



Select Committee on the European Union

Home Affairs Sub-Committee

Corrected oral evidence: Brexit: the proposed UK-EU security treaty

Wednesday 16 May 2018

11.45 am

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Members present: Lord Jay of Ewelme (Chairman); Baroness Browning; Lord Crisp; Lord Kirkhope of Harrogate; Baroness Massey of Darwen; Baroness Pinnock; Lord Ribeiro; Lord Ricketts; Lord Watts.

Evidence Session No. 10

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Questions 102 - 109

Witnesses

I: Mr Jim Brisbane, Internal Assurance Officer and SRO for EU Exit, Crown Prosecution Service; Ms Debbie Price, Head of International Justice, Crown Prosecution Service.

Examination of witnesses

Debbie Price and Jim Brisbane.

Q102 **The Chairman:** Welcome to you both. Thank you for agreeing to give evidence to us for our inquiry on the proposed UK-EU security treaty. We are very grateful to you. You are our last set of witnesses. We have had some excellent ones before now. I should stress that we are looking at the internal security aspects of the proposed treaty, not the foreign policy and defence aspects. That is the remit of this Committee. Could you briefly introduce yourselves and your present roles? Then we will move on to some questions.

Jim Brisbane: Thank you. We are very grateful for this opportunity to give evidence on this important matter. I am the internal assurance officer for the Crown Prosecution Service and I have been in that role since January 2016. I review discrete areas of CPS business and provide assurance to the director and to the CPS board. One of those areas is Brexit. I am overseeing the preparations that are involved. Immediately before taking up that role I was the chief operating officer for the organisation, and before that my operational experience in the CPS was as a Chief Crown Prosecutor in Wales. Before that, I was a prosecutor for 20 years in Scotland. At one stage I worked in the unit that dealt specifically with extradition and mutual legal assistance. Before I left, I had oversight of those arrangements in Scotland. I am here today partly because the director is unable to be here; she is in fact at an event involving European prosecutors in Paris, which I think underlines her interest in these areas.

Debbie Price: I am currently the head of international justice at the Crown Prosecution Service. That is a team that comprises both our international teams, where we deploy over 30 people overseas on casework and rule-of-law issues, and our extradition unit, which deals with extradition requests for the rest of the CPS and with incoming requests from overseas authorities, both European and in the rest of the world. Prior to that, I was at the UKCA, the Home Office's unit dealing with MLA and extradition. I was the head of the UKCA for two and a half years. Prior to that, I was in the organised crime division of the CPS as a prosecutor. I started off spending 10 years in private practice before coming to the CPS.

Q103 **The Chairman:** Thank you. Those are two impressive CVs.

The first question is for both of you. In an ideal world, what would you see as the best sort of "closest possible co-operation", to coin a phrase, on security co-operation between the UK and the EU 27 after we have left? We are working on the assumption that we will leave on 29 March 2019. That in no way prejudges whether we think it is the right thing to do, but that is the assumption on which we are working.

Jim Brisbane: We too are working on that assumption. The tools that we currently have, such as the European arrest warrant and, more recently, the European investigation order, are extremely important to us. We

made that position clear, and the director made that clear in her evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee. We regard them as a package of measures that have an interdependability. Our position is reflected in the Government's approach that is set out, that in effect we want to replicate that position as strongly and closely as possible in any new treaty. What we would say in more detail is entirely consistent with the ambition of the Government. We have been able from an early stage to factor in our views on that, and I think there is a broad consensus, given the evidence that you have heard, on the importance of these measures. In an ideal world, there would be that degree of replication if possible, although we know the challenges that that involves.

Debbie Price: I feel very much the same.

The Chairman: On the question of timing I should say that we are aiming to finish at 12.40, which I hope will give us good time.

Q104 **Lord Ribeiro:** You have already mentioned the European arrest warrant and the European investigation orders as being actively integral and that, if you had to, you would want to recreate them post Brexit. How do these instruments compare to the position before the various new measures were adopted?

Jim Brisbane: Of the two, the EIO is slightly different and much more recent so we do not have such a full understanding and assessment of what it can deliver, although we see the benefits already in terms of speed with which cases and requests are turned round. We are used to working with what came before that so the capability gap is perhaps not so fully understood as it might be if this had been two years down the line. Against that, it is something where we know what our fallback position would be. The EAW is in a slightly different position because that is now a mature measure in many ways, we make extensive use of it and we can illustrate that more, either by case reference or by the sheer statistics: it has allowed more people to be sent back and more people to be returned here.

