

MPA Race & Faith Inquiry

Bob Quick

6 April 2009

Chair: Cindy Butts

Panel Members: Bob Purkiss, Margaret Blankson and Anthony Julius.

This interview has been proof read and names have been inserted only where the speaker's identify is certain.

CB ...go through any of that: suffice to say we've got Anthony, Margaret and Bob

BQ Hello.

CB We're going to talk to you for roughly about an hour,

BQ Fine

CB ..or it may be a bit less, actually; we're not, we're not quite sure as yet. We'll put some questions to you,

BQ Of course.

CB ..we'll give you the opportunity at the end to say anything that you didn't get a chance to say. We're taping the session, you'll get a transcript in a week or so theres time to approve and we hope you'll feel comfortable enough to be as honest and as open as you, you would like to be. Can I kick off? In your opinion, what are the most important issues for the MPS in relation to race and faith?

BQ Confidence, public confidence that we are a fair and just organisation. How can we possibly be seen to be fair and just in delivering policing, if we're not fair and just in the treatment of

our people? And I think that's the single biggest challenge for us all, for us all. I can elaborate on that, if you wish.

Yes, please.

BQ Well, I guess for me, I, I, I sense we've been trapped in something of a circular debate for some years now and I, I, I think that we do need to better define what we mean by diversity and, —a—a--and how we mean to deliver it. Clearly we, at one level, want a meritocracy where we recognise the mission of delivering high quality policing services is very important to the public and therefore we want to recruit, train, develop and deploy the very best people in all of the roles that we have, to do that. But on the other hand, we need to recognise the imperfections of our own internal systems in delivering a meritocracy and secondly the structural barriers that exist, that we have not yet fully over come, to delivering a diverse, well representative police service that the public recognise as being something they can trust and not just looks like the public we serve, but actually perhaps represents the very best of the communities we serve. I've often heard it said we need to recr—recruit a police service that reflects the communities we serve; well, I, I'm not sure that is true! There are many aspects of the communities we serve that we wouldn't want to reflect. I think we have to as—aspire to, to reflect the very best, because of the unique powers that police officers in particular, but now more so police staff, have.

Okay. Can you say more and just, just try and characterise the challenge that you talked about, the public confidence challenge and then can you go on to talk to us about the imperfections which you spoke of?

BQ Yeah. W-- our mission is increasingly complex. My, my own area of counter-terrorism is a very good example of where trust is absolutely vital and will be perhaps the key determinant whether we succeed or fail in effectively countering terrorism and the trust of our communities. So (inaudible), in a, to enable us to do that, we have to convince the public that our work force, in its broadest sense, has the qualities and attributes that they recognise as being necessary to, for, for them to engage with, to work with and to support and so it's very important to understand what the community's sense of that work force requirement is and we have some sense of it, to be fair to the MPA and the Met, the Met Police, a lot of work's gone in to that but it's a continuing dialogue because I think it changes over time and it changes as the requirement on policing changes. As for the, as for the imperfections, well I guess it's the, the attempts to, to, to, to assess whether we, we are a meritocracy and whether we're fair and whether we are effective in recognising the barriers that, that, that stop us building the type of work force that we want and whether we are effective in overcoming those barriers, in terms of the support that we might provide and

the encouragement, indeed we might provide to people who are thinking of a police career, whether as police staff or police officers and people that are not thinking of a police career, perhaps more importantly.

Okay. So what do you think? I mean, do, is the org—is it fair? Is there a meritocracy? How do the systems work? How would you characterise the culture? I mean, I, I

Yes.

..want to get your impressions of where you think the organisation is at.

BQ I, I think the organisation's made a lot of progress in trying to build an, a, a fair and just meritocracy where those best qualified for roles and responsibilities or, indeed, to join the Service are selected to do so and their treatment across the board is fair and equitable. So I, I, I, I feel that you know, we, we have lurched from one position to another around certain approaches, for example progression, promotion and things like that, where perhaps we haven't settled on, on, on a, a particular approach and then worked really hard to refine that approach. I think we have sort of shifted, sometimes, from one fad to another in terms of promotion, for example. So we need to be perhaps clearer about how we want to progress and develop people, either laterally or vertically. The, the, the, the single perhaps biggest point of this might not be a surprise to you, that I would like to make, i—is really if we're serious about improving some of the work force outcomes that we aspire to, we have to challenge the work force structure, our employment structure and, you know, wh—wh—what are very outdated approaches an—and a very outdated regulatory framework, that many people will fight vociferously to protect,

Can, can you give us some

BQ ..because of vested interest.

..practical examples?

BQ Well, for example, I, I think the way we recruit and train people is rather out of date. I, I, I, we, we espouse the rhetoric of profession but we sometimes lack the hallmarks of a true

profession in terms of conveying to those that want to join the Service as tho—as well as those that are in it, that they own their personal development and professional development, the organisation will support it and facilitate it, but actually it doesn't own it so what I'm saying is, moving away from a paternalistic type culture to one that's much more professional, we would say to people, rather than them knocking on, at our door saying "I want a job in the police service, you make me a police officer and whilst, and, and do it at your expense", we should be actually accrediting the market place for potential recruits to acquire the knowledge that they need to become police recruits, or members of police staff, a—and, and incentivise them to, to learn, outside of policing, what they need to come in to policing

Mm

..as a career.

