



Statement

12th July 2011

Police station duty scheme update - solicitor contact line

The Scottish Legal Aid Board's Solicitor Contact Line went live at 9am on Monday 4th July 2011. It is now operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Contact Line arrangements are now operating effectively to ensure that suspects who request advice under section 15A of the Criminal Procedure (Legal Assistance, Detention and Appeals) (Scotland) Act 2010 receive it timeously. In the first week of its operation, demand for the services provided by the Contact Line has exceeded our expectations.

In its first full week, from 9.00 am on Monday 4 July to 9.00 am on Monday 11 July, 458 notifications of requests for advice from suspects were received, giving a daily average of 66 suspects requiring legal advice. Of these 458 requests for legal advice:

- 213 were provided telephone advice by the Contact Line.
- 245 were provided telephone advice by a named solicitor.

From these cases, 29 suspects required a personal attendance:

- 6 from Board employed solicitors,
- 8 from PDSO solicitors,
- 9 from duty solicitors, and
- 6 from named solicitors.

More attendances may also have been provided by named solicitors once the details of the calls were passed on to them, but we will have this information in due course. There are still some misunderstandings about how the scheme operates. We will issue a fuller Q & A sheet for solicitors tomorrow.

Ends

Journalists please contact:

Mat Lopez tel. (direct) 0131 240 1887.