Debbie Price: From our perspective, in terms of dealing operationally, it is about the speed with which you can obtain the people and the evidence and deal with the proceeds of crime. Those are three main areas that we are interested in. It is also about legal certainty. Are the instruments that we are using tested? Can we be satisfied that they work? Can we be satisfied that due process is undertaken? Once you are accustomed to using one system, you deal with all the disputes and anomalies through the courts and you settle into that. Clearly, a reversion to a different set of instruments will lead to a period of legal uncertainty where things need to be tried and tested in the courts, which takes a lot of resources, time and money from everyone involved. So from our perspective, the processes that we have at the moment—taking on board the points about the EIO still being relatively new—are something that we feel very comfortable with. That refers to both the defence and the prosecution, the people also involved in this system. So a reversion to the older

systems will create difficulties for everyone in terms of going back to something from which we have moved on.

Lord Ribeiro: You mentioned statistics earlier. Do you have anything on the European arrest warrant or the other instruments that you might want to share with us now or send to us in written form later?

Debbie Price: Certainly. At any one time we have about 400 to 500 live EAW cases. Every month, about a third of those cases are dealt with by way of the requested person consenting to return. That is one of the real benefits of the EAW: that people choose to return of their own volition. We understand that there is probably an 8:1 ratio in terms of the number of people who are surrendered by the UK versus the number of people that we request and return to the UK. That is not surprising, given that we are one of 27.

About 2.5% of the persons surrendered by the UK are UK nationals. Obviously nationality is a big issue. Generally 30% of those who are requested are own nationals, so in terms of other countries seeking people it tends to be that 30% is the limit of their own nationals. Under the EAW, we expect to surrender between 1,500 and 2,000 a year. That is a large proportion of foreign-national offenders that we are able to surrender to face the criminal justice system in other countries. The EIO is really new. So far we have issued about 129 EIOs since 31 July last year and at around the same time about 140 mutual legal assistance requests, so you can see that the EIO is already catching up and will soon overtake MLA requests. We cannot comment on incoming EIOs; that is a matter for the Home Office's UKCA, but I think the receipt is in the region of 400 to 500 so far. But I can say from reaching out to our teams across the CPS that the evidence is coming much quicker than it was under the mutual legal assistance process. Sometimes people are getting it within two weeks, which is a marked difference from the situation that we had previously.

On mutual recognition on the proceeds of crime, if I can call it that, which is about freezing and confiscation, we are not seeing a lot more outgoing requests from UK prosecutors, but we are seeing more requests coming in from other countries that did not usually do business with us previously. A lot more feel comfortable using this route than did using the old MLA processes. So we have received more in the period since 2014 when those provisions came in. At the moment we have restrained about £80 million on behalf of other EU countries. There is the big caveat there as to how much is actually realised, but so far we have restrained about £80 million and have requested about £4.5 million to be restrained on our behalf by other EU member states. That again is still relatively new, from 2014, but something that has demonstrated to us that under the mutual recognition mechanism things are moving faster, and more countries are prepared to do business with us.

The Chairman: That is very helpful.

Lord Ribeiro: If we could perhaps have some of that data, we would be

happy to reflect on it.

Debbie Price: We are happy to do so.

Q105 **Baroness Massey of Darwen:** What would you like to see covered in the proposed UK-EU security treaty? If the UK cannot retain our current level of co-operation with the EU in full, which issues and instruments do you think should be prioritised?

Jim Brisbane: We have touched on this already. It really is the totality of measures that we currently have. We have spoken in a bit of detail about the European arrest warrant and the EIO on the proceeds of crime. Our participation in Eurojust, for example, is also important for us. We see them as collectively important. We could potentially explain a bit more about their interdependence in practice but they work together as a suite of tools that are available for prosecutors; they get into the rhythm of using them that way and knowing their options. Obviously the one that has the biggest numbers, as it were, and that may have the potential for the most change is the European arrest warrant. That is the one where I know you have been giving consideration to what the impact of that would be. That is something that, in the efforts to get all this through, there would be considerable focus on, but we stress that we have reached the position where all these tools are important to us, and we think that is reflected in the approach that the Government are now taking.

Debbie Price: We have tended so far to focus on the prosecution tools, as we call them, but if we look at the investigation tools, and on most of our really complex and serious cases we work hand-in-glove with law enforcement from the outset of the cases—in organised crime and counterterrorism, for example—a lot of the instruments that you might think of as specifically law enforcement actually impact on our cases. To give you an example, we obtain previous convictions. If the police obtain them early on, they are able to make an assessment of whether a suspect is dangerous. Do they have an association with firearms? Have they escaped from custody previously? Have they attacked police officers, judiciary or prosecutors? When the police are planning an arrest or the search of the premises, that information can be vital in making a risk assessment. When the suspect is charged, if they are charged, it helps us to understand the position in relation to bail and whether we should object to a bail application if this person has a habit of evading custody or changing their name or identity. Then, when we get to the trial, that information may tell us whether that person has a propensity to deal drugs, whether they have many previous convictions for violence, drug-dealing or firearms. That informs the judge and jury about the nature of that person, so we no longer have the situation where the jury feels a bit hijacked when they find out after a trial is over that this person has so many other previous convictions. While that looks from the outset as though it is an investigative tool, it flows through the whole process and so is invaluable for both prosecutors and the police in understanding how we can deal with our case and put all the relevant information in front of the people who need to hear it.

The Chairman: That is very helpful. Thank you.

Q106 **Baroness Browning:** What contingency planning are you doing for the transition period? Are you planning for the possibility that there is no deal on police and judicial co-operation and that that might not be reached until we get to the end of that period? What do you have in the locker ready for that?

Jim Brisbane: It is not ready to come out yet. We have proceeded on the basis that we are still in a negotiation period so we do not know what the outcome will be. Obviously we express confidence that the basic proposition will be accepted that there is a need to maintain what we have, but it would be wrong if we did not do the appropriate planning.

What we have done on contingencies is at two levels. As practitioners, we have fed into some of the planning that the Home Office has done so that it has a full understanding of what the implications would be and what might be required if we were in a different position. Some of that is also reflected in the conclusion that we need to get the measures as they are, but clearly we are going ahead with the preparations just in case. We have done that through providing some of the detailed ways in which we deal with cases.

At the same time, we have also had to look at how we might do the detail if we revert back to judicial measures. We are doing that in some detail for our own internal purposes as well to be absolutely sure that we get to the situation where we have the processes in place, some of which are more familiar, as with mutual legal assistance, because the time difference is small, but also that we have the depth of expertise to deal with extradition in a different setting. Particularly with extradition, we have to map out what those different processes would look like. We have carried out a series of detailed internal workshops to allow us to be clear about that. It will also allow us the opportunity to see whether we can do anything better in terms of the processes that we currently use, rather than just saying, "We're going to revert to something that we had in the past". All that will mean that we will also be in a position to make a careful assessment of what the resource implications will be.

Baroness Browning: I was about to ask you about the resource implications.

Jim Brisbane: That is ongoing work. It is quite detailed and granular because we want to be in a position in which if we are required to express what that may be then we can do it on the basis that there is a proper rationale for it.

Baroness Browning: As things look at the moment, do you anticipate, in the event that that happened, that there would be significant demands on resources?

Jim Brisbane: I do not think the word "significant" is the one that we would use immediately. Extra resources may be needed, but I am not yet able to say what they might be until we understand what some of the

work may look like in future. We do not, for example, have certainty as to how some countries may adjust their own procedures or what will be the remnants of the way that they used to work.

Broadly speaking, we anticipate that the extradition work might be more extensive even if there were a drop-off in numbers, for two reasons: because the process itself will be a much less streamlined one, but also because there is the potential for challenges, which will emerge one way or the other. That is something that we recognise; it is the nature of any change in the law arrangements, and you have to deal with it. So we are planning for all of that but also trying to see what will be necessary to support our work in this area, not just domestically but potentially overseas.

As I am sure the Committee will know, this type of work relies so much on personal engagement when it gets down to the difficulties that arise. We currently have a network of prosecutors who operate within Europe; whether they are described as liaison magistrates or criminal justice advisers does not really matter, but they have a position where they can smooth out problems even within EU countries, where they arise, with simplified procedures. We want to maintain that and are looking to see whether it would be beneficial to expand it in the event that with any new set of arrangements, if we had to revert to them, there would be a need to work through the initial status of what they would look like in practice so that we could make the appropriate representations locally and develop the bilateral strength that would potentially be necessary for that to happen.

Debbie Price: The international team has been looking at an engagement strategy. We recognise that there is risk that we may find ourselves outside Eurojust, even just for a period of time, and we need to keep that engagement going. By and large we are working together with our European counterparts—there does not tend to be any adversarial element to our relationship—but, as Jim said, the most important thing to do is to communicate, and it is about creating those avenues where you can do so. In the absence of Eurojust, we are looking at our internal systems as to how we can communicate via email and whether we can do that in a better way than at the moment, but also at keeping those lines of communication open between us and developing new ones so that, as the changes happen over there, we are able to keep those lines open. That is one of the things that we are focusing on the moment: keeping the communication going.

Q107 Lord Kirkhope of Harrogate: I do not want to test your objectivity too much, but may we go to the withdrawal agreement itself? We are talking about Title V and about elements that are the EU's proposals rather than our own but which seem to be very positive in relation to what is on offer in terms of mutual recognition and ongoing judicial co-operation. As the text is not agreed yet—as I say, I put you a little to the test—in your opinion, are the judicial co-operation proposals that currently sit within that withdrawal agreement workable and positive, or do you have any

immediate observations about them that would suggest that they are not?

Jim Brisbane: They are not concluded so there might be some aspects that we would need to be refined, but they broadly capture the main points that we would want. We want to proceed on that basis of mutual recognition. It is what underpins so much of the work. It looks as though what is currently there would provide us with that period of safe passage until such time as a future framework is concluded.

Debbie Price: In the short term, we can have a period of certainty where we know what we are dealing with because we are maintaining instruments, and then we have a winding-down period, which is very important. There are two areas where we are looking on from the sides at the moment. One is in relation to agencies such as Eurojust and Europol—it is not clear whether they would continue during this period—and the other is in relation to Article 168. At the moment, we understand that the country most likely to indicate that it cannot extradite its own nationals is Germany. We do not know the position with other countries; there may be more. We have been doing some work on this basis because we understand that there are 22 EU member states that have some sort of nationality bar so we have been looking at whether this is a transitional-agreement issue or an end-of-story issue and at what we could do in those circumstances, and trying to identify alternatives.

Lord Kirkhope of Harrogate: Within the draft withdrawal agreement, there is reciprocity with regard to those difficulties. For instance, you mentioned Germany's Grundgesetz, the constitutional bar to the extradition to a third country of its own nationals. You say—this is your line, and it is also the politicians' line—that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. In this case, regarding the proposals that have been made and are being worked on, apart from the point that you just mentioned, are there any other glaring areas in which judicial co-operation will be more difficult when we are a third country? After all, we are going to be a third country, assuming that this goes ahead.

Debbie Price: The point about the withdrawal agreement is that it does not tell us what things are going to look like once the new agreement comes into place; it just allows us to understand what is going to happen in the lead-up to that. This is not a position I like to be in but I do not know what the future looks like, so I cannot say, "This withdrawal agreement gives me what I need". In terms of that period, from April 2019 to December 2020, the one that is looming so closely, I have some understanding of what it should look like, should the agreement be concluded, and I have some concerns, but I really do not know what the future looks like in 2020 at the moment, and I do not think the withdrawal agreement gives me that.

Lord Kirkhope of Harrogate: I am quite interested in this, because you are the professionals here. Politicians are negotiating away. We are all agreed that the European arrest warrant is very important, along with Article 168, which you mentioned in relation to it. Bearing in mind what

apparently is currently on offer, I want to see whether, assuming that something similar to that was negotiated, that would deal with most of your problems.

Debbie Price: What is on offer at the moment is not clearly the European arrest warrant. There are many hurdles. We do not sit in the negotiations so we are not aware of what is being said in relation to it, but in answer to, "Will we end up with the European arrest warrant or with some other form of extradition that isn't based on mutual recognition?", I will say that we are able to extradite to non-EU member states, although it takes longer and it costs more, so in terms of judicial co-operation it is not optimal. I am not sure that the withdrawal agreement tells me that both negotiating parties are in agreement on the EAW at this time. I think both sides can see that it is the preferred mechanism, but whether they can come together on this is something that we are just not at the table to be able to judge.

Jim Brisbane: On the point of whether there is anything in the withdrawal agreement itself that is troubling, the two issues that we note most particularly might be discussed are, first, the extent of participation in Eurojust and how that would work out in that period, and, secondly, the way that the Article 168 position plays out. It is left there as an option for the member states, so we do not know how that will go. It could end up that it is absolutely marginal for the period of time. Extradition of German nationals is at a fairly low level. We have a really clear sense that our role in Eurojust is so significant that, during the transition period, we can find some workable arrangements.

Q108 **Lord Crisp:** I turn to the benefits and the costs; you mentioned costs just now. There are three points here and I will put them all on the table, as it were. First, how much does the operation of the current EU instruments cost the UK? Secondly, how would you assess the costs of the system as opposed to its benefits? Thirdly, have you made any assessment of the costs of using alternative systems, such as falling back on the pre-EU measures, which I think you were just mentioning?

Jim Brisbane: As for the total cost of the package of all the measures, perhaps understandably, we are not in a position where we could give that information. So that we can inform those who have an interest in this as well as ourselves, we have concentrated quite significantly on what the extent of the resource difference might be, but we do not know all of it. This is very much ongoing work, and there will be a balance on some of it. If Eurojust settled in a particular way, for example, that might obviate the need to consider a more extensive deployment of criminal justice advisers or liaison magistrate staff in parts of Europe. We just do not know how all of that sits, but it would not be a major exercise when the clarity is there to do it. We have now begun to do what we have not done previously, which is to look at a granular level at what each of the process steps are so that we can potentially cost that.

Debbie Price: If you look at MLA and EIO, the costs would not really be that different but it would take a lot longer. The issue is not the cost in

terms of pounds, shillings and pence; the issue is whether you can make something happen. Can you get that person back to face trial? Can you get the evidence in the time that you need? The example that I think about is that if we have someone on remand prior to trial, we have to bring that person to trial within a certain period of time—six months. If we cannot get the evidence in time, either the trial date shifts and the person is released, with all the risk that is attached to that, or we do without that evidence.

The same happens in relation to confiscation and freezing orders: either you can issue that restraint or you cannot. That cost is not going to come up on a balance sheet, saying that it is more expensive to do that. It is just a capability gap; something will not be there that was there before. It is most marked with extradition. One of the aspects that the Brexit team is working on now with the CPS is what the alternatives are if we cannot extradite someone from, say, France. If we go for a transfer of proceedings then there is the question of the bundling up of evidence, the translation and the meetings between the officers and the prosecutors. We cannot guarantee that they will take the trial on; even though there is a principle of “extradite or prosecute”, they may not be able to do it.

There is also the cost that is not obvious, the cost to the victims and witnesses of having to travel to trial another country. These are all costs that are not necessarily quantifiable in cash. Trial in absentia is a possibility, so we would go through the whole process but the person would not be here, but again there are problems with that in terms of what would happen and whether or not people would extradite or surrender people to us later on, on that basis. We are looking at what it would be like but we have to have a balancing exercise between how much work we do now, looking into something that might not happen, and whether or not we really want to get that sort of certainty for our organisation as to what it is going to cost us and what additional resources we will need.

Q109 Lord Ricketts: The last couple of questions are on how the world will look after we have left the EU, perhaps putting aside exactly what we get in terms of the EAW and the other instruments. Do you see the British judicial co-operation and law enforcement world losing influence with European countries by not being in the EU more generally and not being at the table as these instruments evolve, change and develop, and having to be a third country lobbying from the outside?

Jim Brisbane: That is obviously a risk but it is an issue that the Government have covered in their approach. They say they want to develop that level of co-operation and dialogue, almost building it into any future agreement. How practical that may be remains to be seen. Clearly there will be some closed-door discussions that we will not be able to participate in.

It is important to stress that in that world of international co-operation, which is now significantly established and has moved away from what was largely international diplomacy into something that you could almost

characterise differently now, where everyone understands the benefits of co-operation and the interdependencies, it would be disappointing if there was not the opportunity for the UK to express its views, whether on thematic issues—we have taken leads, for example, on issues such as modern slavery and have been influential—or on some of the details that sit underneath that.

From the CPS perspective, and certainly in my time in the organisation, the directors for whom I have worked have placed a high priority on this. They are constantly seeking to engage with foreign counterparts, and that is not just restricted to the EU. My own experience is that when there is a true gathering of those who are looking at issues, there is recognition of the EU's expertise and experience in these fields. Again, one would expect that there would still be that regard, even though there may not be the obvious mechanisms that we have to contribute. Technically we are still one voice out of many at the moment, but in my view the weight of what we can say about this will still be substantial because of our tradition and our position globally in so many areas.

Debbie Price: The UK has always been very good at taking the lead in thematics. For example, we have done a huge amount of work on modern-day slavery and human trafficking. We are working with partners, not just in the EU but all over the world. As a third country, I think we will still be able to have that role and to influence partners because of the way that we approach it and the way that we work internally together to bring about the best possible outcomes in investigation, prosecution and dealing with the proceeds of crime.

