Winning the Race

Embracing Diversity
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Foreword

The commitment of the police service to community and race relations (CRR) is fundamental to securing and nurturing the doctrine of policing by consent as the cornerstone of policing style in England and Wales. My belief, and that of HM Inspectors, that CRR should be at the core of strategic police thinking and operational action has led to over four years of intense inspectorate activity.

Winning the Race Revisited in 1999, the follow-up to the original thematic in 1997, reported that the Service had been less than vigorous in addressing the recommendations and guidance of the earlier Inspection. It was disappointing to find the Service failing to maximise the opportunities that Winning the Race had presented. The lack of activity was all the more surprising given the evidence offered to The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and the attendant publicity reported during the fieldwork phase of the Revisit Inspection.

Such is the importance of sound CRR to contemporary and future policing that this third Inspection was announced in Winning the Race Revisited. The concentration of inspection effort in a relatively short space of time on a single, though multi-faceted, topic is unique in the history of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC). As opposed to the conventional thematic approach of concentrating on a representative sample of focus, every one of the 43 forces in England and Wales was visited and inspected.

It is at last reassuring that the Service has now responded to the wake-up call of the previous theamics and the imperatives for action of The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report. For the most part chief constables individually and collectively have seized the issue and faced its organisational ramifications. Without their continuing and visible leadership ongoing achievement will be limited. Whilst providing evidence of tangible progress that suggests grounds for optimism, at the same time the report is ruthless in exposing real and potential frailties so that corrective action can be taken.

There is an underlying will, across the Service, to make policing inclusive of the policing needs of everyone, and for the Service itself to demonstrate inclusivity by being more representative of the richness of diversity.

To help the Service maintain the momentum HMIC will include CRR in its sophisticated risk assessment process that will determine the focus of inspections of individual forces. I have had the privilege of appointing two non-police Assistant Inspectors of Constabulary, both from visible ethnic minorities, who will have a key role in, alongside HMs, ensuring the Service both consolidates progress and continues to improve. Their expertise and experience will be vital to HMIC and I have offered their personal assistance to every chief constable. Inspection is but one limb of the body of help HMIC places at the Service's dispersal.

The report of the Inquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence is proving a catalyst for change. The synergy of the observations and recommendations of that Inquiry with our earlier theamics was compelling. Whilst HMIC has played its part in indicating to the Service that it was off course, improved service delivery to those who are different from the
majority in colour or lifestyle, should be one of many testaments to a young man whose potential was denied to the wider society by racist thugs.

It is a key leadership responsibility of chief constables to keep CRR at the forefront of their individual and collective agendas. It is their duty to ensure the relentless pursuit of continuous improvement. Government, police authorities, HMIC and, most importantly, communities themselves will be vigilant to ensure that there is both the required effort and commensurate improvement. The furtherance of policing with the consent of all will be the necessary milestone of tangible progress.

I am grateful to Chief Constables, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service and the Director of National Police Training for facilitating the scrutiny of their organisations. The inspection team and I express our thanks for the time, frankness and assistance of the many police staff and community representatives who contributed to the Inspection.

Sir David J O’Dowd CBE QPM
HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary
Acknowledgements

This second follow-up Inspection was led by HM Inspector of Constabulary, Mr Dan Crompton CBE QPM CIMgt. He offers his thanks and sincere appreciation to all Chief Constables in England and Wales, including the Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police Service, the City of London Police, and the Acting Director of National Police Training (NPT) for their assistance during this Inspection. This extends to the liaison staff in each of the 43 forces visited and those interviewed or who actively took part in focus groups.

HM Inspector extends his thanks to individual members of the public and to the community groups who contributed to the Inspection by attending meetings and providing an invaluable external perspective on the crucial issues which were raised. These thanks are also extended to the members of a number of police authorities who provided additional insight for the Inspection Team.

HM Inspector for Police Training, Mr Robin Field-Smith MBE, MA, FCIPD, FIMgt, provided support and advice to the Team on the inspection of community and race relations (CRR) training. The contribution made by Mr Field-Smith and his staff was both welcome and valuable in ensuring a corporate approach by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) on this important topic.

