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**To:** Jennifer Bartley <[JenniferBartley@psplaw.co.uk](mailto:JenniferBartley@psplaw.co.uk)>

**Cc:** Greg Powell <[GregPowell@psplaw.co.uk](mailto:GregPowell@psplaw.co.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: FAO Chief Clerks

Dear Greg,

This very subject was the subject of quite a lot of discussion at the weekly “Cross CJS Silver Command” which has representatives from the Police, CPS, Prisons, Courts (both Crown and Magistrates) and the defence community. The defence community is represented by the President of the London Criminal Courts Solicitors' Association, Kerry Hudson. Their contact details can be found on their website - <https://www.lccsa.org.uk>. It's quite a good route to feed in concerns and get responses quickly and verbally I am able to provide more of a flavour of what progress is being made. I should have mentioned this in my reply – apologies for missing it out.

I am expecting to receive some updated and more satisfactory guidance about how our individual court risk assessments can be shared. I have shared with you the current proposal from HMCTS however this is subject to change. It is not within my authority to change this guidance.

On the capacity of courthouses - I agree that we need to shift our paradigm. In developing our listing framework we are also developing a public (and staff) side capacity model so that we do not overload public areas. So where in the past listing capacity was determined by courtroom numbers – that, for the time being, is no longer the case. Although listing is a judicial decision I am feeding this advice on capacity to the Magistrates Court Hearing Working Group (MCHWG) for London (the LCJ made a direction to set these up last week). The outcome of this will be fed back to the weekly Cross CJS Silver Command.

On ventilation systems, the national technical guidance team has reviewed all existing literature and liaised with Public Health England. Their statement is *Public health advice is that there is a very low risk of the transmission of covid-19 through air handling systems, as the virus is not airborne. Air conditioning and air handling units are a key part of a buildings infrastructure and should continue to be used to ensure clean fresh air is available in our buildings.* Nevertheless, I have asked my ops managers to familiarise themselves with their building's ventilation system but I must manage the expectation that there will be much in the way of action to alter the systems at the moment. As you might imagine, my capacity is fairly limited in my ability to respond to all questions about the courts from all users but I will attempt to provide as much information as I can. The mechanism through LCCSA is one we have made a lot of use over the last couple of months – the LCCSA tell me it works well as a mechanism to get to the defence community - but I am sure they would welcome any suggestions to improve their reach.

Kind regards,

Will

**Will Breame**

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