

## Support for independent regulation and registration of public sector language specialists



Lord Bernard Hogan-Howe

*“The UK Government has accepted amendments to the proposed ‘Victims’ Code’ intended to set out and protect the rights of victims of crime. As Lord Bellamy said on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024; “This strengthened wording makes it clear that victims are entitled to access interpreting and translation services from qualified professionals. ‘Qualified’ and ‘Professionals’ are the decisive words that the noble Baroness referred to. I hope that I have reassured her that we have heard and considered her arguments carefully and are committed to addressing their intent through the Victims’ Code.” The full text of the debate is available at <https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2024-04-16/debates/5047DA2C-E4B3-422A-B9B9-114A936DF1DA/VictimsAndPrisonersBill>.*

*“In my speech on 31st January 2024, I fully supported this thrust to establish consistency in the engagement with language specialists who deliver the service required when someone does not speak English. This will ensure the criminal justice system achieves and maintains common standards, as well as accurate evidence and precision to establish truth and strengthens protection of the public. ‘Qualified’ and ‘Professional’ are indeed the decisive words and it is good this is established in law.*

*“Where the standard of interpreters and translators is not established to a high and consistent level, there is a risk that the obtaining of evidence is damaged. This matters particularly for the police but also all involved in the criminal justice system. As Lord Bellamy said on 31st January*

2024; *“Obviously, the general objective is fairly self-evident: in the justice system, you must have a high standard of interpreting and translation”.*

*“From my time as Commissioner and Head of London's Metropolitan Police Service I am proud to say we engaged with professional and qualified public service interpreters who had been independently accredited: their qualifications, experience and right to work checked by the voluntary, not-for-profit National Register of Public Service Interpreters ([www.nrpsi.org.uk](http://www.nrpsi.org.uk)). This organisation also manages a most effective complaints and professional conduct process with robust appeals protocols. This is based on a thorough Code of Professional Conduct, which is transparent and effective, and is a major benefit in engaging practitioners through the regulator, treating qualifying practitioners as professionals with their own independent regulatory body.*

*“It is no longer a case of the criminal justice system ‘should’ support regulation and registration through an independent body, but it is time that the criminal justice system ‘must’ engage practitioners through an independent regulatory body. I am delighted to see the launch of the National Register of Public Service Translators ([www.nrpst.org.uk](http://www.nrpst.org.uk)) which is now sitting alongside the National Register of Public Service Interpreters.*

*“The question is now not ‘why should we have an independent regulator for interpreters and translators who are engaged by the criminal justice system’, but ‘why don’t we have an independent regulator for interpreters and translators who are engaged by the criminal justice system’.*

*ENDS: dated 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2023*

Lord Bernard Hogan-Howe joined the South Yorkshire Police in 1979, becoming District Commander of the Doncaster West area, as well as obtaining university qualifications in law and criminology.

In 1997, he transferred to Merseyside Police as Assistant Chief Constable for Community Affairs, moving on to area operations. He then joined the Metropolitan Police as Assistant Commissioner for personnel, before being appointed Chief Constable of Merseyside Police.

After two years as an Inspector of Constabulary, Hogan-Howe was briefly Acting Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police before being appointed Commissioner in September 2011, serving until 2017, when he was created a life peer.

Hogan-Howe was knighted in the 2013 New Year Honours for services to policing.

23<sup>rd</sup> April 2024