(inaudible)

(inaudible)

AJ Sorry, I, I just don't understand what you mean.

BQ Right.

AJ What does accrediting the market place mean?

BQ Okay. Right. Well, if you think of nursing, medicine, law, the, the professions, the i—i--- if you went to law school and said, Make me a lawyer and do it at your expense, they would laugh at you and I guess, in a sense we need to move to something that recognises that pol—the police career is, should be, a valued and rewarding career, with loads of opportunity. Its a thousand careers in one. And we should aspire to recruit the very best and the most committed and able people.

AJ Does that mean that you think that, that people who want to become police officers should have a, should have to do some kind of vocational training at their own expense before (inaudible) some kind of degree, or, or

BQ Well – what I'm saying is

AJ ..higher, higher education

BQ Yes.

AJ and qualification

BQ I'm, what I'm saying

AJ That, that's a specific proposal.

BQ That, that's a specific proposal; what I'm saying is, the current model's quite exclusionary. For example, people wh—wh--who, who have dependent children, people who are, who are sort of – already in paid employment, who, who perhaps can't afford, or don't want to take the risk of resigning, at that point in time and going into a career that they not, don't know necessarily would be the right one for them, I th—I think by opening up the off—the routes through which people can pursue a police career, as a police officer or police staff, I think has a lot to offer. I think joining the, the police as a recruit and going in to a

Mm

BQ ..structured training program, it's quite long and requires your attendance over a long period of time in one place, can be quite difficult for some people to achieve, whereas, if they were able to, for example, to go to night school and acquire all of the knowledge elements required for the job that they, they're, they're interested in, then I think you open up the organisation to a much wider pool of people.

AJ The, what, what you've su—suggested, which is a, just to my mind, a really interesting idea and I'm not heard this raised before, f-- fits in very well with another argument, which is – which has been developed during the course of these hearings, about the, the, the values and benefits of a multi point entry.

BQ Yes

AJ And the two seem to fit together, don't they?

BQ Yes

AJ Have you given thought to

BQ Oh yes

AJ ..to multi point entry?

(laughter)

BQ But I, I was head of ACPO's Work force Development Business Area, where we did propose multi point entry; we did propose rather radical progression systems to identify the most talented people and progress them much more aggressively through the organisation. At that time, there was support for those types of proposals amongst a sizable minority of Chief Constables, but there was not a, a, a, an overwhelming majority in support, but that's changing and if you look at Chief Constables now, I would say we're probably at the cusp of an acceptance that some major structural changes to our work force framework and our employment structure need to occur and I, I'm, I'm very hopeful of that but it does need political will, because there, there, there is a lot of vested interest in the system and there are lots of people who will argue for the *status quo* and the *status quo* denies us a lot of opportunity to broaden the work force.

AJ You make a – you make a, a general case, as well as a specifically diversity case

Mm

AJ ..in favour of multi point

BQ Yes

AJ ..entry

BQ Yes

AJ W—just, just, to, to put a bit of flesh on the bones of that proposal

Yes

AJ T—two questions. F—First of all, what sort of entry points do you think would be appropriate?

Mm

AJ And secondly, a point was made by a previous person who came and spoke to us, that it's all very well to talk about multi point entry, but you couldn't imagine putting some person who'd come in at Inspector level, or Chief Inspector level, whatever, in charge of a murder investigation. A person in charge of a murder investigation would have to have been a Constable first and gone through the – can you address those two points? First of all, just to identify the points of entry in this multi point proposal, and secondly, to identify that specific point,

BQ Okay.

AJ ..and (inaudible)

BQ Well, well, first thing I would say, if you've got the will to do it, you can do anything you like, but secondly the points that people make are sensible and valid points; for example, fifteen years ago, I, I, I, I think people would have said that direct entry into Chief Officer level, Board level of the police service was not a good thing to do and yet it's now routine. I was a Chief Constable of a Force where actually police staff of the Board outnumbered police officers – in fact, it might just be the case in the Met. So these are senior strategic leaders in policing, many of whom, not all, but many of whom are direct entrants. My head of HR in Surrey was from Rolls-Royce, believe it or not and then before that, I think, I think he was in British Oxygen -- came directly into policing and brought a very different perspective in terms of how we develop our work force

AJ These are, these are what's called, these are not Warranted Officers?

BQ Not Warranted, no.

AJ Right.

BQ But just to make the point (inaudible)

AJ No, I understand that. No, of course.

BQ ..ten or fifteen years ago, that was unheard of and now

AJ Of course

BQ ..it's routine. The more specific point that you raise, about direct entry particularly

Mm



BQ ... I think you were alluding to police officers, where they have responsibilities around public safety and so forth and, and sort of critical decision making roles that have significant public safety dimensions. I think what we just need to recognise, if you want direct entry at, say, Superintendent level, or Chief Superintendent level, then you would have to do a cost benefit analysis and say Look, at that level, would the number of people that you could identify, that could make that transition with very significant induction costs, deliver the benefit that we require and the change that we require?