HM Inspector warmly acknowledges the support and commitment of the Inspection Team itself. This team comprised a non-police Assistant Inspector of Constabulary (Race and Diversity), staff drawn from HMIC, and seconded staff from the following police organisations or Home Office departments:

♦ Lancashire Constabulary
♦ Metropolitan Police Service
♦ Ministry of Defence Police
♦ Norfolk Constabulary
♦ Northumbria Police
♦ South Wales Police
♦ Royal Ulster Constabulary
♦ West Mercia Constabulary
♦ Police Resources Unit - Home Office
♦ Policing and Reducing Crime Unit - Home Office

The combined efforts of team members, coupled with the open and transparent response from all the 43 forces in England and Wales, made the completion of this Inspection report a reality.
Executive Summary

1  This report is a significant milestone reflecting four years of intense inspection activity into police and community relations. The original choice of community and race relations (CRR) as a topic for thematic probing and the sustained thematic inspection effort to help the Service progress, is indicative of its importance to contemporary and future policing. CRR, particularly sound and productive relationships between police and diverse communities, is fundamental to policing with continuing consent and should be at the core of police strategic thinking and operational action.

2  Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) original thematic, Winning the Race: Policing Plural Communities (Winning the Race) published in 1997, revealed that CRR, for a variety of reasons, was not at the core of police thinking but had edged to the periphery. In addition to considered advice and guidance, the report contained 20 recommendations to help the Service move forward. A follow-up Inspection, conducted during 1998, found that little had changed despite the added impetus of the reported evidence given to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. The report of the revisit Inspection, Winning the Race: Policing Plural Communities Revisited (Winning the Race Revisited), added 6 further recommendations and re-affirmed the validity of the 20 in the original Winning the Race. At the same time HM Inspector declared his intention to conduct a further Inspection in 2000 to audit progress and, uniquely in thematic inspection history, all 43 forces in England and Wales would be inspected, not just a representative sample.

The Inspection in Context

3  HM Inspector is acutely aware that, whilst the Service needs to take all necessary steps to safeguard and progress CRR, this is but one aspect of policing within the kaleidoscope of change and demand at both strategic and operational levels. Whilst the police service can make an impact on the improvement or impairment of quality of life, it is not the sole determinant. The over representation of visible minority ethnic communities within any scale of relative deprivation is not a phenomenon manufactured by the police service. Action is still necessary, beyond the police service, to ensure that minority ethnic citizens secure a more substantial stake in our society. The relative proximity to school age of most perpetrators of racist violence and harassments leads HM Inspector to share the concern of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry regarding the role of education in confronting racism. Definitive fairness in our society requires collective effort.

Terms of Reference

4  The aim of this Inspection was to benchmark all 43 forces against the 26 recommendations of the previous thematics. The synergy between those thematic reports and many of the recommendations and observations of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry is both re-assuring and perhaps encouraging but it is the Home Secretary’s Steering Group that drives these latter recommendations forward. In assessing forces on the thematic recommendations concerning the recruitment, retention and progression of visible ethnic minorities, due acknowledgement is accorded to the Home Secretary’s targets set out in Dismantling Barriers to reflect the community we serve (Dismantling Barriers).
Methodology

5 The evidence gathered during Winning the Race Revisited, supplemented by information gained from a comprehensive questionnaire and supporting documentation obtained from each force, were analysed against an objective assessment model. Each force was then allocated one of three levels of inspection commensurate with the analysed information. No consequential negative value judgement can be associated with those forces who hosted lengthier inspections, as the search for potential good practice could determine a longer inspection just as much as more negative concerns. Over 2,100 documents were examined and 600 focus groups or interviews were conducted in one of the largest single-topic HMIC inspections.

6 The benchmarked performance of each force is shown in one of three clusters under ten headings. The rationale behind the clustering process must not be misunderstood. The clustering assessment indicates the progress of a particular force against its own historical performance. The position of a force in a particular cluster does not facilitate direct comparison with any other force. It follows, therefore, that any attempt to construct a league table from the clustering information would be to construct a fiction and sacrifice the intrinsic value of the process. A summary of the clusters is attached to this document (Appendix A).

