

**REPLY BY THE PRESIDENT OF
THE COMMITTEE FOR HOME AFFAIRS
TO QUESTIONS ASKED PURSUANT TO RULE 14 OF THE
RULES OF PROCEDURE BY DEPUTY J MERRETT**

On the 7th May I sent the Civil Contingencies Authority various questions primarily because I did not feel fully informed with regards to the necessity of the continuation of the emergency regulations in light of the amazing results that our community has achieved with flattening, if not squashing the amount of positive coronavirus cases in our community.

What I was trying to get assurances on were if these regulations remain proportionate to the emergency. These questions were not answered and I repeated many of the questions in the debate that began on the 20th May but they remain unanswered.

I believe we need to understand the wider effects of lockdown on our community's health and wellbeing. As such we need to know what community needs government has identified and resourced to support our exit from lock down, but also what areas of our community we may need to support should a second or third wave of the coronavirus hit our community or if we ever face such pandemics again.

In the media conference on the 5th May the Head of Bailiwick Law Enforcement (BLE) stated that there had been an increase in domestic incidents of 30/40% but that that there is enough resource to help.

- 1. Does "enough resource" refer to resources within BLE to enable them to manage reports of domestic incidents, or does it refer to other kinds of resources (such as practical support for people experiencing domestic violence and abuse)?**

In terms of Bailiwick Law Enforcement resources, BLE currently have the capacity to provide the initial response and to investigate associated crimes, despite the increased level of domestic incidents being reported.

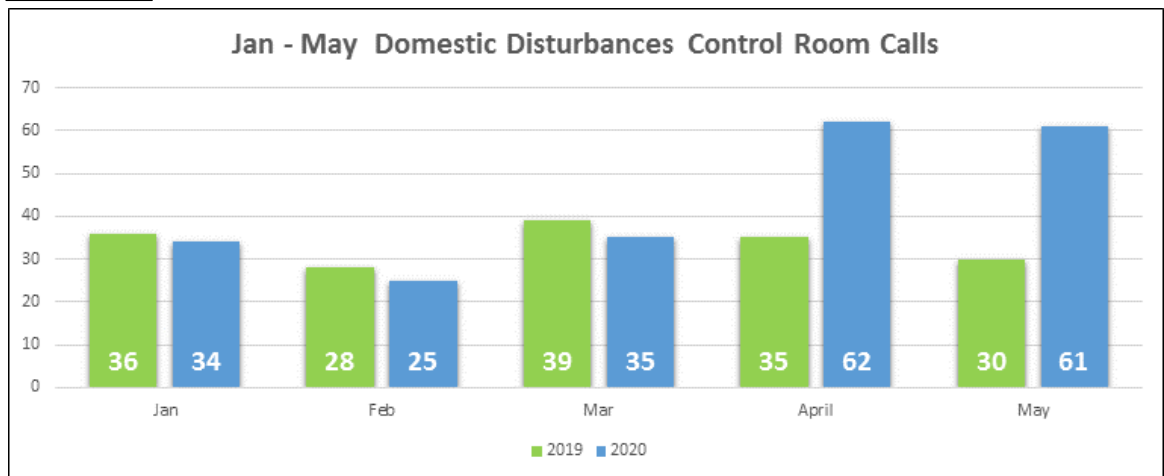
In line with College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice, which advises that Forces should have a dedicated team with specialist knowledge within the Public Protection Unit, BLE are taking steps to look at putting in place a Domestic Violence Advisor to be responsible for developing and enhancing sustainable domestic abuse service provision across Law Enforcement. The opportunity to progress this is now more difficult due to the recruitment freeze across public services however the Head of Law Enforcement is looking into alternative methods to resource this area.

- 2. What are the number of reported domestic incidents by month from January to May 2020, compared to the same time period between January to May in 2019?**

Chart 1 shows the total number of reported domestic incidents by month from January to May 2019 and January to May 2020. As a total, for the period in 2019 there were 168 domestic incidents and 217 for the same period in 2020 – a total increase of 29%.

If we look at the period March – May 2020 in isolation, (compared to the same period in 2019), the increase is greater at 51%

Chart 1



3. What percentage of the increase in domestic incidents are in relation to domestic abuse?

It would be reasonable to say that 100% of reported 'domestic incidents' are domestic abuse related. Child abuse incidents are not included as domestic incidents but are recorded separately.