Mm

BQ Or might it be sensible, perhaps, to do it at a lower level in the organisation—

Mm

BQ ..or in the organisational hierarchy, hierarchy at perhaps Inspector level,

Mm

BQ ..looking at what the military do; nevertheless significant induction costs, because you, you, you know, they select—they train these people for a year, to be officers and to move—to my way of thinking that's a perfectly legitimate strategy, to, to, to have a process whereby the most talented people in society can come in and use those talents much more quickly than the conventional employment approach allows and that's why I think one, we don't recruit some of those people, because of the single point of entry or, or we lose them because it just cannot progress them through the organisation as quickly as their talents would demand, excepting there are some whose egos will demand that, as well, but screening out the ego bit and looking at the, the talent of people to deliver in, in significant operational leadership roles, I, I think it's perfectly legitimate and, and ought to be explored, but I sense the police service have shied from a true exploration of the cost and benefits, culturally and operationally

Mm

BQ ..and in service terms, of, of those approaches and I, I think that, I think the effects could be quite profound.

CB Margaret.

MB (inaudible). Okay, thank you. Let me just go sort of slightly to the side. I want to sort of just pick up on something you said, and then move on to my main question. You sort of, just made a comment that the MPS can do whatever they, whatever we want or whatever they want if they have the will.

BQ Well, I, I think I said "we".

MB If we have the will.

BQ Yeah.

MB If we have the will.

BQ Yeah.

MB So..

BQ I think.

MB So what, so what's the will that the MPS, (inaudible) do you think the MPS (inaudible) enough of the will in response to diversity issues?

BQ I, I, I think that the MPS and the MPA broadly, do have a shared will. I think we, we all have a strong will but, but I, I do think that we're inextricably linked to the will, nationally, of government to reform public services, even when some of that reform is not popular, to the

will, you know, of key stake holders to see that change so, I, I, I'm not sure we've really reached a consensus about what public service reform, as it affects the police, ought to look like

MB Okay

BQ ..and, and, and we tend to get sort of bogged down in, in the old chestnuts of officer numbers and you know, the, the need to have walked the beat for two years before you could..

MB Bob, can I just pull you back

BQ ..possibly be an Inspector.

MB ..specifically

BQ Yes.

MB ..of, of my point in relation to diversity is I'm thinking, if the Met right, you know, right, yeah, truly respected (inaudible) length of time and your, your perception and your view is that the Met has the ability to move (inaudible) when they want them to move, which is what I took from that so I'm trying to understand, is it then, because the will appears to be there in terms of the leadership and both the former Commissioner and current Commissioner, to do it

Mm

MB ..he wills appears to be there from the M—Senior Management team, in terms of what they want (inaudible) so I'm trying to think out where, where's the will not to? Or is it not ...

BQ Well, I, I think, inevitably there, there's a mixed picture across the landscape. You, you'll find Senior Managers who are absolutely open and receptive to the need to device, diversify our work force, to develop it and grow it. And you'll find others, perhaps much more wedded to, sort of conventional thought and the *status quo*. So it's a mixed picture, but a, a, a—as an

Mm

BQ ..organisation as a whole, there seems to me a lot of will, particularly in the last five years, to really make a difference and of course we, we are seeing a significant difference. It's very difficult to judge to what extent structural issues in our society are constraining that and to what degree a lack of will might be constraining that. I c—I don't know how you measure that, frankly, I really don't and I think that's at the heart of some of the

Okay

BQ ..tensions in the debate that's – debates that we had.

MB (inaudible) particularly interesting discussion on one of our focus groups, which was actually around that issue, which is about processes and procedures, or is it about the people in which you operate as a, a long debate on (inaudible) so I'm quite interested in trying to find that, because it requires, to a degree, a different, different set of approaches, depending on what you're doing. But just, just perhaps moving on. In terms of, of your role in, in, as

Assistant Commissioner Specialist Officer

MB Commissioner, sorry! Specialist (inaudible), can you tell me what, what's the leadership? What do you felt is the leadership? Is there a leadership gap around diversity in the Met, in the Force?

BQ I, I don't think there's a leadership gap. I, I've come back to the Met after five years away. I've been back just about a year, just over a year. What I can tell you is in my thirteen months back in the Met, diversity and equality permeates our conversations in all sorts of ways. I, I, I hear the so-called permafrost of middle management speaking routinely about

the benefits of recruiting people whose perspectives will be different, who will challenge our thinking and our approaches. And I think counter terrorism is a very good area where we're all quite challenged and we all need to be, to, to have the benefit of different perspectives, because none of us seem to know the answers to, to the problems that we face. So, but is it perfect? Of course it isn't. There, there are some that do better than others, there are some more committed than others. I'm very encouraged to see, in this year's appraisal system, we've got a much more clearer means of identifying the contribution of officers and staff in promoting equality and diversity in the organisation.

MB So what's wrong? Despite, what, what, what's wrong? Got the leadership; there's a, there's a (inaudible) degree of will there, middle managers are engaged, they're talking about the issues, they're, it's reflected in their, (inaudible) process,

Mm

MB ..what, what's wrong? We understand why we need to have a broader representative work force.

