

Service Prosecuting Authority welcomes HMCPST Inspection Report

Director of Service Prosecutions, Jonathan Rees KC reflects on the publication of an inspection report on the Service Prosecuting Authority.

We invited [His Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate](#) (HMCPST) to inspect the quality of our legal casework in the [Service Prosecuting Authority](#) (SPA), so that we can benefit from the expertise HMCPST has built up from many years of inspecting the [Crown Prosecution Service](#). This supports our steadfast commitment to deliver fair and efficient justice and support the operational effectiveness and discipline of the Armed Forces.



The [report published today \(28 November\)](#) presents a positive reflection of what we do, acknowledging the strengths in our approach to casework. Timeliness and case progression were strong in most instances and HMCPST found that we have clear assurance mechanisms that add value.

Alongside, there is recognition of the high standard of our legal decision-making, which includes cases involving serious sexual offences or domestic abuse. The Inspectorate also commended the care and support we show to victims in such cases.

We are particularly proud of the recognition given to our investment in training military lawyers assigned to the SPA. Many of these lawyers begin their roles with little or no prior experience prosecuting in Service courts, meaning our commitment to professional development is a vital part of maintaining our high standards.

The report is fair, balanced, and constructive. We unreservedly accept all recommendations made, and we will implement them within the recommended timelines. It is reassuring too, that several of the recommendations align with improvements we had already identified through our own internal assurance processes. These include mandating the completion of disclosure management documents in all Court Martial cases for [Armed Forces Act 2006](#) Schedule 2 offences or for cases investigated by the [Defence Serious Crime Unit](#), and amending the template letter used to refer a case to the Commanding Officer, so that it aligns with guidance in the Manual for Service Prosecutors.

We found the inspection process to be a positive and collaborative experience, and the Inspectorate's willingness to engage with the nuances of service law was noteworthy. We were impressed by the care and professionalism with which the inspection was conducted, and a comprehensive report prepared. It has allowed us to recognise areas for improvement, while also confirming the high standard of our existing work.

It's important to acknowledge that HMCPST is an independent body, separate from Defence and the Service Justice System, and its findings are based on hard evidence, including detailed case file reviews.

We hope this report will reassure the public, members of the Armed Forces, and the Defence community that the SPA is performing well and making a meaningful contribution to Service Justice.

Director of Service Prosecutions, Jonathan Rees KC