

BRIEFING NOTE FOR THE MPA HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Prepared by Personnel Department, MPS**Subject: ETHNIC GROUPS USED IN METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE
PERSONNEL RECORDS****Introduction**

The Government has expanded the ethnic groups to be used for the 2001 census of population. In discussions with the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), recognising that the census classifications generally become the standard for most organisations and that a wider number of groups was required to reflect the diverse communities of London, it was agreed that the Metropolitan Police Service would amend the classifications used for our own staff.

Many of the existing groupings remained unchanged, but in addition to those introduced by the 2001 census the opportunity was taken also to include some additional groups. The Greek Staff Association had made a formal request to be included as a separate ethnic minority and the CRE advice was that this should be facilitated. A corresponding additional group for Turkish staff was also included together with an 'any other group not specified' classification.

Revised categories

The revised classifications were introduced for police officers in October 1999. The number of categories increased from 11 to 21 categories. For reference the new MPS categories are shown in groups against the corresponding Home Office categories (*in italics*):

MPS	Home Office
White - British White - Irish White - other Not Stated	<i>White</i>
Black - Caribbean	<i>Black - Caribbean</i>
Black - African	<i>Black - African</i>
Black - British Any other black background	<i>Black - other</i>
Indian	<i>Indian</i>
Pakistani	<i>Pakistani</i>
Bangladeshi	<i>Bangladeshi</i>
Chinese	<i>Chinese</i>
Any other Asian background Black Asian Mixed - white & black Caribbean Mixed - white & black African Mixed - white & Asian Mixed - any other mixed background Greek & Greek Cypriot Turkish & Turkish Cypriot Any other ethnic group not specified	<i>Other groups</i>

For the purposes of counting visible ethnic minorities, all categories are included except the three MPS white groups and Not Stated.

The classification process is voluntary and based solely on self-determination. All officers were invited (through letter and Police Notice) to confirm or reclassify themselves using the revised categories. If no change was necessary, officers needed to take no action. Officers may revise their classification at any time.

Police recruits

An equal opportunities monitoring form is included in the application pack sent to prospective police applicants. Where completed, the ethnic category information is recorded in the application papers as the person proceeds through the selection process. This information is passed to the Recruit Training School when recruits start their initial training. At that point, recruits are required to complete a full personal record form to confirm all the details held in the central computerised records, including their ethnic group. Some recruits change their classification at this stage.

Serving officers

Local and central personnel records retain an officer's ethnic grouping throughout their service. Any subsequent changes sought by an officer to their ethnic classifications are recorded locally and notified by the local personnel unit to the centralised records unit.

Civil staff

The IT system for personnel records for civil staff and traffic wardens was not able in 1999 to accommodate the increased number of categories. The existing 11 classifications have therefore continued. These are:

- White
- Not Stated
- Black - Caribbean
- Black - African
- Black - other
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Asian - other
- Other group.

The enhancement of the records system for civil staff and traffic wardens to cater for the 21 categories has very recently been completed. Arrangements are currently being developed to invite civil staff and traffic wardens to confirm or reclassify themselves against the new groups.

The process for initially recording the ethnic group for recruitment applications and thereafter maintaining the record in the member of staff's personnel records is similar to that for police officers.

Reviews

In recognition of last year's problems with inaccuracies of minority ethnic recruit numbers, work continues within the MPS on systematically improving the recording and publishing of ethnic classification data. External consultants are to assist as part of a wider review of the handling of recruitment statistics.

The MPA have also initiated a review of MPS ethnic personnel data.