

National Black Police Association

Submission

Youth Select Committee Inquiry into Racism and Religious Discrimination

1. Introduction

1.1 The National Black Police Association (NBPA) is grateful to the Committee for the opportunity to be able to present its concerns prior to the oral hearing into racism and religious discrimination which is scheduled to take place in July 2016. This submission outlines the responses of the NBPA on the issues as identified by the Committee, as set out in its helpful Terms of Reference.

2. Background

2.1 The aim of the NBPA is to promote good race relations and equality of opportunity within the police services of the United Kingdom and the wider community. Our objectives are to:

- Advise, consult and intervene on matters of racism nationally, which have negative effects on communities.
- Work towards improving relationships between the police and Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities within the United Kingdom.
- Influence the direction of policies nationally and in line with equality issues and anti discrimination.
- Work towards improving the recruitment, retention and progression of officers and police staff members within the Police Service

3. Issues

3.1 For ease of understanding, this submission is organised thematically; awareness and education, services and prevention. However, attention is **only** focused on those issues for which the NBPA is directly involved.

4. Awareness and Understanding

4.1 The most current official statistics¹ on the prevalence of Hate crime in the area of race and religion reveal that in the period 2014/15, of the 52,528 hate crimes: 42,930 (82%) were race hate crimes and 3,254 (6%) were religion hate crimes. (These figures do not include incidents reported to the British Transport Police). The statistics also reveal that race hate crime was the, *'most commonly recorded strand of hate crime in all 44 police forces. For 41 forces, religious hate crime was either the third or fourth most commonly recorded strand* (Home Office 2015:7).

4.2 There has been an increase in the number of hate crimes recorded by the Police from the periods 2011/2012 to 2014/15².

¹ Home Office (2015) Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2014/15 Statistical Bulletin 05/15 13th October 2015

² Police Recorded Crime (Home Office)

Hate crime Strand	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	% change 2013/14 to 2014/15
Race	35,944	35,845	37,466	42,930	15
Religion	1,618	1,572	2,269	3,254	43

4.3 ‘Racist incidents’ is the term used to describe, ‘any incident, including any crime, which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person’s race or perceived race’ (Home Office 2015:3).

4.4 The NBPA adopts the definitions of racism and discrimination on the basis of religion or belief on those developed by the Independent Police Complaints Commission³ in their published guidance on ‘handling allegations of discrimination’.

4.5 ‘Racism is a much debated term: In the context of complaints of race discrimination it includes any discrimination relating to race, ethnicity, or nationality’ (IPCC 2015:26).

4.6 ‘Religious discrimination is discrimination relating to a person’s philosophical or religious belief. You can also be discriminated against for holding no such belief. Religious discrimination often interests with racism. For example, Islamophobia or anti-Semitism could be either an expression of racism or religious discrimination or both’ (IPCC 2015:30).

4.7 As an organization, the NBPA is concerned about the deliberate association of BAME communities with social problems specifically relating to crime, lack of housing and education provision. We feel that this is fuelling racial and religious tension and is deeply unhelpful. We believe, this is linked to a rise in UK right wing extremist groups such as, English Defence League, Britain First and UK Pegida.

4.8 The NBPA invites the Committee to view the coverage of the London Mayoral Election⁴ and the current EU Referendum debate⁵. The NBPA is concerned that there has been no consistent and sustained counter to these attacks, especially at a political level.

4.9 The NBPA is concerned around the worrying demonization of Islam and Muslims through a direct association of Muslims/Islam with Terrorism. This is directly contributing to Muslims being perceived and treated as a suspect community. The NBPA believes that this situation has echoes of the treatment of the Irish community in the 1970s -1990s (Hickman et al 2012⁶; Runnymede Trust 1997⁷). Whilst this was initially, fuelled by right wing extremists at both national and international level in the aftermath of the September 11th 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre. It has now achieved mainstream status as exemplified in the current American Presidential elections and the London Mayoral elections.

³ Independent Police Complaints Commission (2015) IPCC guidelines for handling allegations of discrimination.

⁴ ‘Its Ugly and dangerous: the inside story of the battle to be London Mayor’, Simon Hattenstone, Saturday 30th April 2016, The Guardian.

⁵ ‘Vote leave embroiled in a race row over Turkey security threat claims’. Daniel Boffey and Toby Helm. Sunday 22nd May 2016, The Guardian.

