



Baroness Jenny Jones  
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**Patricia F Gallan QPM  
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21 April 2016

Our Ref: AC/SCO/40/2016

Dear Baroness Jones

Thank you for your letter dated 23rd February 2016, addressed to the Commissioner, who has asked me to respond on his behalf.

The use of classified advertisements within the porn and sex industry has been an ongoing concern for the Metropolitan Police Service. In 2010 a police intelligence operation identified a significant number of printed newspapers, both national and local, that were overtly placing advertisements offering sexual services. It was apparent that the owners/editors of some of these publications were reluctant to desist because these adverts were a source of significant income. However the investigation was unable to meet the evidential threshold required for a criminal prosecution.

In November 2010 as a result of the operational findings, Commander Richard Martin wrote to all of the editors of the relevant newspaper groups. He expressed his concerns that these advertisements could be facilitating the exploitation of vulnerable persons. He detailed the potential criminal liability for these newspaper groups and sought their support in increasing their governance of the advertisements and the services being offered.

Whilst the Daily Sport would have been one of the publications involved in this practice, it ceased hard print publication in early 2011. No criminal action was taken prior to the newspapers closure.

More recently the advertising of sexual services has moved, predominantly, to online publications. An on line version of the Daily Sport exists in this format. The 'policing' of on line activities is far more challenging, but the MPS continue to monitor certain media advertising to identify criminal offences and the exploitation of vulnerable persons. In particular, the Trafficking and Kidnap Unit actively monitor known websites suspected of advertising sexual services provided by victims of Human Trafficking and Exploitation. In addition, a substantial amount of work is dedicated to identifying and de-briefing exploited victims from web page advertisements and the subsequent identification, arrest and prosecution of offenders. In addition the continual safeguarding and welfare of the victims of exploitation are a pivotal part of this activity.

In 2014 the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) was established to ensure governance and regulation of the UK Newspaper and Magazine industry, including on line publications. If a member of your constituency has a generic complaint concerning advertisements for sexual services then I would advise them to contact the IPSO. However if there is suspicion or knowledge that specific adverts were directly linked to criminality or the identification of vulnerable persons then the local police should be contacted.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia F Gallan'.

Patricia F Gallan  
Assistant Commissioner  
Specialist Crime & Operations