

[Applicant's name and address]

PCCS/00339/09

9 November 2011

Dear [Applicant's name],

### **Complaint about Strathclyde Police**

I refer to your application to my office regarding your complaint about Strathclyde Police. I write to inform you of my decision in relation to your case.

My office has considered the correspondence you have sent in relation to your complaints and has carefully examined the files sent by Strathclyde Police. Based on the information provided, I note that you have complained to Strathclyde Police about the volume and frequency of emergency vehicle sirens near your home. You claim that these sirens have caused you distress and headaches.

I have viewed the response you received from Chief Inspector A on 9 June 2011. In this letter you were advised as follows:

*"Firstly, I would like to express my sincere regret that the use of sirens by a variety of emergency service vehicles passing your home is causing you such a disturbance. However as has been explained by Sergeant [B], all three emergency services (police, fire and ambulance) only use their sirens in the event of an emergency and for the minimum amount of time.*

*For the police this could be when someone's life is in danger or when there is a serious crime ongoing. All of the police vehicles are fitted with sirens that emit between 115 dBA and 123 dBA, this complies with the Health and Safety standards and decreases the further you are away from the vehicles. I understand that the reason for using these sirens in terms of safety to the public and all road users has been explained to you and that you are satisfied with the explanation given by Sergeant [B].*

*I apologise once again that you felt the need to contact us in relation to this matter and reassure you that officers only use their sirens in the event of a genuine emergency or to signal a vehicle to stop. Sergeant [B] has informed me that you fully accept the explanation given by him and are supportive of our ongoing actions and that in this respect your complaint has been successfully resolved."*

I am satisfied that Strathclyde Police has provided you with a reasonable response to your complaint and I do not believe there is anything I would be able to add to what you have already been told.

However, I note that following the discussion of your complaint with Sergeant B on 8 June 2011, there is no record of a signed notebook entry confirming that your complaint had been resolved. This is something I would expect to have been done and I will therefore be raising the matter with Strathclyde Police in order that they may learn from this when dealing with complaints in the future.

I note from your correspondence with my office that you have requested financial compensation for the distress and disturbance the sirens have caused. The payment of compensation is ultimately a matter for the civil courts and I have no power to order that such a payment is made. If you wish to pursue compensation I suggest that you seek legal advice in this connection.

In accordance with my office's procedures, a copy of this letter will be published, in fully anonymised form, on my office's website. This will occur on 12 November 2011.

My involvement in your case is now at an end.

Yours sincerely

**JOHN MCNEILL**  
**Commissioner**