus providing a positive level of independent scrutiny. I have asked my Equality & Social Justice Manager to develop similar assurance processes of oversight within the new structure in order to test compliance as far as is practicable.

Overall the report presents a positive picture of progress in South Wales and I am confident that areas for improvement will be tackled by the Chief Constable and that will be overseen through my governance arrangements.

**Rt Hon Alun Michael JP**  
**Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales**