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Rt Hon Dame Diana Johnson DBE MP
Home Affairs Select Committee Chair
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

31st May 2022

Letter to Chair of the HASC

I am writing to you in your capacity as Chair of the Home Affairs Committee to understand whether there are plans to examine the operation of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (“the Act”).

The Act provides a framework for use by the security and intelligence agencies, law enforcement and other public authorities to obtain communications and communications data, and independent oversight by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner. These powers cover the interception of communications, the retention and acquisition of communications data, and equipment interference for obtaining communications and other data.

Section 260 requires me to prepare a report on the operation of the Act in the six-month period between 29th May 2022 and 29th November 2022, and that report must take account of any report on the operation of the Act by a Select Committee of either House, whether acting jointly or alone. The work of various Parliamentary bodies was considered to be of significant benefit during the passage of the Act and the provision was included to ensure Parliament had the opportunity to review the legislation, should it wish to, after five years.

I am writing to understand whether there are plans to report on the operation of the Act, and the timeframes around this. To ensure I could give any Select Committee report my fullest consideration, I would want to allow the maximum time possible between receiving the report and publishing my own, within the timeframes set out in the Act.

My officials stand ready to engage with relevant Parliamentary colleagues to discuss this further and provide you with assistance as necessary.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

With my good wishes
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Patel", with the words "With my good wishes" written above it in a cursive script.

Rt Hon Priti Patel