⁶ Hickman, M.J., Thomas, L., Nickels, H.C. and Silvestri, S. (2012) Social Cohesion and the notion of ‘suspect communities’: a study of the experiences and impacts of being ‘suspect’ for Irish communities and Muslim communities in Britain. Critical Studies in Terrorism, Vol.5, No.1, May 2012.

⁷ Runnymede Trust (1997) Islamophobia a challenge for us all.

4.10 The NBPA believes that the introduction of the duty in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) as detailed through the revised *Prevent* duty guidance⁸ will further exacerbate the culture of fear, mistrust and suspicion of Muslims and have a potentially devastating effect on young people. The NBPA agrees with the viewpoint set out by Baroness Professor Ruth Lister⁹ et al who assert that *Prevent* ‘reinforces an ‘us’ and ‘them’ view of the world, divides communities, and sows mistrust of Muslims’. As such the NBPA endorses the view of David Anderson QC¹⁰ regarding an independent review of the *Prevent* Strategy¹¹.

4.11 Despite numerous public inquiries into race in policing; Scarman¹² (1981) Macpherson¹³ (1999), HMIC¹⁴ (2001) HMIC¹⁵ (2003) Race and Faith Inquiry Report, Metropolitan Police Authority¹⁶ (2010). Racism is still an issue within the Police Service.

4.12 The 2012 survey into the state of the UK police survey by the Independent Police Commission of 14,000 respondents; one in ten of all serving officers and up to the rank of Chief Superintendent¹⁷. Identified the extent of bullying and harassment of BME police officers.

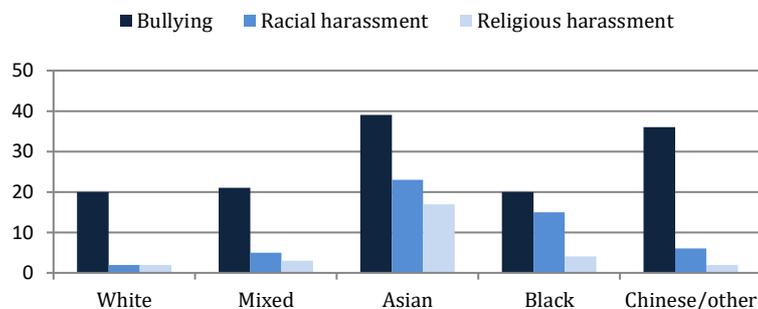


Figure 1. Percentage reporting being bullied ‘all’ or most of the time

4.13 We make the Committee aware of the concerns made by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary in its PEEL: Police Legitimacy Report 2015: a national overview;

HMIC is deeply concerned that there may be bias in the way that those from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background are treated, following a public complaint or an internal allegation of misconduct. We also have some evidence to support our earlier inspection findings that, following a complaint or allegation against a BAME officer or staff

⁸ HM Government (16 July 2015) Revised *Prevent* Duty Guidance for England and Wales: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales in the duty in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

⁹ ‘*Prevent will have a chilling effect on open debate, free speech and political dissent*’, The Independent Friday 10th July 2015.

¹⁰ Supplementary written evidence submitted by David Anderson Q.C. (Independent reviewer of Terrorism Legislation)

¹² Scarman, Lord (1981) *The Brixton Disorders 10-12 April 1981*. Report of an Inquiry by the Rt.Hon. The Lord Scarman, OBE. London: HMSO

¹³ MacPherson of Cluny, Sir William (1999) *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: Report of an Inquiry by Sir William MacPherson of Cluny*. London: The Stationery Office.

¹⁴ Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (2001) *Winning the Race Policing Plural Communities*

¹⁵ Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (2003) *Diversity Matters*

¹⁶ Metropolitan Police Authority (July 2010) *Race and Faith Inquiry Report*

¹⁷ Source: Bradford, B., Brown, J., and Schuster, I. (2012) *Results of a survey on the state of the Police Service in England and Wales*. Independent Police Commission

member, a pattern of behaviour seems to take place that makes it more likely for that complaint or allegation to be considered by the professional standards department. We are extremely disappointed that, given the sensitivity and importance of this issue, forces have not done more to have robust and consistent processes in place for gathering and analysing data to assess for themselves whether all complaints or allegations against officers and staff are dealt with fairly and consistently¹⁸.

