STOP WATCH response to the “Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting Police and the People” consultation.

September 2010

This paper is in response to the Home Office consultation document – Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting the Police and the People. It focuses on the changes proposed to the recording of stop and search (para 3.13), transparency (paras 2.32- 2.34), improving confidence in policing (para 5.2) and empowering communities to hold the police to account and participate in local crime prevention (para 5.6).

Summary

We are concerned that:

- The removal of the requirement to record “stops” was conducted without community consultation or community impact assessment. It may adversely affect communities whom the safeguard was put in place to protect.

- The changes to “stop and search” made under the Crime and Security Act 2010 make it difficult for the police or communities to determine the effectiveness of the use of stop and search powers.

- The proposed changes to “stop and search” recording outlined in this consultation document will damage effective monitoring of the power and undermine both internal and external accountability.

- The Government’s review of section 44 counter-terrorism stop and search powers is welcome but the use of stop and search powers that do not require reasonable suspicion has increased sharply and will have a detrimental impact on trust and confidence in policing.

We recommend that:

1) An independent reviewer of the police use of stop and search powers should be appointed.

2) The recording of “stop and account” should be reinstated.

3) The Government should undertake and publish a community impact assessment on the impact of abolishing the requirement to record “stops.”

4) Safeguards should be put in place to mitigate the potential for the misuse of “stops” and address the disproportionality in stop and account rates.
5) The Government should undertake and publish a community impact assessment on the impact of abolishing the requirement to record names of those stopped, injury and damage resulting from the stop and search and mechanisms put in place to remedy any problems it raises.

6) Guidance should be issued to forces on how to ensure that information on the effectiveness of stop and search powers is recorded consistently and how this information should be shared with both local and national monitoring mechanisms.

7) The Government should undertake and publish a community impact assessment on the impact of further changes to internal and external accountability of stop and search powers.

8) No further reductions should be made to the recording of stop and search. Emphasis should instead be put on improving the efficiency of current data collection systems with the ultimate goal of full electronic recording.

9) An independent review into the use of section 60 stop and search powers should be conducted. The law and safeguards for its use should be tightened up in line with the exceptional stop and search powers granted under section 44.

10) Schedule 7 stops should be reviewed within the current review of counter-terrorism and security powers. Schedule 7 stops should be monitored within the same recording framework as all other stop and search powers and ethnic data shared with community monitoring groups.

11) The Government should commend and support good practices for recording the police use of stop and search powers.

12) The Government should commend and support local communities in scrutinizing stop and search practices. Good practice in community stop and search monitoring should be mandated for all forces within the structures outlined in this consultation document.
Public trust and confidence in policing and stop and search

Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting the Police and the People makes clear that the key priority for the police is to cut crime but that this can only happen with public consent and active cooperation. As the consultation document states: “We want [the public] to trust the police… and to have confidence that the criminal justice system has ethics and integrity” (para 1.22). The Government’s vision is for crime reduction to be achieved through “a strengthened bond between the police and local people” (para 1.22). This will be based on the public having a “real say in how their streets are policed and be able to hold the police to account locally, having more opportunity to shape their own lives” (para 1.22). Public confidence is described as a means to deliver wider social benefits to all, rather than being an outcome in itself. The ‘Big Society’ will be developed by encouraging community engagement through localised accountability structures, and fostering active citizenship. The consultation paper recognises that “engaging with communities requires a diverse workforce… this is important in getting communities more involved in policing, ensuring the police can understand local communities’ needs and to build trust and break down cultural barriers” (para 2.22).

For communities to have greater trust in policing requires more than an increased focus on developing a diverse police force; it requires fair and equitable criminal justice outcomes for all communities. Discussion of this is absent from the consultation document.