It really is down to us how we work, both with EU partners and partners in the rest of the world, to demonstrate that we still are leading on many of these issues. If you look at the relationships that our counterterrorism police and prosecutors have all over the world, we have influence because we are at the cutting edge and we perform so well. From an operational level, which is where I am coming from today, I think our influence is about doing the job really well, working really effectively, co-operating and, when our counterparts need something for their prosecution's investigations, making sure that they get it.

Lord Ricketts: Do you think—as a part of that, which I think is very interesting—that the bilateral relationships with individual EU countries will need to become more load-bearing once we are out of the EU? Like you, I pay tribute to the role of the liaison magistrates; I was ambassador in Paris until recently, and the liaison magistrate there had a tremendous network, not just in the capital but with the regional prosecuting authorities, the examining magistrates and so on—really useful human contact, which cannot make up for the absence of legal agreements but can certainly help to oil the wheels. Do you see bilateral relationships with individual EU countries becoming more important, taking some more of the strain? I think you mentioned the possibility of expanding the liaison magistrate network if necessary after we leave the EU.

Jim Brisbane: Absolutely. With every year that passes, you understand the benefits of relationships and conversations. You need to invest time in those, and it is the time of the folks who are deployed to do that. We are assessing that, and obviously as things develop we will see how much commitment there needs to be, but it is quite likely that in the event of us not being able to replicate what we have that would be part of our overall response.

Debbie Price: On a case-by-case basis, it is genuinely a bilateral relationship. If our prosecutors are working with their counterparts in France on a case where there is evidence in France, they are not necessarily taking into consideration the wider European issue. More strategically, it is important to work on both levels, but on a day-to-day basis we as an organisation will need to ensure that we have those really close relationships with our EU counterparts, that we are able to talk to them about anything at any time and that we can work effectively together to bring about justice, because that is what we are there for.

Jim Brisbane: We have the comfort that that has grown so much over the last couple of decades. If we have to go back to conventional measures, we are in a different space in terms of the understanding of our folks and folks overseas that this is how you do it, in terms of the contacts and the directness of approach, which can sometimes cut through the difficulties.

The Chairman: With certain countries, if it did come to this and you had to strengthen bilateral relations with, ideally, all 27, are there some where you would say, "We really must do the following three, four or five first"? Do you have a list of priorities, as it were? You could not do them all at once, I guess.

Jim Brisbane: We have been doing those preliminary assessments. You have to look at a number of areas, such as volume and thematic issues. You are right that that is something that we have to look at.

Debbie Price: It is about reciprocity, so sometimes it is a question of what they need from us. Running a unit where we are doing casework on behalf of other countries is not necessarily just about CPS needs; it is about what they need from us. Our proceeds of crime unit deals with incoming requests for restraint and confiscation, so sometimes the relationship is about working with countries that want evidence or people from us, and sometimes it is about what the CPS needs from those countries.

Jim Brisbane: To add a bit of context to that, in the area of proceeds of crime quite a lot of that work is done by video conferencing. We have built that up quite substantially.

Lord Kirkhope of Harrogate: There have been discussions about the CPS in a broad context in terms of its resources, its effectiveness and so on. That is slightly out of your areas here but, if we move to a broader approach that is not under the present rules so we have to go to the

bilaterals and so on, will that not put pressure on the CPS itself in terms of the numbers of people who have to be employed, the resources and so on? Will that not have a big impact?

Jim Brisbane: The impact will be mainly from an adjustment of resources because we will need people with the appropriate skills to deploy for this work. We have been engaged in a recruitment exercise for some period of time because we are trying to get more people into certain areas of work. In this particular area, it is about getting the right people. We are an agile organisation, so even against the potentially short lead-in times for this we are confident that we can allocate the right people without necessarily putting undue pressure on any other part of the organisation.

Debbie Price: I am sure most of you will recall, when the changes to the Extradition Act happened in 2014, that suddenly we had a bulge in the pipe of cases that needed to be dealt with, because new legislation creates a certain amount of legal uncertainty and things need to be clarified. We are anticipating a bulge in the pipe. We do not know how long it will be or how big the bulge will be, because we are not yet sure precisely what it is going to look like. It may be that people may need to be shifted from one place to another, but part of our thinking is whether we should be considering how we do things. Should we have extradition specialists or should we have a more versatile model? This is an opportunity for us to look at what we do and how we do it. Perhaps we are too compartmentalised, and the way to face this and other challenges is to be more agile.

The Chairman: Thank you. It is very good to finish with the word "opportunity" because it is not one that we hear all that often when we are talking about the implications of Brexit. You have been extremely helpful, frank and open with us, and we appreciate that. Thank you very much for your evidence.