BQ Well, that, that's, I -- it's a great question, you know, I -- I wish I could, could, I wish I could answer that. I, I could have a stab at answering it

MB Yes,

BQ ..and say

MB Good

BQ ..what's wrong, I think progress is not as quick as we all want it to be. That, that's what's wrong. And then you get into a huge debate about why that is. Secondly, we get it wrong; we make mistakes in individual cases that have huge impact, impact and amplification and create frustration and perceptions, that things perhaps are worse than they maybe are. All, all I can say is, I see the Met's numbers are all going in the right direction and I would include my own area of business that a-- as moving in the right direction, but it isn't as quick as I would like and –

MB (inaudible) when you say quick, are you talking about the – the time argument or are you talking about something else?

BQ I'm talking about time specifically, but there are other dimensions of, of, of our dissatisfaction, but in terms of, for example, bringing in people in to the specialist operations arena, female officers and staff, BME officers and staff, I've seen a lot of progress, we've grown as a, as a business group quite dramatically with new counter-terrorism funding in particular and that's helped us change the ratios of police of—poli—BME staff and police officers and female staff and officers, but certainly there, there are still, there are still barriers to people coming in and I don't think we fully understand them. For example, very difficult to get female officers involved in Armed Protection Commands. Again, very much the same in Surrey Police, when I was Chief Constable. Massive under-representation of women in those areas of our business, where firearms are carried and yet, on the other hand, you can see very obvious benefits in attracting women into that type of work, where you perhaps get a slightly less macho

Mm

BQ ..sort of disposition to the carriage of fire arms and those types of duties. We did a lot of work in that Force and in the end, a myriad of different approaches led us to conclude that perhaps there was, there was a real gender difference in the attitude of men and women towards firearms. It was, was underpinning our difficulties in equalising representation in the Armed Commands.

BP Margaret, could I just join in on that one?

MB Yes, of course.

BP It's just that i--, in, in the past, Bob, and I, I know you just referred to it. You, you were a key advocate of doing health checks to be able to identify what was, what wasn't working, what needed to be done and then getting on and doing it. I mean, is this perhaps a way? You know, you said, well, we know that it's not quite right, but di—is there still a process here, within the Met, that, of those health checks being done in an open, honest and receptive way?

BQ Y-- I th—I think there are; for example, we undertake a lot of survey work of our staff, we have focus groups, we have various fora in the organisation, I Chair my business group, Diversity and Equality Board and there are lots of issues that you can recognise as being things that require action and, and I'm sure all business groups are the same. We have prioritised areas, where we think there are barriers to people's progression or to fair treatment and we have plans to address those issues; some of them are, are easy to address, others are quite difficult, because it may be, you know, you actually have to spend a lot of money refurbishing a whole load of accommodation to provide the right facilities, it costs money, it takes time. But the important thing is, have we recognised it? Has it got the right priority and is someone responsible and accountable for delivering it?

MB Can, can I just, I've got two further (inaudible)

Sorry -- were you going to come back? 'Cause if not, I'll go back over to Margaret.

BP N—no, I was just going to, to come back on something the, the, the question that you --over the answer you gave earlier on, where you indicated that, you know, at, at certain levels there were people who -- at certain levels, there were people who accepted that there were attitudinal problems with others. That's what I'd picked up.

Yes, yes.

BP Is – do you think that the action is robust enough, dealing with those attitudes? 'Cause, quite often, it's not structural, though you know,

(inaudible)

BP ..a combination. It is, it's in there, isn't it?

BQ Yeah. Yes. The, the attitudinal, stroke cultural type challenges are, are obviously harder in some respects, because they're harder to evidence

Mm

BQ Do I think that we're effective in dealing with them? Not always, no. I think the tools we have are blunt, I think the tools we have to deal with people who we, we do suspect promulgate prejudice and discriminatory behaviour are quite, quite blunt, frankly and I think people are often afraid to address these issues and this is a key leadership issue;

Mm

BQ ..this is about the leadership signal that people like me send to officers and staff, about how I will back them and how the Commissioner will back them

Mm

BQ ..challenging people who are not of our values. And I don't think we've been very good at that in the police service generally, in the past. I'm --obviously applaud the Commissioner's five Ps and his messages about leadership and moral leadership and it's the moral leadership from top to bottom of the organisation, recognising that, in a sense, the moment you sign on the dotted line to be a member of the Metropolitan Police, you assume a leadership position in the eyes of communities, whoever you are. And we – I don't think we have convinced our staff yet that they are supported to tackle

Mm

Yeah

BQ ..and, and of course they, they tend to read and --disproportionately and hear disproportionate about things that go wrong and long and protractive employment tribunals and things where the Met have to apologise, we've got this wrong and p--paid out, poss-- quite possibly you know, with good cause and quite justifiably and I think it intimidates people sometimes, and yet we don't emphasise how often we get it right and, and encourage others to follow that example. We have many, many people, at all levels of the organisation, (inaudible) are supremely expert at this. They can address unfairness, they can spot inequalities and the sort of pervasive but subtle nature of it and address it. And we



need to learn more from them and we need to convince our staff that actually, you can do this and you will be backed by the organisation. You know, there are ways of doing it and there are sort of parameters to how you behave in tackling all sorts of things, under-performance, discrimination, unfairness, inequality, lack of opportunity, but, but some people do it very well.

Okay.

MB Just two final points, (inaudible) one that I'm interested in (inaudible) getting your view and perspective (inaudible) perspective of, sorry. I was just ask you about the Diversity Directorate 'cause it's clearly, I imagine, your Division is a big reciprocate (sic) of their services.

Yes.

MB Can you tell me how and if you think structurally if it's they're in the right place, in terms of (inaudible) and units

Mm

MB ..and yes, (inaudible) deal with that first, that.

BQ You know, I, I've, I've make, make these comments with, with some sort of *caveats* but I, I'm not sure they are necessarily structurally in the right place. I'm not, I'm not sure whether my business group receives the same attention, possibly, as others but, but it's hard for me to evidence

Mm

BQ ..that ; it's just an impression I have felt, but that, to be fair, whenever we ask for help we get active engagement and support and advice, I am copied in to products, best practice, from the Directorate, Denise Milani attends the – my, my Diversity Board a—and is a very

sort of active member of that Board. So I'm sure, I'm sure we could better integrate the work of that Directorate with SA, but I'm not sure we've yet found the right mechanism to do that. They're, they're not, they're not ever-present throughout the Directorate. We've tried to be the Business Group (inaudible), we've tried to be as self sufficient as we can and take responsibility for our own issues; examples of that, we're setting up the SO Careers Consultancy, the, the Opportunity Fairs that we have around the Met, we deploy people to all parts of the Met to talk to staff about opportunities in SO, we have careers fairs, we have particular day events in the fifth floor briefing room, for various groups of Met employees about pursuing careers here, but, but it isn't, it isn't as, as ever-present and integrated perhaps, as we'd all like and that's --the onus is as much on me as it is on them

Mm

BQ ..to make that

MB (inaudible) so you saying strategically we're in to the organisation may sit, sort of in the right place and the reason I ask is 'cause there's some suggestion

Mm

MB ..that they should, they shouldn't actually sit (inaudible) TP, they should sit

Yes

MB ..Above that level, where

Yes

MB ..I'm just

BQ Well, I, I certainly --I'm not sure TP is necessarily the right place. I understand the huge

Mm

BQ ..business group and there's lots of, lots of good arguments to say why they might be

Mm

BQ ..but from my perspective, particularly given we're much smaller in scale, but the critical nature of having people with particular skills, qualities and perspectives in Specialist Operations cannot be over

Mm

BQ ..stated for the Met in its long term challenges, around security and around counter terrorism. So I, I wonder whether a more central – D--Directorate might be better; I wonder whether actually having it slightly devolved with chunks of it in the business groups more integrated into the business groups with just a smaller central

Mm

BQ ..co-ordinating function may be better, I don't know (inaudible) it's good debate.

MB Thank you very much. Just one last final point I just (inaudible). I, sorry! Sorry! Right, I'll move you on now, I'll come back to you.

AJ No, no, no, no. 'Cause you, no, no, go on (inaudible)

MB No, no, no, no. It will fit in, my question will fit in anywhere else, it's okay. I just wanted to ask you, you know when you say, you said I don't think we convinced our staff. I just wanted to get a, an indication from you, what you f—what you think that area of work means, (inaudible) given there's been a training which I know isn't about convincing others (inaudible) training and learning, so the training and learning's been made available, the

business case in a lot of circumstances, from what I can see, has been outlined and generally Met staff will say, these are the reasons

Mm

.. we need a diverse work force, to give the examples where, you know, that's been beneficial and

Yes

MB where, where not happening (inaudible) diverse work force has equally impacted on the Service (inaudible) and what is it you think that is the convincing bit, that we need to do that is a tangible outcome and –

BQ I, I think it's, it still comes back to the, the hearts and minds of people-- who we are, why we join and how the organisation and what we do conspires to knock that out of us. I, I, I don't think we understand values attrition very well

BQ I don't think we yet understand the need to replenish that, that sort of values reserve that every person has when they join and yet can be very quickly eroded by a siege mentality and a very powerful occupational culture. So part of that is the leaders of the organisation

Mm

BQ ..looking into the eye of the work force and telling them about the need for us all to deliver a, a, a, a leadership that's moral and that's absolutely wedded to some key priorities about how we, how we operate and how we conduct ourselves in policing and what our values are. And more lea—leadership by example and certainly the, the organisation can act inconsistently. They hear Senior Managers say one thing and do another. And to staff, those gaps

Mm

BQ .. ma—may for senior managers seem very, very small; they, they are but the width of the Grand Canyon when, when you're a front line

Mm

BQ ..officer or member of staff and you see

Mm

BQ ..that sort of thing. So I think it is a maturing of the culture, it's – it's -- people don't still, in my view, feel as empowered as they should, in standing up and their voice being heard, so – I'll, I'll give you one example. I, I think f—we've heard this before, I know, but for example the rank of Sergeant is a very important Sergeant in policing teams and of course we have police staff front line supervisors who are no less important in their teams. But, but are we really clear about what their role is? And I don't, I think we send so many confusing and mixed messages about their role. And I know the Commissioner's very focussed on these issues through the five Ps and actually his vision around very intrusive supervision and wants to send a much clearer message to front line supervisors about their role in upholding the values of the organisation; quality assuring the delivery of services to the public. Actually, when you boil it down, there are probably five or six critical things that we should just focus on, relentlessly and not confuse them with all this other myriad of stuff that in the end will not be the determinant of success or failure, to the organisation.

