

**Vera Baird QC MP**

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Desmond Hudson  
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16 January 2007

Dear Mr Hudson

**Means testing**

Thank you for your letter of 5 January requesting a review of the means testing scheme.

A full review of implementation and first six months operation of the scheme was always planned. I can confirm this will begin in May 2007, by which time we should have the necessary data to evaluate the operation of the first six months.

The review will consist of a thorough evaluation of the operation of the existing scheme and its impact on the wider CJS, which would be likely to cover most of the issues you raise. It will not be a review of the policy itself or an assessment of alternatives to the current scheme.

The review process will of course involve consultation with the Law Society and other representative bodies, as well as other CJS stakeholders. I can also confirm that the findings of the review will be published.

I welcome your offer to play a full part in the review process, and my official will be in touch in due course.

Yours sincerely,