In matters of policing, equality and community relations, stop and search practices remain the crucial litmus test. In England and Wales, the rate of stop and search among black people is 7 times the rate among whites and among Asians it is more than twice the rate among whites.¹ Anxieties about the unfair use of stop and search powers have a long history in Britain. Stop and search was cited as one of the causes of the Brixton riots in 1981.² Almost two decades later, the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report recognised that institutional racism was evident in the nationwide disparities in stop and search figures. While the inquiry was keen to acknowledge the complexity of the issue, Macpherson insisted that there remained “a clear core conclusion of racist stereotyping.”³ The recent Home Affairs Select Committee report on progress since the Lawrence Inquiry noted that minority ethnic people remain “over-policed and under-protected within our criminal justice system” as evidenced by the persistent disproportionality in the stop and search figures.

A number of concerns flow from the disproportionate use of stop and search. Firstly, unfair targeting of certain groups for stop and search means that they are more likely to come to the attention of the police. In comparison to their white

counterparts, “black people are almost twice as likely to enter the criminal justice process as a result of being stopped and searched by the police.” Secondly, as the arrest rate resulting from stop and search is similar for all groups, seven times as many black people and twice as many innocent Asian people are searched in comparison to their white counterparts. This results in significant proportions of these communities coming into contact with the police as suspects. Being stopped and searched publically can be an embarrassing, frightening and potentially humiliating experience. Research shows that unsatisfactory contacts between the police and the public can have a negative impact on public confidence in the police, not only for the individual directly involved, but also for his or her family, friends, and associates. Solving crime relies directly on the willingness of communities as witnesses or victims of crime to pass on information and comply with the law. Unfair use of stop and search drives a wedge between the police and communities and jeopardizes their support of the police and their use of their powers.

Equally important to communities is the need for police powers to be used effectively and efficiently. The rate of arrests resulting from stop and search has stayed consistently between 10-13 percent for the last five years. This raises concerns about the targeting of stop and search, that 9 out of every 10 stop and searches based on “reasonable suspicion” does not result in an arrest for the behaviour suspected or any other offence. There appears to be a limit to the skills of officers to distinguish between those actually involved in committing crimes “from those for whom a generalized suspicion exists in the police lexicon – urban males wearing hooded sweatshirts, for example.” A Home Office review of the research evidence concluded that stop and search has “only a minor role in detecting offenders for a range of all crimes that they [stop and search] address, and a relatively small role in detecting offenders for such crimes that come to the attention of the police.” The study also found little evidence to suggest that stop and search has a general deterrence or preventative impact on crime. In light of this evidence, the use of stop and search powers must be

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7 Home Office (2009) Police Powers and Procedures England and Wales 2007/08, London, Home Office. This relates to stop and search conducted under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, which requires reasonable suspicion. The rate of arrest coming out of other stop and search powers that no not require reasonable suspicion is much lower.
8 Ministry of Justice (2010).
constantly reassessed: balancing the costs of using the power and its effectiveness at fighting crime against the impact on the community as a whole.

The “Big Society” goal of developing an engaged and empowered community willing to work locally to fight crime depends crucially on police action being perceived by individuals and groups as fair, effective and legitimate. The changes made in the Crime and Security Act of 2010 and further proposals to stop and search made in this consultation document have important implications for communities and the police and risk undermining monitoring and accountability. It is within this context that we make the following observations and recommendations.

Removal of the requirement to record “stops” / “stop and account” under the Crime and Security Act 2010

The Crime and Security Act 2010 removes the requirement for police to record all “stops.” The recording of stops was recommended by the Lawrence Inquiry in response to community concerns that stops where being used disproportionately against minority communities and to circumvent the safeguards contained in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE). “Stops” or “stop and accounts” cover encounters that fall outside the statutory stop and search powers, where police officers detain members of the public to ask them to account for their actions, behaviour or presence in an area but do not go on to search them. Recommendation 61 of the Lawrence Inquiry proposed that police officers should make a record of all stops which includes the reason for the stop, the outcome, and the self-defined ethnic identity of the person stopped. This was incorporated into PACE in 2005, but from January 2011 will no longer be recorded.

The number of times where the police required people to stop and account for themselves was far greater than that for stop and search in 2007/08 (2,353,918 compared to 1,035,438). Exercise of the stop and account power is more evenly spread between police forces compared with the power to stop and search. Overall in 2007/08, the rate of stop and account for black people was two and a half times higher than for white people. The rate for Asian people was slightly higher than for white people at a rate of 1.2 to 1. This ratio is similar to the previous year and is notably lower than the national disproportionality ratio for stop and search.¹¹

When Recommendation 61 was introduced, the Home Office viewed it as a means of promoting “trust and confidence in the police by providing transparency and accountability on the spot at a strategic level, for police initiated non-statutory encounters.”¹² The on-going disproportionality in stop and account indicates that the problems recognised by the Lawrence Inquiry remain a

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concern and that there remains the need for monitoring and accountability. The data collected on stop and account is an important indicator for assessing whether stop and search powers are being used fairly. Disproportionality in stop and search is often dismissed as an artifact of the recording procedures where police officers argue they are more likely to complete a form for ethnic minorities for fear of complaint or justified on the grounds that black people more likely to be stopped by virtue of their being more “availability” on the streets where stop and search is taking place or greater rate of offending. As shown, disproportionality rates are far less marked in relation to stop and account than stop and search. Since recording requirements and conditions where stops and searches take place are the same as with stop and account, it highlighted that police decision-making forms part of the process driving disproportionality.

We are concerned that the requirement to record stops was abolished with little or no community consultation taking note of these issues and that there has been no community impact assessment undertaken or made public.

Recommendations

The recording of stop and account should be reinstated.

The Government should undertake a community impact assessment is on the impact of abolishing the requirement to record “stops” and made this public.

Safeguards should be put in place to mitigate the potential for the misuse of “stops” and address the disproportionality in stop and account rates.

Changes to “stop and search” under the Crime and Security Act 2010

The Crime and Security Act 2010 reduces the reporting requirements on stop and search forms by amending the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) and will come into force in January 2011. Currently, PACE requires a police officer to complete a full record of a stop and search and, where practicable to do so, provide the individual with a copy of the record at the point of contact. This act removes a number of the current reporting requirements. Officers are still required to record: date; time; place; ethnicity; object of search; grounds for search; identity of the officer carrying out the stop and search. It will no longer be necessary to record: the name of the person searched or other description of the person, or description of the vehicle; whether anything was found as a result of the search; or whether any injury or damage was caused as a result of the search. The Act maintains a requirement that every stop and search which does not result in an arrest is recorded and the person searched will receive a receipt recording the date and grounds on which they were

searched and identifying the constable who carried out the search. Where a person is taken into custody as a direct result of the stop and search, the custody record should show that the action originated from stop and search.

We have grave concerns about the impact of these changes to the monitoring of stop and search. Firstly, we believe that the changes will make it difficult to assess the effectiveness of stop and search. It will no longer be necessary for officers to record on the forms whether the stop and search has resulted in arrest or other positive outcomes such as seizures or fixed penalty notices (FPN). The Act requires that a note of whether an arrest was made as a result of stop and search be made in the custody suite. Yet, all 43 forces across England and Wales have different custody systems that would need to be adapted to do this and no guidance has been given on how this will be done and how statistically this information will then be linked back to stop and search data. There is no provision for seizures or other outcomes to be measure so this information will be lost. Analysis of what is found during and the outcomes of stop and searches also act to determine whether officers’ development of suspicion was correct and that the objects recovered match what was being searched for. Losing this information takes away a key determinant for supervising officers and external monitoring groups to determine if the stop and search has met the requirements of PACE. We support the Government’s proposals to “ensure that crime data is published at a level which allows the public to see what is happening on their streets and neighbourhoods” (paras 2.34). But this must be matched by providing local communities with information about police performance and what activities are being undertaken by the police in their local areas, with what purpose and to what effect. It is essential for the outcomes of stop and search be measured and that this statistical information is shared with communities to allow them to assess the legitimacy and effectiveness of the use of stop and search and policing powers more generally.

Secondly, we are concerned that officers will no longer need to record any injury of damage caused as a result of the stop and search. The requirement to record this information acts as a safeguard by reminding officers that their conduct during a stop and search is being monitored and that they are accountable to the public. It can also act as an important safeguard for the police if a complaint is made about their conduct or injuries or damage sustained during the stop and search.