(inaudible)

AJ We've been talking a lot about a, a kind of indivisible BME issue and, and within that indivisibility w--we've been talking about one aspect, which is the que—question of, of what's called progression

Yes

AJ ..and I, I would call promotion.

Yes

AJ But, but, but particularly, coming from where you're coming from, the question of faith seems to , to, to detach itself from that indivisible BME issue.

Mm

AJ And it would be, would be remiss of us, I think, if we didn't take the opportunity of spending a few minutes talking about that particular aspect, which is, which is not – in the received sense

Mm

AJ ..a, a, a colour question

Mm

AJ But in, but is instead a, a religion question. And I wonder, before, before the questions become more focussed, whether we could have a, a general statement from you on the sort of problems that are arising in that context?

BQ Well, when I first came to Specialist Operations in March of 0-8, I was struck by a couple of things that happened in my first week or two, where officers asked to see me, v-- very junior officers, Constables, Detective Constables and a, a number of those were actually of the Muslim faith and I, I, I, I, I'll give you one example of a few officers that spoke to me and one was a, an officer who worked in another Force and after the 7/7 bombings was outraged, like the rest of us and decided that he wanted to come and join the Metropolitan Police, to make his contribution, as a Muslim, to responding to the atrocities of the 7/7 bombings and work in Specialist Operations and of course we were recruiting at that time, heavily. And this officer then sort of told me how proud he, he was to come and work in SO

and then talked about his experience of being an Officer in SO in Counter Terrorism Command. And it, it was an interesting insight, again, into the culture and how sometimes it lacks the sensitivity and the agility to embrace people who have a different perspective. And actually this officer was fluent speaker in Arabic, was very well connected, with family, through a number of communities in London, in the Muslim communities, had a good challenging disposition a--and was clearly intellectually quite capable and yet, felt entirely disillusioned. In fact he said to me, "Boss, I don't want anything to come out of our conversation, other than to you, for you to know what happened to me, in the hope that it won't happen to those that follow me, because he said, Actually, on Monday I transfer

Mm

BQ ..out of the Metropolitan Police, back to another Force. I've given up. And it's too late for me, but I hope that what I say impacts on you. And that, so it's qu—it's, it's

AJ Sorry, forgive me for interrupting, but that, that's quite tantalising, what you said, because you haven't identified any of the specific

Mm

AJ ..observations that you made. Would, do you feel able to do that?

BQ Yeah. What he told me was in confidence, but

AJ Of course

BQ ..I think he would forgive me for sharing the sort of

AJ Yes

BQ ..touchy feel of, of it but, but it was essentially a failure to recognise the contribution that he could make; I

Right

BQ ..I, I, I would sort of say that was the headline.

AJ Right.

BQ Failure to recognise some of the cultural attributes that he brings; you know, for example, he was talking about -- how shall I say this? -- the, the sort of cultural expectation of some of the middle management that he would go with other officers to soirees in Embassies

Mm

BQ ..which is sort of --

AJ Just, sorry I don't understand that.

BQ Well we have connections with the Embassies across London

AJ Right

BQ ..and we have to have very good working relationships

AJ Right

BQ ..with the Embassies, because there are all sorts of



Yes

BQ ..security issues and occasionally, Embassies being what they are, hold functions on a regular basis and there's an expectation among

AJ You mean drinks parties?

BQ ..well, receptions,

AJ Receptions, okay

BQ Quite formal,

AJ Right

BQ .. very businesslike, but nevertheless

AJ Yes

BQ ..they do serve drinks there, as well and canapés and relationships are made and issues are discussed and they're very useful for us

AJ Right

BQ ..in a business sense but wh- wha- what it was simply was that there was an expectation that officers would go in a group to these, these events and this officer one, doesn't drink and, and, and, and you know, said, I'm happy to stand my share of that work but – but, but I don't drink alcohol and so I'm perhaps less enthusiastic about it than some of my colleagues and

so I'll, I'll do my turn but I don't think we should all go to them *en masse* and do this sort of thing. And I think the officer was absolutely right and – but that, that was not well received by – that was seen as being bit of a trouble maker, not fitting in, you know, it's tha—it's that type of thing so that, that was just one example of a number of examples he gave; bear in mind, I took it at face value, I, I, I can only say, from everything I heard from the officer, that there was nothing to suggest that anything he said wasn't true, or fair and, and, and it was a, a, a, an opening insight for me, as a new AC, as to some of the issues that might be lurking below the surface in my business group. I saw a number of officers, n—not all men, not all BME, not all Muslim, I saw a cross section of officers who, of their own volition, saw, saw the opportunity to raise with me some elements of SO that they felt were unfair and not right, in one form or another. I'm sure some had axes to grind, others, I think, were doing it on truly altruistic motives,

AJ D--do they, do they,

Yes

AJ I'm sorry to keep interrupting you but I, there are questions that are constantly being thrown up by what you're saying and one has to try and capture them.

BQ Sure.

