



## **NPM Statement**

### **BBC Panorama: Undercover in the police**

**2 October 2025**

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The UK NPM was deeply concerned to see the findings of apparent racist, misogynist and abusive behaviour demonstrated in the BBC Panorama programme *Undercover in the Police*.

The treatment of some detainees while in custody at Charing Cross police station were shown to be far below the standards we would expect under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, and the Human Rights Act 1998, the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

NPM bodies proactively monitor and inspect all settings where people are deprived of their liberty in the UK. Our presence serves a preventive function, both by ensuring an external presence to limit the growth of closed cultures, and by identifying concerning behaviours, patterns or actions by staff and reporting them.

It is not the role of the UK NPM to investigate following a complaint, that is the role of the Independent Office of Police Conduct – however we will be making contact with the IOPC to support where we can.

In 2024, the NPM focussed its attention on culture in secure settings, and developed bespoke guidance for monitors, leaders and managers to develop actively preventive monitoring practices. We encourage all NPM monitors, visitors and inspectors to make use of these, on the NPM's website:

[Guidance for leaders and managers: Prevention of ill treatment in places where people are deprived of their liberty – National Preventive Mechanism](#)

[Guidance for monitors and inspectors: Prevention of ill treatment in places where people are deprived of their liberty – National Preventive Mechanism](#)

It is rare that we come across the intentional infliction of pain and suffering, as seen in this documentary. As NPM bodies find when monitoring and inspecting police custody, the documentary referred to the majority of officers who do their job professionally and with empathy.

The NPM continues to develop work on culture change in organisations that deprive people of their liberty. The at times violent racism, misogyny, and discrimination seen in this programme demonstrates a disturbing culture which must be rooted out at the Metropolitan Police, and completely fails to uphold the standards we and the rest of the public expect from police and custody officers.

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