Thirdly, we are concerned that the removal of the requirement to record the name of the person searched will make it difficult to measure repeat stops and victimisation. As the discussion above highlighted, there are long standing concerns about the use of stop and search to target certain communities or individuals\(^\text{15}\) – without collecting name data it will be difficult to assess the validity of these concerns. The police will be unable to answer complaints about repeat

\(^{15}\) See for example, Cohen, D. and Lydall, R. “Black Met adviser stopped and searched more than 100 times,” The Evening Standard, 16\(^{th}\) October 2009.
stops as they will have no means of proving how many times they have stopped a person.

Recommendations

The Government should undertake a community impact assessment on the impact of abolishing the requirement to record names of those stopped, injury and damage resulting from the stop and search and mechanisms put in place to remedy any problems it raises.

Guidance should be issued to all police forces to ensure that information on the effectiveness of stop and search is collected consistently. This should include information on how arrests resulting from stop and search will be recorded in custody suites but also ensure other positive outcomes (such as seizures and FPNs) are recorded and how this information will be shared with both local and national monitoring mechanism such as with local beat meetings and in the section 95 CJS data.

Proposed changes to “stop and search” recording in the Policing in the 21st Century

This consultation document suggests further changes to stop and search recording, stating:

“We will also maximise the use of available technology to further reduce the paperwork in policing so that, for example, an officer will only need to record manually three pieces of information on a stop and search record.” (para 3.13).

It is not clear in the document which three pieces of information should still be recorded manually and if the document is proposing recording the other information currently recorded, electronically or not at all.

We are concerned that only collecting “three pieces” of information on a stop and search does not provide enough information to effectively monitor stop and search either by police supervisors or external monitoring groups to ensure that stop and searches are used fairly, effectively and within the law. We recognise the desire to reduce bureaucracy in policing but argue that it is essential that all changes result in improved not weakened community engagement and accountability. The data currently recorded through stop and search monitoring mechanisms enhance accountability and effectiveness by providing a picture of stops by individual officers and across units and forces. It makes it possible to compare where stops are taking place with maps of local crime patterns, supporting more effective targeting of stops and searches. A certain amount of bureaucracy is necessary to ensure that the police are accountable, and transparent. The idea that completing stop forms is a distraction from “real” police work is a notion that needs to be challenged. Real police work is about building trust and confidence, promoting accountability and building legitimacy around the
use of stop and search. Having spoken with and observed police officers across the country, stop and search forms routinely take between 2 – 5 minutes to complete. When balanced against the impact this potentially intrusive power can have on individuals and communities – this is not a large commitment of police resources.

A survey of police officers conducted at the time of the implementation of recommendation 61 found that there was widespread support within the police service for increased accountability providing that it is not bought at the cost of significantly increased bureaucracy.\(^\text{16}\) This suggests an understanding of the importance of external scrutiny and that the development of efficient forms of recording should provide a key focus for future development. We welcome the move towards supporting forces to monitor stop and search using technological solutions. We are aware of good practices in forces, which have embraced electronically recording through Airwaves, Smartphones or other handheld devices, which have cut the paperwork associated with stop and search forms without undermining accountability. The West Yorkshire police force, for example has rolled out a system of recording stop and search on blackberries, which cuts the time to record a stop and search encounter to two minutes. Currently, there are only eight out of the 43 forces nationwide that have the technological capacity to record stop and search electronically so without significant funding being provided to forces to enable them to buy the technology and appropriate software it will not be possible for all forces to move to electronic recording. In the current financial climate, we would urge that the emphasis is put on improving the efficiency of the paper system in line with national good practices.

**Recommendations**

A community impact assessment is undertaken on the impact of further changes to internal and external accountability of stop and search powers.

No further reductions are made to the recording of stop and search and emphasis is put on improving the efficiency of current data collection systems with an ultimate goal of full electronic recording.

