



T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Audrey Nicoll MSP
Convener
Criminal Justice Committee
BY EMAIL:

19 September 2023

Dear Convener

The Scottish Government published Scotland's first Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy on 30 May 2017, in line with the requirements set out in section 35 of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015.

In 2017, 207 potential victims of human trafficking were identified in Scotland. The number of potential victims identified in relation to Scotland has increased substantially during the lifetime of the Strategy, with a total of 621 potential victims identified in 2022. The collaborative efforts of all those organisations who have come together under the Strategy over the past six years has undoubtedly improved knowledge and awareness of human trafficking and exploitation.

The 2015 Act also committed Scottish Ministers to review the Strategy within three years of publication and every three years thereafter. The review must set out Ministers' assessment of the extent to which the Strategy has been complied with and, following the review, Ministers may also decide to revise the Strategy. Following the first review in 2020, the Scottish Government has now conducted a second review which took place between October 2022 and March 2023. This involved an extensive programme of engagement to seek views of a wide range of groups, including people with lived experience of human trafficking, stakeholders and interested parties on the effectiveness of the Strategy and its implementation. The review has been published today and can be accessed here <http://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781835212486>.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot
Tha Ministearanna h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot



Having considered carefully the review and the evolving environment in relation to human trafficking, I have decided that the Scottish Government will now undertake a refresh of the Strategy in conjunction with stakeholders. We will ensure that the Committee is sighted as work progresses.

In addition, the fifth and final progress report under the existing Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy will be published by the end of the year, and I will share this report with the Committee in due course.

SIOBHIAN BROWN

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot
Tha Ministearanna h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot

