



Justice Committee

The Rt Hon David Lammy MP

Deputy Prime Minister, Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor

By email only

5 December 2025

Dear David,

Criminal Court reform

I write to seek clarity on some of the measures announced during the Statement you made on Tuesday 2 December on Criminal Court reform. Please could I request answers to the following questions:

1. Can you confirm what percentage of the 3 per cent of trials that are currently heard by a jury will no longer be heard by a jury – is it a reduction of 25 per cent as reported in the Law Society Gazette¹ or 50 per cent as Minister Richards told the Joint Committee on Human Rights at its hearing on Wednesday 3 December, at which I was a guest?
2. The proposed Bench Division will hear either-way cases where the anticipated sentence is three years or less. In practice, how will it be determined that a case meets this threshold? Will consideration be given to the facts of a particular case or just sentence length? Furthermore, please can you provide a list of offences that are expected to fall within the jurisdiction of this new division?
3. What percentage and types of cases are you anticipating will now be heard under the following modes of trial:
 - a) the Magistrates' Court
 - b) the new Bench Division
 - c) trial by jury
 - d) how does the new percentage heard under modes a), b) and c) compare with the current percentage of cases currently heard under each mode of trial?
4. What is the MoJ's comparative prediction for the number of cases there will be in the Crown Court backlog for each of the next 5 years if either:
 - a) the reforms are implemented
 - b) the reforms are not implemented
5. Can you provide us with any updated modelling you hold for each of the key reforms announced in your Statement?
6. What is the MoJ's target time from charge to sentence for rape cases and when do you expect to reach it?

¹ The Law Society Gazette, [Quarter of jury trials to be axed as Lammy unveils 'swift courts' plan](#) | Law Gazette, 2 December 2025



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I would appreciate responses to these questions ahead of your appearance before the Justice Committee on 16 December.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Slaughter MP
Chair, Justice Committee