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Stop and search powers that do not require reasonable suspicion

Within the context of this consultation, we welcome the Government's review of stop and search powers under section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000 but draw attention to other exceptional stop and search powers that do not require any form of suspicion such as section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, which allows police to stop individuals without reasonable suspicion "in anticipation of violence," and by schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000, which allows stops in ports and airports for counterterrorism purposes. As the Government has recognised, section 44 powers have been used disproportionately against ethnic minority groups and peaceful protesters. The European Court of Human Rights highlighted the potential for discrimination and misuse of section 44 stating that: "there is a clear risk of arbitrariness in the granting of such a broad discretion to the police officer. While the present cases do not concern black applicants or those of Asian origin, the risks of the discriminatory use of the powers against such persons is a very real consideration."  

Many of the problems that have been identified in relation to section 44 hold consistent for section 60 stop and searches: arbitrariness, misuse, lack of monitoring and safeguards, and a disproportionate impact on ethnic minorities. Reasonable suspicion acts as a safeguard against abuse of stop and search powers as it provides a threshold of suspicion against which officers' use of the powers can be measured. Without the requirement of reasonable suspicion there is increasing evidence that section 60 is being used as a "catch-all" power in response to low-level disorder. Since its introduction, the numbers of section 60 stop and searches have increased dramatically. In 1997/98, there were 7,970 section 60 stop and searches; increasing to 11,330 in 2000/01; to 45,600 in 2004/05; to 53,250 in 2007/08 and to 149,955 in 2008/09. This represents a staggering 282 percent increase in the use of the power last year. Even more disturbing is the evidence that this exceptional power is being used disproportionately against minority communities. The latest data shows that the rate of section 60 stop and search for black people is 26 times the rate for white people and for Asian people it is 6 times the rate for whites. The rate of arrests resulting out of section 60 stop and search have remained consistently under 4 percent, significantly lower than the arrest rate for PACE stop and searches.

17 Section 60 powers allow officers at the rank of Inspector to authorise the application of section 60 in those areas where they anticipated incidents of serious violence. They are also permitted to extend the initial 24 hour period for a further 24 hours.
18 Gillan and Quinton v. the United Kingdom (Application no.4158/05), European Court of Human Rights, para 85.
There is little research into the quality of local intelligence that is used to justify section 60 authorisations. There is also little regulation to ensure that the intelligence basis given for invoking section 60 meet legal standards (i.e. that there is a credible threat of serious violence in a defined area), or to see that the power is used consistently within and between forces. An investigation conducted by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) into the use of section 60 stop and search powers in the West Midlands in 2007 confirmed concerns, that section 60 was being used inappropriately to deal with routine crime problems with no justifiable reason why normal police powers based on a reasonable suspicion were not being used. Few would disagree with section 60 powers being used in situations with a genuine risk of violence in a clearly delineated area for a short period of time. Beyond these circumstances, the powers given to the police under PACE section 1 provide an adequate tool that includes the safeguard of reasonable suspicion and local monitoring mechanisms. The long-term use of section 60 is having an impact on the predominantly black and Asian people who find themselves repeatedly stopped and searched. Without a well-defined standard of suspicion, searches are likely to take place for reasons that are unclear to the individuals being searched or the wider community. Where police are given extraordinary stop and search powers, safeguards and local mechanisms for external accountability should go beyond what is required for section 1 PACE stops to ensure that communities can have confidence that powers are being used fairly and legitimately.

There are similar concerns around the use of Schedule 7 stop powers in ports and airports where 'examining officers' are able to stop, question and/or detain people, without the need for any reasonable suspicion, to ascertain whether they are likely to be engaged in acts of terrorism or not. According to Home Office data, 10,400 people have been examined under this legislation since 2004. Of them 1,110 were subsequently detained with 43 subsequent convictions resulting in a 0.4 percent conviction rate of the total recorded stops or 3.8 percent of the total recorded detainments. There is no information publically available on the ethnicity of those stopped under schedule 7 powers. There is little doubt that these powers play a role in ensuring that our ports and airports remain a hostile environment for potential terrorists but there is increasing concern that innocent people merely detained under Schedule 7 for further questioning are treated the same as actual terrorist suspect and that these powers are being used disproportionately against ethnic minority and Muslim communities. For example, the police routinely gather and retain the DNA and fingerprints of people detained under this power infringing their right to the presumption of innocence. Nationally, 1,200 people have had their fingerprints and DNA taken. The experience of being