7 HM Inspector used the cluster technique so that forces can readily identify their specific developmental needs and the ‘good practice’ forces from whom they might learn. It must be emphasised that progress and continuous improvement require a holistic approach. For example, a force that has demonstrated creativity and particular commitment on the recruitment of visible ethnic minorities will not succeed if its service delivery to those minorities is inadequate, despite the fact that other forces can learn from their recruitment good practice. Sustained effort and positive leadership is required across all areas of activity. Similarly, the inevitable changes in the aspirations and expectations of Diversity can only be met if the Service has the mechanisms and, more importantly, the will to remain in tune with those aspirations and expectations.

Strategic Drivers and Policy Initiatives

8 Awarding full committee status to the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) CRR Committee is both a welcome move forward and tangible evidence of the ACPO commitment to progress. Its changed status as a policy-making body in its own right, free of subordination to a parent committee, enables it to maximise the expertise of its membership and communicate policy and guidance directly to the Service. The recent ACPO Diversity Strategy should provide strategic direction and complimentary guidance for forces.

9 At the time of the last thematic less than half of forces had produced a CRR strategy. Two years on 98 per cent of forces work from or are developing their own strategic document. Some strategies are not the product of a meaningful consultative process. This unilateral approach is inherently counter-productive with lack of external and internal ownership the likely consequence.
Too many Basic Command Unit (BCU) commanders, taking advantage of an illusion of autonomy, are exercising personal choice on CRR well beyond what should be the limits of their discretion. There must be corporate imperatives on CRR matters and discretion necessarily circumscribed. BCU commanders are key individuals in enabling the Service to achieve the Home Secretary’s priority to secure “the trust and confidence in policing of visible ethnic minorities”. It is difficult to recognise circumstances where any BCU commander who failed the corporate test on CRR, should continue to occupy that position.

The importance of unequivocal and positive leadership regarding CRR is emphasised by HM Inspector. It is essentially such leadership that translates the necessary and the desirable into reality. The positive response of chief constables to earlier criticisms of aspects of their leadership on CRR issues has been refreshing and has provided an impetus for beneficial change. This leadership, apparent in resourcing decisions just as much as in reinforcing the appropriate message to the public and staff alike, must be sustained and constantly recharged if achievement is to continue to replace aspiration.

Consultation

It was encouraging to see the genuine and sustained commitment throughout the Service to improve the consultative mechanisms, especially the efforts to secure the views of those previously ignored or historically silent. The encouragement to forces in the earlier thematics to establish meaningful liaison with ‘hard to reach’ groups has, despite the potential for definitional difficulty, proved the catalyst for thought and action as intended.

HM Inspector notes the collective frustration around the efficacy of the statutory Police Community Consultative Group (PCCG) process. It is encouraging that forces have gone well beyond that statutory requirement to secure minority views in some refreshingly innovative ways. The disciplines of the Best Value regime, particularly the important element of consultation, provides both police authorities and chief constables with the opportunity to improve service delivery by maximising that consultative requirement.

In acknowledging progress, HM Inspector reminds forces of the added value to be gained in using the consultative outcomes in their strategic thinking and policy making in a transparent way. The ensuring credibility of consultation will be recognised by the public. The virtuous circle will be complete as the established credibility will encourage the active involvement of all sections of the public in an inclusive way. What the public want is not always what the Service thinks they want. What sections of the public believe is possible is not always readily achievable.

Community Intelligence

It is unlikely that the necessary link between consultation and service delivery can be securely in place unless Community Intelligence is a part of the information conduit. Such intelligence provides the picture of the quality of life experienced by individuals and groups. It needs to be fully integrated into an integrated intelligence strategy if its potential is to be realised. Its integration and use must be subject to the existing regulations and codes of practice governing intelligence as a whole.
Serving the Community

16 Most forces have responded positively to earlier thematics and conducted an audit of their current CRR status. Some have moved on and exploited the findings to inform their CRR Strategies. A few had embedded the audit process on a cyclical basis as an in-built monitor. A minority had yet to conduct an audit or had not made effective use of the audit product.