AJ But – it, is it fair to say that the, that the two objections which you were hearing, which you were accepting, were first of all a, a, an insensitivity

BQ Yes

AJ ..to, to cultural attributes,

Yeah

AJ ..characteristics, or whatever?

BQ To some degree, yes. It, it

AJ ..which, which had the effect of making the, the, the officers uncomfortable and that was destructive of morale and the overall efficiency of the organisation, point one,

Yeah

AJ ..and two, a, a quite distinct failure properly to exploit the special skills that many of these individuals were bringing to the organisation. Is that, those seem to be the two, the two characteristics

BQ Amongst other things, yeah.

AJ What, what would be -- so, staying at that level of generality, what were the other categories?

BQ Oh well I think you've summed up the two

AJ Okay

BQ The two key ones were, was (inaudible)

AJ ..for those of us (inaudible)

BQ ..was a lack of appreciation of what he could bring and exploiting the qualities

Yeah

BQ ..and insights that he had. And, to some degree, a lack of sensitivity.

AJ Yes, but, so the obvious question is, is, is how have things changed?

BQ Well, things, I think, are changing, as are-- as a result of not just that encounter but a number of encounters and attempts to get a feel for the, where is SO on the sort of cultural spectrum, ---

END OF SIDE A

BQ .. my Senior Commander (inaudible) I, I told them about these people that came to my door, told them what they'd said, I tried not to be judgmental, in a sense, by j--by saying, look, I haven't tested whether that person told me precisely the truth, or whether there was six of one and half a dozen of the other here, but I said (inaudible) I recognise the pattern and we had a very open dialogue about that early on; as a result of that I said that I would like to Chair the Diversity Board and we've started to make a bit of progress on that and get some more structuring into diversity. What, or and equality as, as, as a series of issues, but what did encourage me, as a result of those encounters early on, I went into SO15 and I was actually surprised to see a very structured program for equality and diversity in the Command and some very, very powerful champions at middle management and senior management level, so I was encouraged by that, but it seemed to me that Command is taking in the, these issues seriously, but there are still clearly people in the Command who probably do not feel fully integrated in, into it or fully supported and, and, and have not yet found their place in it and the Command had not been successful in helping them find their place, where they can make that contribution.

BP (inaudible) just on, on the point that Anthony's made, you, you're one of the few people who's used the term equality in relation to diversity who's come in front of us, Bob;

Mm

BP ..what is it that, that, why do you think that they felt comfortable to come and talk to you and, and what, what message do you think you sent out that, that made them feel that they'd be listened to?

BQ Well, I, I don't know whether, I, I

BP Just that you were new? I mean

BQ It may have been. I think, I think it's probably I was new, I guess, I don't know.

CB (inaudible) I don't -- I'm not sure, and, and the reason why I say that and I don't want to embarrass you, but in the—is it the thirteen months that, since you've been back

Mm

CB ..I mean, you know, peo—people are talking about you in terms of your understanding of equality and diversity. There seems to be a, a bit of a buzz, you know, around Bob Quick when it comes to equality and diversity and I'm,

Right

CB ..and, and I was going to ask the very same question

(inaudible)

CB ..about, what it is about your leadership style and, and I just wondered how we were able to capture that, but also how what might we, to use this terminology that we've heard earlier, is to almost infect the organisation. How, how do we infect the organisation with those people that we know within it, who are doing good things, so that we can ensure that that permeates?

BQ I, I, I, I'm not sure I can answer that, so far as to say I think there are a lot of people around that are, really do take these issues

CB Sure

BQ ..seriously and I'm, I'm sure you know that, as well as I do. If I could describe what I think is a really important ingredient that the staff look for, whether they're police

Mm

BQ ..officers or police staff, it is, is one, that you're straight, you know

Mm

BQ ..you, you're just straight and that you, you, you, you are prepared to accept the inadequa— inadequacies of the organisation's culture. I, I, I would describe myself as one, one of the culture's fiercest critics, you, you know, going back to my time long before even the Macpherson Inquiry but during the Macpherson Inquiry, during the anti-corruption campaign, you know, we, we could, we could write volumes about how good the culture is and we know its good points and its attributes but we're often sometimes reluctant to accept its deficiencies, because of our, because of the, the role of policing, managing social conflict, a, a, a, and feeling besieged

Mm

BQ ..it cr—it creates a reticence

Mm

BQ ..to criticise one another and criticise ourselves.

CB Okay.

(inaudible)

CB Yeah.

BP (inaudible) yeah, it's just, you, you, you made a statement earlier on and it was part of your opening, (inaudible) about frameworks, outdated frameworks in your opening sort of talk, Bob. And you, one of the things you spoke about was the regulatory framework being outdated. I just want to ask, 'cause this Inquiry is about the MPA, as well. Was, was part of that related to that, as a regulatory framework?

BQ I, I wasn't actually think—when I said that, I wasn't thinking so much about how we're governed; I was more thinking about the, the, the, the employment

Okay

BQ ..law that governs the police service and, on the one hand your, your arguments say it's tried and tested, our basic work force model has stood the test of a hundred and eighty years

(inaudible)

BQ ..and of course, that – those remarks are very true. We, we have to be a resilient organisation, we have to be very flexible, in terms of deployment, to meet any crisis that may be asked of us to, to rise to, but the same time, it doesn't look very modern and when, when, when we think about the type of society we have and the aspirations of people in our society, we don't always get the best out of it, so I, I think we miss out on a lot of very talented people i—in diverse elements of our society, that either don't contemplate joining the police service or, if they do, they are disillusioned because we're not as flexible in employment terms as other employers. Simple as that.

