



Baroness Vivien Stern CBE
House of Lords
London SW1A 0PW

Sir Michael Scholar
Chair
UK Statistics Authority
Statistics House
Islington
London EC1R 1UW

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Dear Sir Michael


On 15 March 2010 my review into how rape complaints are handled by public authorities in England and Wales was published. One of my major concerns was the confusion about what is the correct figure for the conviction rate for rape. This led me to make two recommendations to your Authority about the way criminal justice statistics are collected and presented. I should say that in preparing the report we received considerable help from your staff.

Since mine was an independent review and the UK Statistics Authority is an independent body I thought I should contact you directly to suggest we might meet.

If I may amplify a little, the first difficulty we encountered when carrying out the Stern Review was to find the statistics at all. When we found some there was a range of figures. Some of the figures were collected for management purposes and some for other purposes and they covered different time periods. We found that Government publications used the term conviction rate for all crimes except rape in the way it is normally used but for rape a different definition of the conviction rate appeared in some documents. The controversy about the definition of the conviction rate and what the conviction rate actually is has clouded the more important issue of how to deal with rape in the criminal justice process.

To contact Baroness Stern's office please call Helen Fair on 020 7848 1904 or email Helen.fair@kcl.ac.uk

I hope that this constitutes a reasonable agenda for a meeting and I hope that this will be possible to set up. Perhaps your office could contact mine and we could look at some dates?

Yours sincerely


Baroness Vivien Stern CBE