4.14 The NBPA refers the Committee to the recent Home Affairs Select Committee (HASC) Inquiry into Diversity in Policing (HC27). Whilst the NBPA welcomes the HASCs recommendations. We are concerned that they will **not** address stubborn issues at the heart of race inequality and policing. **As they are not underpinned by a supportive public policy discourse around anti racism/ race equality. A supportive public policy discourse, which champions race equality and anti racism is much needed**

4.15 Fundamentally, the omission of the words, race, racism, and the HASCs inability to acknowledge the continued existence of institutional racism within policing is concerning. However, this is not new, and is part of the pattern of marginalisation and backlash against race and racism in favour of the more conciliatory terminology of diversity and unconscious bias.

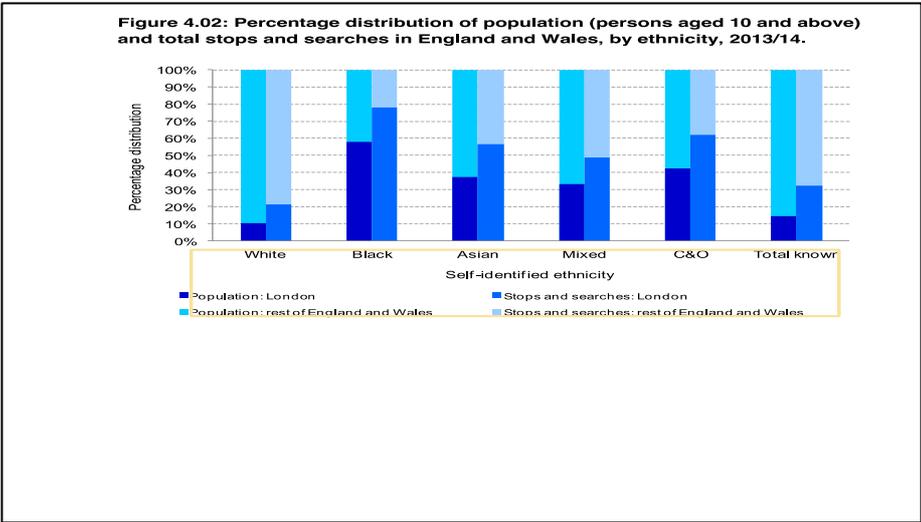
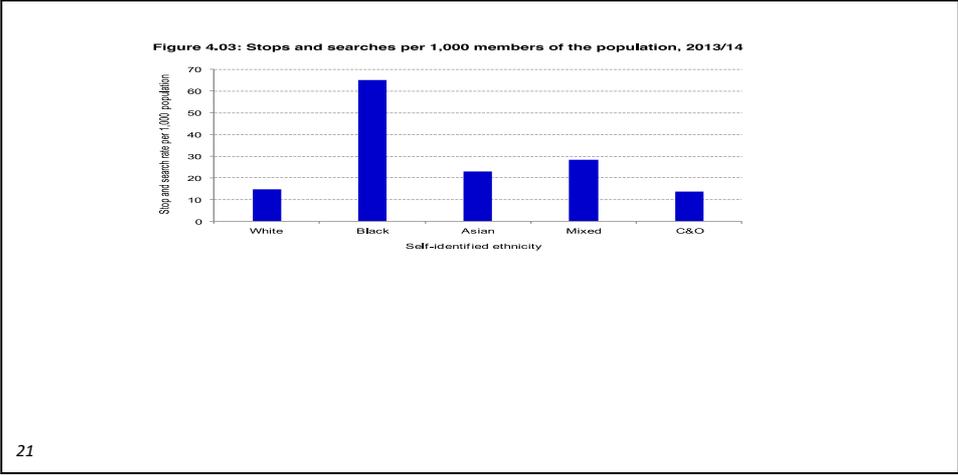
4.16 Stop and Search has historically been a contentious issue for BAME communities. The Committee is referred to the Section 95 Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2014¹⁹ which helpfully articulates the following salient points;

“The overall ethnicity trends for stops and searches were heavily influenced by stops and searches conducted in London, due to London’s ethnic composition compared with the rest of England and Wales. According to the 2011 census, over half of the Black ethnic population in England and Wales reside in London, compared with only a tenth of the White population. Also, in 2013/14 London accounted for a third of all stops and searches conducted in England and Wales, despite having only 14% of the population. The higher proportion of stops and searches in London is also apparent for each individual ethnic group. For each, the proportion of stops and searches carried out in London was higher than the proportion of the group resident in London. If the stop and search data is combined with population data to account for the differences in ethnic populations across England and Wales, it shows that there was a higher probability of being stopped and searched for the Black ethnic group relative to all others. The Black stop and search rate was four and a half times higher relative to the White ethnic group. The Mixed ethnic group were twice as likely to be stopped and searched relative to the White ethnic group, while the Asian group were one and a half times more likely. The Chinese and Other (C&O) ethnic group were just as likely to be stopped and searched as the White group”²⁰.

