

A message from the Investigatory Powers Commissioner, Sir Brian Leveson:

Over the past quarter, the IPCO team and I have significantly increased our external engagements, continuing to prioritise transparency and open dialogue with our domestic and international partners. These activities reflect our ongoing commitment to upholding public trust and ensuring a clear understanding of IPCO’s vital oversight role.

In January, at the request of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), I travelled to Japan to meet with ministers, senior government officials, legislators, and leading experts in cyber and constitutional law. The visit was highly productive and covered in Japanese media. I was pleased to note the interest of Japanese counterparts in IPCO’s model as a benchmark for effective independent oversight.

Media engagement has also remained a focus. I was invited to speak with Joshua Rozenberg for his A Lawyer Talks podcast, where I discussed my responsibilities as the Investigatory Powers Commissioner and the essential work undertaken by IPCO. [\[You can listen to the episode here\]](#). I also had the honour of delivering the Reform Club’s annual Lord Atkin Lecture, where I spoke on the topic of “Authorisation and Oversight: The Use of Covert Investigative Powers by UK Authorities.” Additionally, I addressed students at King’s College London’s National Security Programme, providing insight into the importance of judicial oversight in the use of covert powers. I also chaired a panel discussion for the Centre for Emerging Technology and Security (CETaS) on its latest publication, *UK Public Attitudes to National Security Data Processing: Assessing Human and Machine Intrusion* [\[You can watch the discussion here\]](#).

Throughout the quarter, I have held a series of valuable meetings with key stakeholders including the Heads of the intelligence agencies, the Attorney General, Lord Hermer KC, and the Security Minister, Dan Jarvis. These engagements have allowed us to reinforce the importance of robust oversight and the continuing relevance of IPCO’s work.

Finally, I had a constructive and forward-looking meeting with the Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper, during which we discussed key oversight challenges and potential updates to the Investigatory Powers Act (IPA).

These engagements collectively reflect the dedication and professionalism of IPCO and our shared commitment to accountability, transparency and the public interest.

Thank you for your continued support and interest in our work.



Policy and organisational updates from IPCO

Update to Schedule 4 of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016: In October 2024, the Home Office formally consulted the Investigatory Powers Commissioner (IPC) in accordance with section 72(2)(a) of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (IPA), regarding proposed additions to the list of public authorities permitted to acquire communications data under Schedule 4 of the Act. Following this consultation, on 2 April 2025, a draft enhanced [Affirmative Statutory Instrument](#) to update Schedule 4 was laid in Parliament.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Investigatory Powers: This month, IPCO has published two documents relating to artificial intelligence. IPCO’s interest in AI is specifically focused on its use by public authorities in the context of investigatory powers, particularly where these technologies affect individual privacy or broaden the scope of surveillance activity. [\[You can access both documents here\]](#).

Publication of the Technology Advisory Panel’s (TAP) AI Assessment Framework: The Technical Advisory Panel’s (TAP) AI Assessment Framework provides a structured, practical tool for evaluating the proportionality of data-driven AI models used in investigatory contexts. While the framework is not a substitute for the legal test of proportionality under the IPA, it is intended to support decision-makers in determining whether a specific AI model is a suitable and justified means of achieving operational objectives.

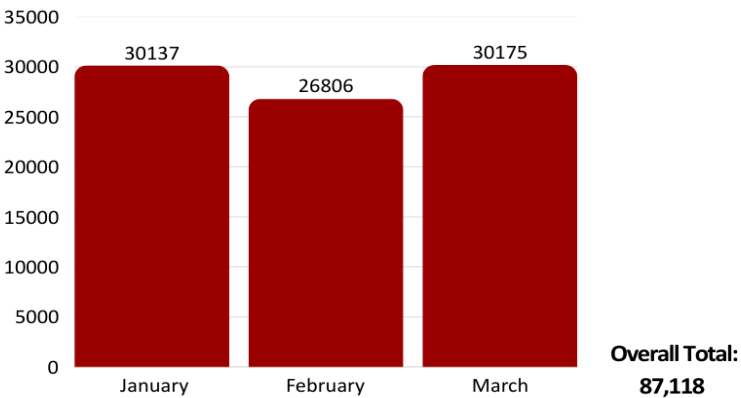
IPCO’s 2023 Annual Report: We are pleased to announce the publication of our 2023 Annual Report, although we apologise for the delay. The report provides a detailed overview of IPCO’s work including inspection findings, compliance issues, and notable errors identified across the use of investigatory powers. [\[Read the full report here\]](#).

Appointment and reappointment of Judicial Commissioners: The Prime Minister has appointed two new Judicial Commissioners to support the Investigatory Powers Commissioner, Sir Brian Leveson, in the independent oversight and authorisation of investigatory powers. Lady Leona Dorrian and Lady Valerie Stacey will formally join the Judicial Commissioner team in May 2025. In addition, three Judicial Commissioners—Sir Nigel Davis, Sir Declan Morgan and Sir Peregrine Simon have been reappointed for a further three-year term.

Q1 STATISTICS

COMMUNICATIONS DATA (CD)

The below table shows the number of applications that our CD authorisations team have reviewed in the previous quarter *

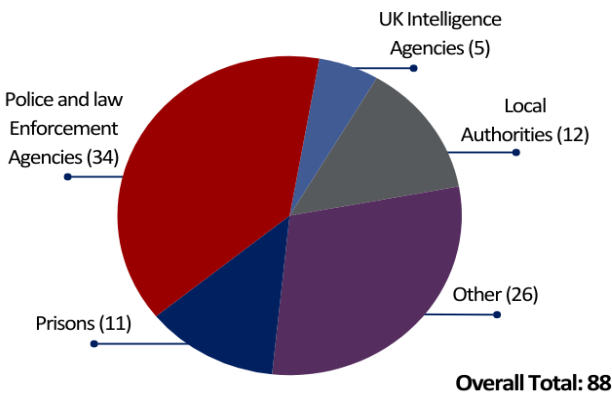


Our Authorisations team independently consider applications to access CD from law enforcement and public authorities, to ensure it is only authorised, and CD subsequently obtained, where this is lawful, necessary, and proportionate and meets the IPA thresholds.

*The CD application figures are preliminary and may be subject to change. The final figures will be officially published in the IPCO Annual Report.

INSPECTION STATISTICS

Below is a breakdown of our inspection statistics showing how we inspect the organisations we oversee.



As part of our oversight, we have a statutory obligation to inspect the use of investigatory powers. We have a dedicated Inspectorate divided into three teams focusing on different areas of oversight. Each team is led by a Chief Inspector, and together they ensure that we are adopting similar practices and applying consistent standards of scrutiny across all our oversight work.