

CPS ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO VICTIM AND WITNESS SURVEY

KEY POINT TO BE ADDRESSED FROM SURVEY	RESPONSE	TIMESCALES FOR COMPLETION
CPS SPECIFIC ACTIONS		
Only 58% of victims remember receiving an explanation when their case was stopped (63% when the charges were altered). This is particularly important as a clear explanation at these stages is shown in the survey to drive higher levels of satisfaction for victims & witnesses even where the result is not what they wanted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Crown Prosecutors and Victim Liaison Unit Managers will refocus efforts on making sure communications happen in all appropriate cases. • Review quality and impact of communications through speaking to witnesses and community representative groups • Further improve performance against CPS target for communications made in appropriate cases 	<p>September 2015</p> <p>March 2016</p> <p>June 2016</p>
49% of those victims entitled to the Victims Right to Review (VRR) who did not take this up did not know how to ask for a review to take place. Of those who did ask for a VRR review, 81% were dissatisfied with how the request was managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the effectiveness of methods of informing victims of their VRR rights with a view to introducing improvements. • Gather feedback from VRR applicants to what might be done to drive higher satisfaction for this group. 	<p>December 2015.</p> <p>March 2016.</p>
In general, 51% of victims and 38% of witnesses did not feel that they were given sufficient support to help them cope with cross-examination. For sensitive offences (bereavement, sexual offences etc.) these figures rose to 55% and 53% respectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot new arrangements for speaking to witnesses at court in 2 Areas • Train all CPS prosecutors in new guidance on speaking to witnesses at court and implement across England and Wales. • Review effectiveness of new arrangements. 	<p>October 2015</p> <p>March 2016</p> <p>December 2016.</p>
Only 60% of victims and witnesses were able to meet the prosecution representative before or on the day of the case to ask questions about what would happen in court.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot new arrangements for speaking to witnesses at court in 2 Areas • Train all CPS prosecutors in new guidance on speaking to witnesses at court and implement across England and Wales. 	<p>October 2015</p> <p>March 2016</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review effectiveness of new arrangements. 	December 2016.
<p>There was significant misidentification of Victim Liaison Officers even after an explanation of their role. Yet 82% of those who did come into contact with them felt they gave a good service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore how Victim Liaison Units might contribute more to the support of victims throughout the case 	<p>To begin in September 2015 and complete by March 2016.</p>
<p>There is a strong correlation between the victim /witness feeling they were kept informed at every stage and their levels of satisfaction with the service. Also positive correlation between needs assessment and satisfaction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify ways to improve the quality of, and to target, communications effectively; and ensure needs assessment are offered in all relevant cases. Consider implications of this feedback for CPS and wider CJS witness support going forward. How can we establish acceptable level of communication for different types of victim and witness? 	September 2015.
CROSS CJS ACTIONS		
<p>There is a discrepancy between victim and witness beliefs and the actual outcome of cases. Whereas the actual level of successful prosecutions runs at over 70%, only 38% of victims and 29% of witnesses believed that their case ended with a verdict of guilty. As a successful outcome is one of the key factors in supporting higher satisfaction this needs to be tackled.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review - with the police and others - how best to make sure victims and witnesses are kept informed. 	<p>Examine issue of resulting as a priority within the review by October 2015.</p> <p>Complete review by March 2016.</p>
<p>72% of victims called to give evidence had a named contact from the point of charge. This should be 100%.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review with the police how to make sure named point of contact is offered. 	March 2016.

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Many witnesses would have liked access to a range of special measures but high numbers were not offered these (e.g. clearing of the public gallery).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the police to identify and address reasons why special measures are not offered in all appropriate cases at time of evidential statement being taken • Report findings to the MoJ Victim and Witness Policy Unit to feed into consideration of further policy development. • Remind CPS prosecutors and other staff of importance of special measures applications in appropriate cases in messaging internally about the results of this survey 	<p>September 2015</p> <p>September 2015</p>
Many more victims and witnesses would have liked the opportunity to give evidence by video or have a pre-recorded cross-examination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report findings to Common Platform Programme, CJS Efficiency Programme, HMCTS Reform Programme and MoJ Victim and Witness Policy Unit to feed into their work plans. 	September 2015
Only 40% of victims and 47% of vulnerable and intimidated witnesses could remember being given a full needs assessment. Both figures should be 100%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the police, review the operation of Witness Care Units to make sure needs assessments are offered in all appropriate cases • Review the way in which the offer of a needs assessment and the assessments themselves, are recorded. 	March 2016.
34% of victims not offered a chance to make a Victim Personal Statement. 56% of victims who gave a Victim Personal Statement did not know whether or how it had been used in their case.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider fresh actions to ensure that police and WCU staff offer VPS in all relevant cases • Get swift agreement to expand the information provided re the result of cases to include whether and how VPS was used • Consider further actions in light of recommendations of the Victim Commissioner's report on VPS, due in autumn 	<p>September 2015</p> <p>September 2015</p> <p>Autumn 2015</p>