

To:

The Scottish Police Authority

Cc:

The Criminal Justice Committee of the Scottish Parliament;

The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service

Date: 12 June 2026 at 23:09

Dear Mr Mackin

Thank you for your recent correspondence and for the time and consideration which the Scottish Police Authority has given to the matters raised.

I am, in principle, willing to assist the Authority in any way which may be helpful in establishing a complete and accurate understanding of the circumstances surrounding the events complained of.

Before proceeding further, however, I believe it is important to draw attention to several matters which I respectfully consider relevant to the Authority's consideration of this complaint.

Firstly, whilst I note the suggestion that concerns may be raised directly with Police Scotland, I am concerned that such a course is unlikely to provide an effective remedy in the present circumstances.

As you will be aware, the matters which I have raised have previously been brought to the attention of Police Scotland and ultimately, to Deputy Chief Constable Alan Speirs in his capacity as the senior officer responsible for Professional Standards.

In correspondence already provided to the Authority, DCC Speirs made clear that Police Scotland's position remained unchanged and further indicated that Police Scotland did not intend to engage further with me regarding the substantive matters I had raised. I have again attached, for your convenience, the relevant correspondence in which DCC Speirs is engaged.

In those circumstances, I am struggling to understand how referral back to Police Scotland could realistically result in meaningful consideration of concerns which have already been presented and upon which Police Scotland has indicated it does not intend to engage further.

I therefore respectfully invite the Authority to consider whether the circumstances now disclosed justify independent examination through the Authority's own complaints framework

rather than referral back to a process which appears already exhausted.

Secondly, I consider it important that the complaint is viewed within its wider operational and historical context.

To assist the Authority in that regard, I attach a recent analytical paper concerning the Scottish Police Authority's relationship with Operation Talla and wider pandemic policing structures.

The purpose of that paper is not to allege wrongdoing on the part of the Authority. Rather, it examines publicly available material which appears to demonstrate significant awareness of, participation in and proximity to Operation Talla-related discussions and structures during the pandemic period.

In my respectful submission, that context is relevant because the matters now complained of did not arise in isolation. They arose within a wider operational environment which has subsequently become the subject of significant public interest, Freedom of Information disclosures, complaints and scrutiny.

I would therefore be grateful if the Authority would consider the contents of that paper carefully when assessing the present complaint.

Thirdly, I consider it important to make clear that the documentary and evidential material presently in my possession relating to Operation Talla extends considerably beyond that which has thus far been provided to the Scottish Police Authority.

The material includes primary-source documentation, contemporaneous records, official disclosures, correspondence and associated evidential material obtained over a prolonged period of investigation.

In my respectful view, any attempt to properly understand the provenance, implementation, oversight and consequences of certain Operation Talla-related decisions would benefit significantly from consideration of that wider evidential body.

Should the Authority wish to pursue a comprehensive examination of the matters raised, I remain willing to assist by making available relevant material in my possession insofar as it may assist in establishing a complete and accurate evidential picture.

My objective is not to advance a predetermined conclusion but to ensure that any examination of these matters proceeds on the basis of the fullest available evidential record rather than on a partial one.

Equally, given the evident public interest considerations engaged and the constitutional questions which arise from certain aspects of Operation Talla, I consider it necessary to preserve the ability to provide relevant evidence to appropriate persons, bodies and institutions where doing so may assist public understanding, accountability, oversight or the maintenance of constitutional integrity.

Finally, given the wider constitutional and public-interest considerations which now appear to arise from these matters, I consider it appropriate that this correspondence is copied to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and to the Criminal Justice Committee of the Scottish Parliament.

This is not intended as criticism of the Scottish Police Authority, nor as an attempt to circumvent any process which the Authority may consider appropriate.

It reflects the fact that the issues now under consideration appear to extend beyond the circumstances of a single complaint and engage broader questions concerning policing governance, public accountability, oversight mechanisms, public confidence and the operation of criminal justice institutions during the Operation Talla period.

In my respectful submission, transparency is best served where relevant public bodies are afforded the opportunity to understand the nature and significance of the issues being raised.

I remain willing to cooperate constructively with the Authority and would be grateful if you could confirm how you wish to proceed.

Thank you once again for your engagement with this matter.

Yours sincerely

Ian Clayton

Lead Investigator

Ethical Approach UK

[The documents which were attached to this email are available via these following links:

https://ethicalapproach.co.uk/emails_from_20092025_to_12012026.pdf

https://ethicalapproach.co.uk/analysis_spa_talla.pdf]