

Baroness Stern published her review into how rape complaints are handled by public authorities on Monday 15 March 2010.

The Government has also published an interim response to her review, which welcomes the review and accepts the direction it sets. There will be a fuller response to Baroness Stern's review and recommendations later in the year.

In response to The Stern Review, Vera Baird, Solicitor General, said:

"I am glad that Baroness Stern recognises the significant progress made since 1997. We will carefully consider all her recommendations and have given a preliminary, very positive, response to them today. I am very grateful to her for such a comprehensive and insightful report.

"However, I do have reservations about ceasing to refer to the widely used six per cent figure, which reflects the percentage of reports that produce a conviction. Although we don't count any other offence in this way, it is particularly meaningful as it reflects the high number of rape victims who drop out before they get to court, and we really need to focus on that group, as Baroness Stern herself says.

"We do, though, need to make more of the fact that when cases get to court the conviction rate is 58 per cent and that this has increased by more than half since 1997. This is largely because of the various steps we have taken to get victims to feel more confident that they will be supported. As Baroness Stern says, the Independent Sexual Violence Advisers play a significant role and these victims should feel more confident than ever about coming forward in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously and treated with dignity and respect.

"The importance of the significant increase in conviction rates is that it sends a signal out to rapists that they won't get away with it, these days."

Both reports are available on the GEO website: [The Stern Review](#) and [Interim Government Response](#)