Chart 2 shows the number of domestic assaults. The percentage figure shows what percentage of the total number of domestic incidents (provided at Chart 1) these accounted for.

In the period January – May 2019, there were 124 domestic assaults which accounted for 74% of all reported domestic incidents.

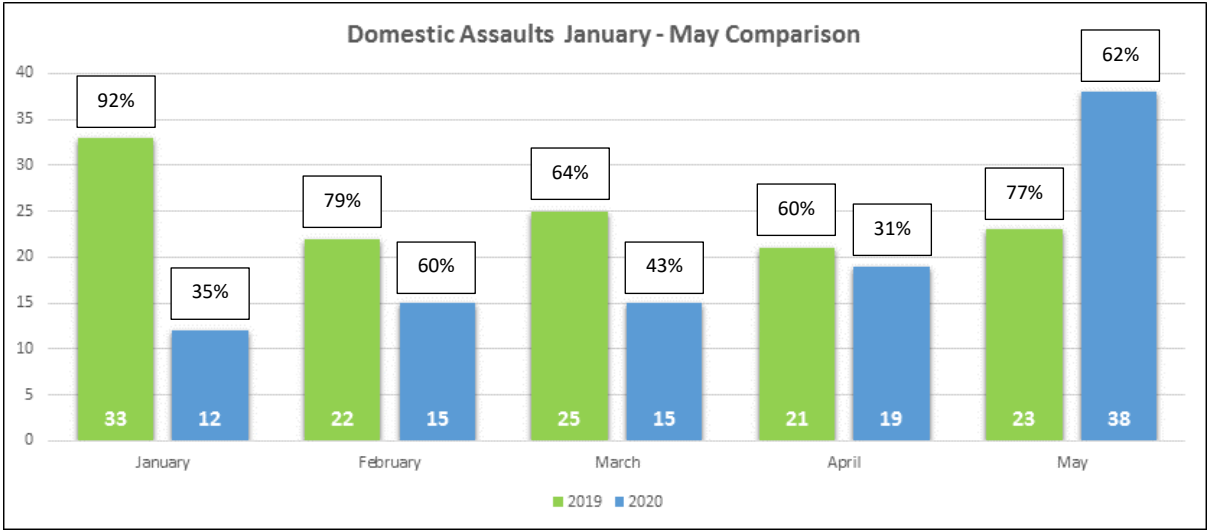
In the period January – May 2020 there were 99 domestic assaults which accounted for 46% of all reported domestic incidents.

Data from Chart 1 and Chart 2¹ shows that in the period whilst there has been an increase in domestic incidents, fewer of these are classified as recorded domestic assaults under the formal counting rules.

¹ The calls in Chart 1 are the total number of calls – classified as domestic disturbances. Those total calls include those listed in Chart 2 as domestic assaults.

Chart 2 is a subset of the total calls listed at Chart 1 and shows the percentage of the total at Chart 1 that is made up by domestic the assaults.

Chart 2



4. What additional resource has the Committee for Home Affairs requested or allocated to support for the members of our community who have been involved in the increases in domestic incidents?

Home Affairs in partnership with Employment and Social Security (“ESS”) are supporting the funding of additional emergency refuge provision as necessary during the period of lockdown. The demand for this may continue as we emerge out of lockdown as it is likely that the reporting of domestic incidents will rise as victims have more freedom to seek help. At this stage funding for the additional provision has been absorbed within existing budgets and individuals requiring emergency accommodation are generally able to contribute to this cost through Income Support benefits. If the demand for additional accommodation persists it will likely be necessary for the Policy and Resources Committee to release funding for this essential need.

5. If there has been a rise in domestic abuse, has there been a rise in demand for services that support these members of our community beyond the initial interaction with BLE? For example, has any additional resource been ring fenced or given by the States to support any of the organisations which support members of our community with regards to domestic abuse? If so, how much?

There has been a rise in domestic abuse cases and Safer LBG have seen significant increases in referrals throughout April and May this year compared with the same period last year. The outbreak of Coronavirus, in itself has not caused an increase in domestic abuse, but the unique circumstances and stresses this created in families, which has made more victims come forward and may have also brought some cases to the attention of services that were previously going unaddressed.