¹⁸ HMIC (February 2016) PEEL: Police legitimacy. A national overview. pp7.

¹⁹ Ministry of Justice (26 November 2015) Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2014 A Ministry of Justice Publication under Section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991.

²⁰ Ministry of Justice (26 November 2015) Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2014 A Ministry of Justice Publication under Section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 pp29-30



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²¹ Ministry of Justice (26 November 2015) Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2014 A Ministry of Justice Publication under Section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 pp30

²² Ministry of Justice (26 November 2015) Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2014 A Ministry of Justice Publication under Section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 pp29

- 4.17 Concerns about Stop and Search are being tackled by the introduction of the Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme, which was introduced on 26 August 2014 by the Home Secretary.
- 4.18 The scheme is designed to contribute to a significant reduction in the overall use of stop and search, deliver better and more intelligence-led stop and search, and improve stop-to-arrest ratios. It will also provide the public with further information on the outcome of searches²³.
- 4.19 The NBPA welcomes the spirit of the commitment given by the Home Secretary to tackle discrimination stemming from Stop and Search. She articulated her concerns during her address to the NBPA AGM and Conference on 22nd October 2015²⁴;
- 4.20 Through our youth engagement activity; VOYAGE (voices of youth and genuine empowerment) we have gained valuable insight into the concerns of young people around policing and racism, key findings of which are as follows;
- Dogs were used by young people to arm themselves against Police and Peers (as dogs were used against them in both scenarios);
 - In some cases young people would ask a White friend to call the Police so they can be taken more seriously; and
 - Systematic failings to engage with young people have resulted in crimes being unreported, and the perpetrators having a sense of power within the community.

5. Services

- 5.1 As part of our work, the NBPA engages with voluntary and statutory organisations and Government to push forward issues of equality, fairness and social inclusion. A particular feature of our work is through outreach with young people, whether it be through visiting schools as part of citizenship classes; or informing young people about their rights in the area of stop and search.
- 5.2 The Metropolitan Black Police Association was instrumental in developing VOYAGE, (part of the NBPA's charitable trust –BPACT) a social justice charity which aims to empower marginalised Black young people and provide them with the self-awareness and motivation to transform themselves and their communities. VOYAGE's mission is to encourage and assist young people to bridge the gap between their schools, communities and criminal justice system whilst supporting young people to sustain successful partnerships and meaningful relationships.
- 5.3 Through this work, we believe we have improved the level of understanding around issues as stop and search and how to report crime for those involved in the initiative. Feedback from participants on the programme to the NBPA conference in October 2014 revealed the following;
- "I feel I could handle a stop and search situation as I know my rights and know how a Stop and Search should be conducted."
 - "I now understand why Stop and Search is necessary as Police need to tackle crime on our streets."

²³ Home Office (2014) Best use of stop and search scheme.

²⁴ Home Secretary, Rt. Hon Theresa May, Speech to the National Black Police Association Conference, Birmingham 22nd October 2015.

- "I feel that officers are human and don't feel under threat as many young people feel."
- "I now understand and feel confident to report crime, if I had to do so."
- "I have a better understanding of how and why there is the need to Police."

6. Prevention

6.1 Youth engagement initiatives such as VOYAGE have demonstrated their effectiveness in creating powerful BAME young leaders who have been equipped with the skills, knowledge and capacity to create changes in attitudes of young Londoners. It is important that initiatives such as VOYAGE are supported as they hold the key to effective engagement with young people especially in the area of policing and criminal justice.

7. Conclusion

7.1 We believe that more work should be done to promote good race relations to understand and address the issues faced by BAME communities, police officers and staff. This requires an honest, proactive and mature approach, which is underpinned by the analysis of data and the genuine and active engagement and involvement of BAME communities, staff and staff support networks like the NBPA. The development of meaningful interventions which contribute to understanding, identifying and addressing racial disproportionality in the police is the key to delivering 'one nation' policing.

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