BP Right, let me – let me now try and pin you down with a direct question, then, about the MPA. Do you think that the direction, the scrutiny and oversight role that they have, has been robust enough or could it be done more to help the, the vision that you have of equality and diversity?

BQ Well, certainly it could be improved. I, I think, again, like the MPS, the Authority is a victim of the, of the law that it has to operate under. But I think there are things it can do to improve. I think the Committee structures tend to be very formal and slow and inflexible. It would seem to me that, sometimes, a different relationship between the MP, --PA and the MPS might bear more fruit, in terms of what we, we, we commonly agree are the outcomes we all seek, so I, I do think there's a need for more, for more dynamic relationship and more collaboration, 'cause actually, I think people get confused around governance and think that it has to be a very formal, arm's length process where your job is to bash up with the Met whenever it does something wrong. Well it, actually I, I don't think it needs to just be that. I, of course it must hold the Met to account and it must have authority to hold it to account very formally, in the appropriate circumstances, but that doesn't actually stop Members and officers coming together in, in a more, perhaps, trusting environment, to actually have a dialogue and work together on some of the issues. I think, I think clearly there are pockets of that but I, I, I think there are areas where it perhaps doesn't work as well as it might.

BP And, and just on that, I mean, 'cause you, you've obviously had experience of working in a, a rather more informal relationship with Authority members and committees, but I just want to bring you back to one thing, because we've heard, from the Commissioner, this, this term confidence and, and it seems to be something that's really being driven. But there is that other link with confidence, which is trust and confidence and there's a gap, at the moment, in reality and in perceptible terms, amongst BME particular people that we're talking with. What can be done more to, to get over the, the trust --and you've given a good example of people being able to come and trust that they can speak to you, in confidence and that in itself has then, hopefully, on the basis of giving more confidence back through. That's what you said one person, that's the only (inaudible) thing that that person wanted out of it. What more can be done at your level, with your peer group, to make that -- you know, consistent more, across the – MPS and the MPA?

BQ Well, I, I think there are lots of things we can do – for example I, I, I, I have a strong sense that, that the senior leadership of the organisation has to have a, a very candid dialogue with the people we lead and actually we should encourage that



Mm

BQ ..all levels of the organisation, but sometimes all-- the messages we give are not as clear as they need to be about what's expected of people. What is the deal? And what will be tolerated and what won't be tolerated, in terms of behaviour? Why did we join? Why did we all join the, the police service and actually we, we know, almost without exception, they're for very altruistic reasons and we need to remind ourselves (inaudible) so what can we do? I think, looking people in the eye, you know, face to face and telling them, they have to hear

Mm

BQ ..it from me, in my business group, in the end. An—and better still, if they hear it from me with my senior team, that we are joined up and of one mind and one voice, about the style of leadership in Specialist Operations and what is fairness and equality in Specialist Operations and, and I take my cue from the Commissioner and the program the Commissioner in the early months of his tenure is starting to put some shape to and I'm very encouraged by that, because I think I, I think it's what's needed and he started the process, I am planning a series of road shows with, with Specialist Operations, where my senior team get perhaps three or four, five hundred at a time and we have half a day, or more if we need to, where we have that dialogue and, and the test of it, for me, is if people, people's voice can be heard. My, my message to the, to them – and it embraces diversity – is, they have an absolute right, an absolute right, whoever they are, to expect good leadership and if they don't get it, they have, they must have a voice and I have an absolute right to expect good leadership st—starting with me as an example, but right the way through the organisation and, and moral courage from our leaders, to do the right thing. And I-- and the test for me is, can I convince them that if they do the right thing, they'll be backed and they won't be cut adrift and, and left out on a limb, "Ooh, you shouldn't have done that, ooh no, you know, we're going to – we were going to (inaudible)" – have they got the support and will they be backed if they're doing the right thing? And I just don't think, yet, we have convinced enough people, 'cause I think they want to do the right thing, I've no doubt about that. I think they want to. The very vast majority.

CB Okay, I think we're going to have to

(inaudible)

CB ..end it there, Bob! That was – really, really useful session; I hope you found it useful, or interesting at least. We'll make sure we get the transcript to you . You talked earlier, you made reference earlier, to some ideas that you'd had as a result

Mm

CB ..of having the modernisation portfolio and you gave us two very clear ones, but I just wondered if there, if there were other things that you think could be of use, then we'd be really pleased to hear them. Mostly because a lot of people have told us that this issue is going to take time, you need

Yes

CB ..to naturally make it happen

Yes

CB ..and I think what we've been very comforted by, with your evidence today, is that you're acknowledging it takes time, but we can't wait for it to happen; I mean not waiting for it to happen, these are some things that we could do, so I think your, your, your evidence has been a, yeah, just a complete dream to listen to

Mm

CB ..actually,

(inaudible)

CB ..so, and we thank you for that.

Okay

Thank you very much. Thank you.