At the commencement of lockdown Safer alerted Home Affairs to the increased pressure on the Women’s Refuge and contingency plans were put in place for overspill accommodation, working in close liaison with ESS. The main cost of the

provision of the Refuge is met by a payment to Safer based on the tendered contract, however it is ESS that provides income support to individuals who find themselves in need of emergency accommodation.

Use of refuge emergency accommodation increased from 25 adult residents in the period 1 March to 31st May 2019, to 38 adult residents in the same period during 2020 (an 83% increase).

In March to May 2019, there were 53 referrals to the refuge outreach service. For the same period in 2020 there were 99 referrals (an increase of 87%). When looking at the Outreach Service's total caseload during this same period over the two years – this increased by 107%, from 100 clients being supported in 2019, to 207 in 2020.

The Independent Domestic Violence Advisory (IDVA) Service dealing with high risk cases also saw new referrals increase from 37 to 45 in the March to May period 2019 compared to March to May 2020 (a 22% increase). , The service expects to see much greater rises in the coming months as referrals to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) have already risen considerably in the last fortnight since some elements of lockdown have relaxed.

The Sarnia Programme which is a pilot group work programme for domestic abuse perpetrators, was temporarily paused in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 outbreak. At this time programme work was placed on hold, and resources were switched to maintaining safety with clients during the lockdown period, a period of time that had the potential to significantly increase risk in relation to Sarnia Programme perpetrators. This interruption to work was unavoidable, as treatment work is not safe to complete remotely without controls being available regarding environment, confidentiality, and victim accessibility.

Group work is planned to recommence with clients from phase 4 at the beginning of June, when face to face appointments will start again. Caseloads for this pilot are currently being capped at 14 clients at any one time, but it is recognised that demand for this services is much higher.

Other than the funding provided for additional emergency refuge accommodation, there are no additional funds currently available within the Home Affairs budget to provide additional resources for these specialist services. The Committee for Home Affairs remains on target to present to the States this year the Domestic Abuse Strategy update report at which point it will be for the States to decide whether it considers it appropriate to provide additional funding for some of these services in light of the growing demand.

I caveat my next series of questions by stating that I do not know how the data was collated or verified, but it was reported at the beginning of May that 9% of England's community were not complying with their regulations and that 44% were struggling to abide by them, with the remainder being able to cope.

1. Do BLE have any stats for our community in regards to the % that are not complying with the emergency powers? Can these statistics be provided on a month-by-month basis by each month that such powers have been in place?

Some statistics on formal Law Enforcement activity have been collected in relation to community compliance with emergency powers. In line with National Police Chiefs Council guidance, together with the guidance provided by HM Procurer concerning proportionality and necessity, the Head of Law Enforcement instructed officers across BLE to adopt the '4 E's strategy' which is to: Engage, Educate, Encourage and Enforce. Using these principles, enforcement action is the final option. The majority of actions, focusing on the first three of the four E's appears to have been the appropriate strategy. The majority of public interaction has involved informal guidance being provided by officers – which has not been recorded.

Following the first set of emergency powers, there was a high profile licensing matter where a premises failed to comply with the emergency powers. This case went to court and resulted in the conviction of an individual. In addition on 4th June 2020 a case was heard before the Magistrates Court for breaching isolation regulations. Throughout the period where the emergency powers have been in place, a number of investigations have been carried out on potential breaches and words of advice and final warnings have been issued to a number of individuals:

Table showing number of Covid-19 related occurrences (as at 04.06.20):

Covid-19 Informal Guidance	Not recorded
Covid-19 Formal Words of Advice	59
Covid-19 Final Warning	6
Covid-19 Reported for prosecution	5

2. How many individual members of community have had to be detained by BLE in their homes or in any other place under the emergency powers?

BLE have detained one individual in Police custody under the emergency powers for persistent breaches of a 14-day isolation notice.

3. How many times has BLE needed to enforce measures that they have been given under the emergency powers?

In terms of advice provided by BLE officers to members of the public in line with the '4 E's strategy' (which is to: Engage, Educate, Encourage and Enforce), BLE have worked co-operatively with the community focusing on the first three of the four E's. In most cases this type of engagement is not been formally recorded.

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4. How many times has the BLE used their powers to detain a member of our community with a determining factor being the person's age?

BLE has not detained any member of the community with a determining factor being the person's age.

BLE have given words of advice to parents and young people as well as elderly persons required to shield but have not used emergency powers in this way.