



Ministry
of Justice

The Right Honourable
David Lammy MP
Deputy Prime Minister
Lord Chancellor & Secretary
of State for Justice

Andy Slaughter MP, Chair
Justice Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Ref: 130893

14 January 2026

Dear Andy,

**UPDATE ON THE INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION INTO THE ESCAPE OF DANIEL
KHALIFE FROM HMP WANDSWORTH**

I am writing to provide you with an update on the Independent Investigation into the escape of Daniel Khalife from HMP Wandsworth on 6 September 2023. I will shortly lay a Written Ministerial Statement on this topic in the House of Commons. In light of the Committee's remit and its engagement during the investigation, I am writing to provide an early update ahead of the Statement being laid.

On 8 January 2024, the House of Commons was informed by the then Lord Chancellor that the Investigation, led by Keith Bristow QPM, had concluded. At that time, it was not appropriate for the government to provide further detail due to ongoing criminal proceedings and the need to protect prison security. Those proceedings have since concluded, and Mr Khalife has been convicted of offences under the Official Secrets Act 1911 and the Terrorism Act 2000, as well as escaping from lawful custody.

In the spirit of transparency and accountability, I have decided that a fuller account of the Investigation's findings and recommendations should be made public, sharing further detail while ensuring prison security is not compromised. As such, I will shortly lay a Written Ministerial Statement on this topic in the Commons, with Lord Timpson laying a corresponding one in the Lords. Given the Justice Select Committee's remit, I am sharing some detail with you in advance and in good faith that these details will remain confidential until the WMS is laid.

The Investigation scrutinised five key operational themes: prisoner categorisation protocols; security protocols and their application; assessment of escape risk; work allocation risk assessment; and operational capacity including staffing levels.

Key findings and operational recommendations

- Prisoner categorisation: The decision to hold Mr Khalife in a Category B prison was found to be consistent with policy. Improvements have since been made to intelligence-sharing processes, operational backlogs, and staff training to strengthen categorisation decisions.
- Security protocols: The Investigation identified shortcomings in searches, vehicle escorting, and contingency activation. HMP Wandsworth has implemented revised search protocols, improved risk-based practices, and prioritised staff training. HMPPS has also updated its internal policy framework for managing terrorist risk.
- Escape risk assessment: Policy was found to have been applied correctly, but enhancements have been introduced to daily monitoring, risk assessments, and assurance checks. National policy has been reviewed to ensure risk information from other secure environments is considered.
- Work allocation: The Investigation found that Mr Khalife should not have been assigned kitchen duties. Processes have since been strengthened through improved risk assessments, intelligence use, and oversight mechanisms.
- Staffing: While staffing levels were not a direct factor, and there was no evidence found that staff corruption played a role in the escape, measures have been taken to increase security personnel, improve training, and enhance operational resilience.

Strategic recommendations

The Investigation recommended a stronger security culture, clearer local strategies, and closer collaboration with scrutiny bodies. HMP Wandsworth has undertaken a comprehensive review of its security arrangements, supported by strengthened leadership and assurance processes. HMPPS and the Ministry of Justice continue to work with HM Inspectorate of Prisons and Independent Monitoring Boards to embed improvements across the estate.

The Government has acted swiftly and decisively to implement the Investigation's recommendations. Through strengthened leadership, renewed focus on security culture, and rigorous assurance processes, vulnerabilities have been addressed and reforms embedded. These measures are being independently tested and continuously improved to ensure lessons are learned and incidents of this nature are prevented in future.

I trust this update is helpful to the Committee. Further detail will be provided shortly as part of the WMS being laid tomorrow. If you require additional information or wish to discuss any aspect, I would be happy to assist.

Yours sincerely,



RT HON DAVID LAMMY MP

**DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
LORD CHANCELLOR AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR JUSTICE**