17 The definition of a racist incident, revised as recommended in The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report, is well known throughout the Service. However, there is still a resistance by some officers, including some supervisors and managers, to come to professional terms with the underpinning rationale of the definition. The definition is known: it is now the task of leadership to penetrate the residual resistance of the cynical and gain acceptance of the professionally obvious.

18 Generally there has been substantial progress in dealing with homophobic incidents in a sensitive and appropriate manner. Whilst the requisite sensitivity is acute in responding to incidents in and around established gay venues, officers have less confidence in drawing on their professionalism when dealing with incidents in neutral locations.

19 It is a testament to substantial progress that the clusters respectively relevant to racist incidents and service provision to the gay community are the only clusters where the majority of forces are classified as ‘exhibiting examples of good practice’.

20 The seeming complacency in some forces regarding the apparent disproportionality in the use of the stop and search tactic is a cause for concern. Insufficient analysis of the statutory data is being undertaken to establish trends and, importantly, the pattern of team and individual use. Supervision is often restricted to the bureaucratic rectitude of the forms whilst failing to monitor and improve the quality of stop and search encounters on the street. The recently published research papers by the Home Office Policing and Reducing Crime Unit (PRCU), which confirm many of the observations in previous HMIC reports, collectively provide a template for action. The use of stop and search powers will continue to be a key determinant in the level of public confidence enjoyed by the Service. This should not be taken to imply that HM Inspector discourages the use of stop and search: he stoutly supports it – but stop and search should always be seen as applied both professionally and fairly.

21 Despite examples of imaginative good practice, the Service for the most part remains obsessively secretive to the exclusion of consultation and involvement in advance of some operations. The delicate balance of professional judgement is acknowledged but the benefits of openness, taking into account the attendant risk, are not always given due weight.

22 The Service has progressed impressively since the original thematic in its approach to those repetitive incidents that, whilst individually at the foot of the ladder of criminal gravity, collectively go to the heart of quality of life. The added impetus of partnership obligations regarding quality of life under the Crime and Disorder Act is welcome. There is, however, room for improvement in the deployment and protection from abstraction of Community Beat Officers (CBOs) who often are the very officers who can resolve such localised problems in a locally acceptable way.

Winning the Race: Embracing Diversity
It was refreshing to learn in focus groups of the public, particularly from representatives of the minority ethnic communities, of a renewal or, in some cases, a birth of confidence in their police. This is deserved and has been earned by the Service but must be nurtured to maturity. The job is not yet done but the tools are now more appropriate and the practitioners more appropriately skilled.

**Reflecting the Community**

A police service that is more representative of the diverse communities it serves is a logical and definitively recognisable contribution to foster the envied doctrine of policing by consent. A visible stake in policing is likely to make that consent the more readily forthcoming. Chief constables and chairs of police authorities accepted, without question, the targets of due proportion in terms of the recruitment, progression and retention of visible ethnic minorities now contained in *Dismantling Barriers*. There has been overall progress since the previous inspection particularly on the targeted element of recruitment. The effort and initiative to improve the recruitment profile is not matched by equivalent energy and creativity in addressing progression and retention. These three strands are implicitly intertwined and cannot be unravelled without the definite possibility of overall failure.

The value of cultural auditing is now accepted within the Service and the consequential action on completion of the audit process will ultimately lead to an improved organisational culture. This will not only contribute towards the eradication of institutional racism but also eradicating discrimination however it is manifested. The selection and promotion of all staff remains an area where individual attitudes on diversity can be tested. Some progress has been made but with only modest gains regarding appraisal. Logically an approach that will assess individual performance on diversity issues should be part of the product of the National Competency Framework.

The ability of the Service to both challenge and deal with inappropriate behaviour is much improved. The business of challenging and dealing with inappropriate attitudes is more complex. It is the subject of examination within the following section on training and developing staff. Until such challenges are seen as the norm throughout all forces organisational culture will not improve and the efforts to recruit, retain and fully develop minority ethnic staff will be at risk.

Finally the role which support networks can play within forces should not be underestimated. Whether they be formal or informal, affiliated or otherwise, they are a powerful stakeholder in the drive to make the Service more professional in dealing with diversity both internally and externally.

