

The Rt Hon The Baroness Scotland QC



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Lord Jones
House of Lords
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29th January 2010

Dear Barry

In the debate of 26 January on the Criminal Justice Act 2003 (Mandatory Life Sentence: Determination of Minimum Term) Order 2010, I promised to write to you about the statistics for knife crime.

You asked whether there are figures available regarding the level of knife crime, how many people over the age of 21 committed such crimes, as well as those in the age brackets 18 to 20 and 12 to 18. The Ministry of Justice publishes quarterly knife crime statistics and these can be found on its website using the link <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/knife-crime-sentencing.htm>. National sentencing statistics for 2008 have just been published and can also be found on the website using the link <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/sentencingannual.htm>. The documents will be available through the Library of the House.

As I said in the debate, Schedule 21 to the Criminal Justice Act 2003, currently provides for three starting points for those offenders aged over 21 – a whole life term, 30 years and 15 years. A court may adopt a 30 year or 15 year starting point for an offender who is aged 18, 19 or 20 years old. There is a separate starting point of 12 years (for all murders) for offenders aged under 18 at the time the offence was committed. The new 25 year starting point for murder with a weapon taken to the scene with the intention of use and used in the commission of the murder will apply to those aged 18 and over at the time of the offence.

A copy of this letter has been deposited in the Library of the House.

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