

**NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD**  
**MONITORING PSNI HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLIANCE**  
**HUMAN RIGHTS THEMATIC 2008**

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**Violence Against Women: Domestic Violence**

**Terms of Reference**

As part of the Policing Board's statutory duty to monitor the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) for compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998,<sup>1</sup> the Policing Board intends to conduct a thematic inquiry during 2008 into the effectiveness of the PSNI's approach to tackling domestic violence against women.

In 2007-2008, the PSNI responded to 23,076 domestic incidents. 9,283 crimes with a domestic motivation were recorded. More than two thirds of these crimes fell within the category of violent crime (offences against the person, sexual offences and robbery).<sup>2</sup>

Through the Human Rights Thematic, the Policing Board also aims to raise public awareness of domestic violence against women as a serious and endemic societal problem and to challenge attitudes and behaviour of those who condone or perpetrate domestic violence against women.

**Terms of Reference**

The Policing Board's Human Rights Thematic will consider the PSNI's approach to tackling domestic violence against women and its compliance with human rights legislation in the following areas:

1. Prevention and protection.
2. Investigation and arrest.
3. Support for victims.
4. The role of PSNI Public Protection Units.
5. Inter-agency associations.

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<sup>1</sup> Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, s.3(3)(b)(ii).

<sup>2</sup> PSNI Statistical Report No. 2, Domestic Incidents & Crimes, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008.

The Human Rights Thematic will also consider the human rights implications of Northern Ireland Government strategies and action on domestic violence against women and whether women are deterred from reporting domestic violence because of the way they are treated at any stage of the criminal justice process.

The Policing Board will publish a written report with its findings and recommendations at the conclusion of the Human Rights Thematic.

### **Written submissions**

The Policing Board's Human Rights and Professional Standards Committee is seeking written submissions of no more than 2,500 words on matters relating to its Human Rights Thematic 2008. Interested individuals and organisations are invited to make submissions by **31 July 2008**. Submissions should be made by post to the Policy Branch, Northern Ireland Policing Board, Waterside Tower, 31 Clarendon Road, Clarendon Dock, Belfast BT1 3BG or by email (in word or PDF format) to [information@nipolicingboard.org.uk](mailto:information@nipolicingboard.org.uk) and should address the Terms of Reference of the Human Rights Thematic.

This consultation will be followed by a series of roundtable discussions with specialists and key stakeholders later in the year.