22 Examining officers are able to stop and conduct a thorough search of an individual, their possessions and any vehicle that they may be driving as well as of all associated passengers, their possessions and their associated vehicles and to detain a person for up to 9 hours for an extensive ‘examination.’ Schedule 8 extends their powers to obtain the examined individual’s DNA and fingerprints.

stopped under this power can have a damaging impact on individuals and communities - leaving them feeling alienated from society.\textsuperscript{24}

**Recommendations**

An independent review into the use of section 60 stop and search powers is conducted. The law and safeguards are tightened up in line with the exceptional stop and search powers granted under section 44 and an independent reviewer is appointed.

Schedule 7 stops are reviewed within the current review of counter-terrorism and security powers being undertaken. Schedule 7 stops are monitored within the same recording framework as all other stop and search powers and data shared with community monitoring groups.

**Good practice for recording stop and search and empowering community through stop and search scrutiny panels.**

Research shows that internal police safeguards are a necessary but insufficient basis for effective regulation of stop and search.\textsuperscript{25} External scrutiny acts to remind the police that they are accountable to the public and to focus their attention on community experiences and local priorities. There are innovative forms of external monitoring being developed which empower local communities to monitor the use of stop and search and serve to improve trust and confidence at a local level. In most police forces quantitative stop data is reviewed by Police Authorities and most have some form of community monitoring groups. Good practice highlights the usefulness of both quantitative and qualitative indicators, with statistical information being scrutinised alongside detailed records of individual stops and other sources of information, such as complaints, feedback from community organisations and satisfaction surveys. Below, we provide three short cases studies from the West Yorkshire Police, Suffolk Constabulary and a Youth-Arts Centre in the London Borough of Lewisham, which highlight what is possible.

The West Yorkshire Police were the first force in the country to develop scrutiny panels that examine both the investigation of hate crime and the use of stop and search in each district. Panels meet monthly and consist of 10 to 20 members from other public agencies and local communities and at least one officer of Chief Inspector rank. Each panel meeting examines at least ten stop and stop and search forms; five of ethnic minorities and five selected from all available forms. Forms are randomly selected by community members in advance with all personal information removed. The officers who conducted the stops are asked to supply a photocopy of their pocket book or supplemental report giving fuller information about the circumstances around each interaction. Panel members


examine the data, ask questions, determine whether the forms have been completed correctly, and whether the grounds for the stop were adequate and in line with PACE.

West Yorkshire Police has recently introduced an electronic stop and search system, which allows stops to be recorded on a “Blackberry” mobile device. This creates real time data on stop and search and allows it to be actively compared to local crime maps. This system has just been rolled out and scrutiny panels are in the process of working out what data they need for effective monitoring and how best for this to be displayed. The panels are also given data based on local community satisfaction surveys, which feeds into their scrutiny. The scrutiny panels are organised by the police, which means they are embedded within institutional structures and thus more likely to feed into operational decision-making. There is clear evidence of police commitment to the panels and willingness to respond to problems raised.

In 2008, the Suffolk Constabulary formed a stop and search reference panel. This resulted from research conducted by the Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality, which found that in Suffolk black people were stopped at a rate 9 times greater than the rate for white people; higher than the national average, and in some rural parts of the county this increased to rates as high as 22 to 1. This research led to the development of a stop and search scrutiny panel organised by the Equality Council, so sits outside the police. The group scrutinises district-wide performance, looking at all stops and searches of people from BME backgrounds. Forms are reviewed in advance of each monthly meeting by the Equality Council and a number are brought forward to the police for discussion at the meeting. The Police provide information on the stops to the group which is then discussed. The panel also discusses stop search complaints brought to their attention via third party reporting, monitors the impact of the use of stop and search in the community and contribute to the forces’ stop search policy, procedures and training.

