Sir Andrew Dilnot CBE
UK Statistics Authority
1 Drummond Gate
London
SW1V 2QQ

29 July 2014

Dear Sir Andrew,

I am writing with regard to a speech yesterday by Rt. Hon Yvette Cooper MP and an associated document published by the Labour party. These contain a number of inaccurate statements about crime:

1.   Labour claim that: 'violent crime rises'. However, the independent Crime Survey of England and Wales found there were 1,327,000 violent crimes in the year to March 2014. This was lower than the 1,666,000 in the year to March 2013. Labour base their claim on a rise in recorded crime in 2013. However, as the Office for National Statistics notes: 'this is thought to reflect improvements in recording and possibly a rise in public reporting' (Labour, The Choice: Crime and Justice, 28 July 2014, link<http://www.labouremail.org.uk/files/uploads/f133d290-acf8-9b24-cdaf-d0168b77bb7b.pdf?utm_source=taomail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12633+test&tmtid=54092-12633-5-19-19>; ONS, Crime in England and Wales, period ending March 2014, Bulletin Tables, Table 5, link<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-328153>; ONS, Crime Statistics, period ending December 2013, 24 April 2014, link<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/crime-stats/crime-statistics/period-ending-december-2013/index.html>).

2.   Yvette Cooper claimed the Government is: 'failing to deal with growing modern crimes. There's been a 25 per cent upsurge in reported online fraud.' However, the Office for National Statistics warned that: 'trends in fraud should be interpreted with caution. It is unclear to what extent there has been a genuine increase in such crimes or whether the move to the centralised recording of such offences has led to improved counting of fraud offences' (Labour Press, 28 July 2014, link<http://press.labour.org.uk/post/93103289509/the-choice-on-police-and-crime-yvette-coopers-speech>; ONS, Crime in England and Wales, Year Ending March 2014, 17 July 2014, link<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_371127.pdf>).

3.   Labour claim that: 'the number of cautions, proceedings and convictions' for violence against the person are falling. Again, this claim is based on a comparison between 2012 and 2013. The statistics published by the Home Office for 2013/14 show an increase in crimes of violence against the person resulting in a charge or summons (Labour, The Choice: Crime and Justice, 28 July 2014, link<http://www.labouremail.org.uk/files/uploads/f133d290-acf8-9b24-cdaf-d0168b77bb7b.pdf?utm_source=taomail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12633+test&tmtid=54092-12633-5-19-19>; Home Office, Crime Outcomes in England and Wales 2013/14, 17 July 2014, link<https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/331597/hosb0114.pdf.pdf>).

4. Labour use figures on domestic violence to suggest that prosecutions and convictions for domestic violence are falling. However, these do not include figures for 2013/14. These show that the volume of domestic violence referrals from the police rose to 103,569 in 2013-14, the highest level ever. 2013/14 also saw the lowest ever level of discontinued cases for domestic violence cases (Labour, *The Choice: Crime and Justice*, 28 July 2014, (www.labouremail.org.uk/files/uploads/f133d290-acf8-9b24-cdaf-d0168b77bb7b.pdf?utm_source=taomail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12633+test&tmtid=54092-12633-5-19-19); CPS, *Violence against Women and Girls Crime Report 2013-4*, July 2014, (www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/cps_vawg_report_2014.pdf)).

Crime is falling and England and Wales are safer than they have been for decades. It is irresponsible for the Labour Party to confuse improved recording of crime with rises in crime and to use out of date figures.

I would be grateful if you could clarify whether these statements are accurate.

With best wishes,

Chris Kelly

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