**Staff Training and Development**

HM Inspector previously acknowledged that training alone will not guarantee improved service delivery. Equally police officers and support staff must be equipped with the knowledge and the skills that breed the confidence that is crucial to improved service delivery. The Inspection revealed an inconsistent picture across England and Wales. At the
upper end of a sliding scale some forces have the key elements of effective CRR training firmly in place, whilst at the other extreme some forces have no such training in place. This extreme of inaction fails both staff and public alike.

29 HM Inspector is critical of the lack of a training needs analysis in many forces and the absence of timely training evaluation. There is an associated cost of such activity but HM Inspector is firmly convinced that the ultimate cost of ignoring these necessary disciplines will be greater. The absence of the active involvement of members of the local minority communities in some force training programmes is a further cause for concern.

Conclusion

30 After the professional disappointment of the two earlier thematics, HM Inspector is pleased to record optimism that the Service is at last on the road to recovery. The leadership of chief officers and others is evident and the range of initiatives in relation to consultation, recruitment and service delivery are as varied as they are impressive.

31 Increased knowledge and awareness by those actually delivering the service at street level is clear from the widespread knowledge of the definition of a racist incident and the improvement of service provision to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities. In part this is a reflection of the awareness of staff responding to leadership direction but it is also a product of the service extending the consultative process beyond the limited and the comfortable. Both are extremely positive developments that should lead to cohesive improvement.

32 More needs to be done. More will always be needed to be done. In addition to driving change forward and consolidating progress, police leadership must ensure that whatever the barriers to progress, whatever the conflicting or changing priorities that dynamic times may generate, there is no regression. The Service took significant strides forward in the wake of The Scarman Report 1981 which inspired the Service to take a courageous and revealing look in its attitudinal mirror. The Service benefited from the resulting reflection. Whilst some of the post-Scarman progress is still evident, much was allowed to ebb away on the tide of changing fashion. The gains in response to the thematics, the positive response to the organisational catharsis on the publication of The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report, must not be allowed to evaporate in the same way. This requires not only the vigilance of police leadership but an ongoing determination to secure the gains and capitalise on them.

33 HMIC will be equally vigilant and will continue to encourage, to advise and to criticise. None of the inspection issues consolidated in this report will be lost but will be incorporated into the HMIC Risk Assessment Model for individual force inspections. This Model has attracted praise from other inspectorates and other external bodies. HMIC now has the benefit of the skills and expertise of two non-police Assistant Inspectors, both of a minority ethnic background, who will have a specific remit to help and advise HM Inspectors on this element of their inspections. Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Constabulary has written to forces to make these skills and expertise available on request. HMIC is not just the author of criticism but also an ongoing source of help.

6 Winning the Race: Embracing Diversity
The significant investment of energy and valuable resources by HMIC has been both appropriate and necessary. The need to place CRR centre stage of police thinking and to keep it in the spotlight of policy makers as opposed to an extra in the wings, was forced home not only by the thematics but by the extrinsic imperative of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry.

It casts a pall of sadness over our society that a young black man with so much to offer that society should lose his life, and that same society be deprived of his considerable potential, simply but most cruelly because his skin was not white. Whilst such abhorrent barbarity remains a feature of our society, it is the overwhelming duty of the police service to respond professionally, sensitively and purposefully to its victims. Winning the Race was the flashing neon light that advertised to the Service some of its frailties. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry demonstrated how aggregated frailties are the ingredients of catastrophic failure. The Service must never fail again.

Leadership must continue to place CRR at the core of policing. The indication from this Inspection is that the point is not only taken but being acted upon. The Service must remember that just as the aspirations of life and leisure styles of police officers change and increase over time, so do those of minority ethnic citizens. Forces need to keep pace with those latter changing aspirations and be ready to alter the course of service delivery accordingly. Structures, systems, processes and mechanisms, even HMIC reports, are important but their importance begins and ends in their impact on the quality of service delivery. The ultimate arbiter of quality policing is the quality of service delivery to the individual. That service has quality when it is service according to need. Policing according to need will ensure that the Service across England and Wales retains the mandate of all to police by consent.