The Suffolk scrutiny panel has wide community participation. The independence of the Equality Council promotes transparency and meaningful scrutiny, while also encouraging trust and diverse community participation. Meetings are challenging and a real opportunity to hold officers accountable for their actions as the community members have a good understanding of the law and context surrounding stop and search practice. The police are currently exploring how to share quantitative stop and search data with the group and feed discussions into operational decision-making.

Research has shown that the quality of the encounter is crucial to public satisfaction with stop and search. Second Wave is a London-based youth arts

project that organises training workshops on stop and search with young people and the Lewisham Police and Territorial Support Group (TSG). Workshops are planned by young people with the support of a tutor and involve 6-8 youth participants and 6-8 police participants. The police attend out of uniform, as a way of establishing a sense of equality and an atmosphere where honest discussion can take place. Workshops are designed by the young people and include a balance of drama-based games, trust exercises, and role-play scenarios exploring street encounters combined with in-depth discussion of police-youth interactions. Recent workshops examined issues such as ownership of public space, perceptions of young people, and identity in relation to the recording of ethnicity on stop forms.

The police officers involved in these workshops have developed a deeper understanding of young peoples’ experiences and developed professional skills to improve the quality of the interaction. One senior officer notes: “The workshop process has challenged our thinking and approach. We now have greater insight into young people’s expectations ... The work has not only fostered a more open, transparent and accountable approach to addressing crime and community safety issues, but has significantly developed officers’ communication skills and ability to relate to young people ... TSG4 officers continue to show enthusiasm to learn and to accept criticism. This has engendered trust in young people.” Equally so, the young people who have been involved in the process have developed a greater understanding of stop and search powers and policing in general. They have gone on to be involved in local government bodies, through the Lewisham Police Consultative Group and other forums and are participating in an outreach programme to expand the workshops to local schools.

Recommendation

Good practices for both recording stop and search and engaging local communities in scrutinising stop and search practices should be shared nationally

The provision for community stop and search monitoring along the lines of the good practice outlined should be mandated for all forces within the structures outlined in this consultation document.

Conclusions

The next few years will present a challenge to the police service whom will be expected to further reduce crime with fewer resources. We welcome the Government’s recognition the police cannot effectively fight crime with the support of the public. That support is dependant on police using their powers in a manner that can be demonstrated to be fair, legitimate and effective. Statistical records enable the exercise of police powers to be monitored and help communities to hold the police to account. The data currently recorded through
stop and search monitoring mechanisms enhance accountability and effectiveness by providing a picture of stops by individual officers and across units and forces. It makes it possible to compare where stops are taking place with maps of local crime patterns, supporting more effective targeting of stops and searches. A certain amount of bureaucracy is necessary to ensure that the police are accountable, and transparent. Completing stop forms is not a distraction from “real” police work but part of a process that builds trust and confidence. If policing is to be locally responsive and democratically informed, mechanisms for recording stop and search must be enhanced and not further undermined and communities must be involved in the monitoring of local use of police powers.
StopWatch

StopWatch is an action group formed of leading organisations from civil society, the legal profession and academia.

StopWatch aims to ensure the fair and effective use of stop and search powers to promote safety and positive police community relations.

StopWatch’s objectives include:

1. Ethnic disproportionality in stop and search cut by half over the next five years and forces given guidance and support on how to achieve this.
2. Reviewing the use and regulation of stop and search powers that do not require reasonable suspicion such as section 60, schedule 7 and the Road Traffic Act.
3. Ensuring that there is effective monitoring and external accountability of stop and search.
4. Pushing for the creation of a parliamentary champion/ independent reviewer for fair stop and search use, and equality in policing.
5. Securing funding for and promoting research on stop and search and alternatives to the use of the power.

Participating organisations include:

Equanomics
Federation of Student Islamic Societies (FOSIS)
Manheim Centre for Criminology, London School of Economics
Muslim Safety Forum
NACRO
Not Another Drop
Open Society Justice Initiative
Release
Runnymede Trust
School of Law, Kings College London
Second Wave

If you would like further information about StopWatch, please contact Kjartan Sveinsson at: kjartan@runnymedetrust.org