

Gender and Minority Ethnic Strength, Distribution and Progression: Analysis

1.0 Police Officers

1.1 Proportionality of Overall Strength

- 1.1.1 Over the two and a half year period from March 2001 to September 2003, overall workforce proportionality improved. The percentage of police officers from minority ethnic police groups grew from 4.1% to 5.9%, which represents a 64% increase in the number of minority ethnic police officers within the MPS. The Met is on target to hit the 6.6% strength target by March 2004, and at the time of writing the latest data available was that at 31 December 2003 minority ethnic police officer strength stood at 6.2%.
- 1.1.2 The proportion of police officers who were female also improved from 15.7% to 17.3%, with the number of female police officers having grown by 27% over the two and a half year period. The Met will comfortably achieve the 18% strength target by March 2004, and at 31 December 2003 female police officer strength stood at 17.6%.
- 1.1.3 Achievements on increasing the proportion of police strength accounted for by women and minority ethnic officers have been underpinned by targeted recruitment activity and reduced turnover.
- 1.1.4 Turnover rates for female police officers fell slightly from 5.06% to 4.19% between 2000/01 and the first six months of 2003/04 (annualised rate), and remained below turnover rates for male police officers. In relation to length of service, the pattern remained broadly similar, with turnover rates highest in the first year of service – although below those for men – and showing a further peak in the fourth year of service and again around the ten year stage.
- 1.1.5 Turnover rates for minority ethnic police officers, which in 2000/01 were lower than for white officers (4.51% as compared to 5.80%), increased so that during the first six months of 2003/04 the turnover rate for minority ethnic staff stood at 7.43% as compared against 5.42% for white officers. As for other groups, the highest turnover rates occurred in the first year of service. By the first half of 2003/04 minority ethnic wastage in the first year of service had increased by almost half as much again as compared with the earlier period.
- 1.1.6 Targeted activity to reduce wastage among minority ethnic officers includes the 0-5+ Development Programme, which supports and develops minority ethnic police officers in the first five years of their career and beyond. Additionally, the 0-2 Probationer Mentoring Programme, delivered on BOCUs, is aimed at enhancing retention

among all probationers, including women and those from minority ethnic groups. Furthermore, work is ongoing within the Career Development and Retention Unit in the HR Directorate to enhance retention and progression of police officers and police staff, including women and those from minority ethnic groups.

1.2 Distribution of Female and VEM Police Officers Throughout the MPS

1.2.1 Boroughs

1.2.1.1 Because of the way police officers' careers are structured, the initial impact of improved gender and ethnic workforce proportions had been felt on borough, as female and minority ethnic police recruits complete their probation on borough and gain the skills and experience necessary to progress their police careers. Between March 2001 and September 2003, the proportion of police officers on boroughs who were from minority ethnic groups rose from 4.18% to 6.25%, and the proportion of female officers rose from 17.9% to 19.21%. The aspect of the MPS that is most visible to the public is also its most diverse.

1.2.1.2 The percentage of each borough's police officers who were female either remained high or increased in 28 of the 32 boroughs, with the only exceptions being Westminster (fell from 16.2% to 15.5%), Havering (fell from 17.1% to 15.5%), Hackney and Newham (remained constant at 16.8% and 16.9% respectively). The percentage of each borough's police officers from minority ethnic groups increased on all BOCUs with the sole exception of Havering, where the proportion fell from 2.9% to 2.6% of total strength. Although the absolute number of minority ethnic officers at Havering remained constant at nine, total strength on the borough grew over the period.

1.2.1.3 Overall, this picture is encouraging. There continued to be a relatively small number of boroughs where the full benefits of the improvements in the gender and ethnic balance among MPS police officers had not yet been felt.

1.2.1.4 To put this into context, it may be helpful to outline the factors taken into account when posting individual officers to boroughs. These are:

- the number and type of vacancies on each borough;
- the skills of the officers being posted
- the location preferences of the officers being posted; or, where it is not possible to match individual preferences with operational requirements,
- the distance of individuals' homes from the boroughs with unfilled vacancies.
- occasionally, boroughs will "bid" for a named individual who they feel meets the requirements of a particular vacancy, but such

requests are only considered when a robust case for doing so is made.

1.2.1.5 There have been occasions when boroughs have made a request for, for example, women to be posted to them, to address the fact that women are under-represented on the Borough. Following legal advice, the MPS does not conduct postings on such a basis, except where genuine occupational requirements exist with reference to a specific post.

1.2.2 *Specialist Units*

1.2.2.1 As previously indicated, the improvements in workforce proportionality have not yet fed through consistently to specialist units (Specialist Operations, Specialist Crime and Territorial Policing non-borough units) to the extent that has been the case on BOCUs. Many posts within specialist units are for detectives, and to become a detective, police officers must have completed probation, completed a period of training, and undergone a selection process in order to become a detective. Many others posts require specialist experience and training, e.g. Public Order, Firearms, TSG etc. It is therefore to be expected that recent years' achievements in boosting minority ethnic and female recruit numbers will not yet have fully worked through into specialist units.

1.2.2.2 Changes to the structure of the Specialist Operations and Specialist Crime directorates mean it is not always possible to make meaningful comparisons for all specialist units over the two and a half year period in question. Bearing this in mind, the main points to note are detailed below.

1.2.2.3 The number of minority ethnic police officers working in specialist units increased by a little over a third over the two and a half year period, and the proportion of those working within specialist units who are from minority ethnic groups likewise improved from 3.42% to 3.8% in SO and SC, and from 2.53% to 2.89% in TP non-borough OCU. Minority ethnic officer proportions were lowest in the Force Firearms Unit (SO19), where they remained constant at 1.5%, and remain relatively high in Special Branch and the Palace of Westminster, where at the end of September 2003 they stood at 5.2% and 4.7% respectively. The picture has changed significantly in Anti-Terrorist Branch, where the percentage of officers from minority ethnic groups increased from zero to 4.9% (11 officers) in two and a half years.

1.2.2.4 The Child Protection Unit continued to account for a little over a quarter of the female police officers working in SO and SC, although at 10% of the Unit's strength, as compared to just under 4% two and a half years previously, male officers accounted for a higher proportion of the Unit's officers. Outside the Child Protection Unit, the number of

women in SO and SC increased from 447 to 493, although female officers as a proportion of strength in those units declined from 10.44% to 9.55% over the period in question.

1.2.2.5 Within Territorial Policing, the Operations Specialist Support, Territorial Support Group and TP Crime OCUs, all of which had low female workforce proportions of between 0% and 8.1% in March 2001, all achieved an increase to between 8.4% and 12.2% by September 2003. However, the number and proportion of women officers in Traffic OCU has declined slightly over the period in question.

1.2.2.6 A number of initiatives and pieces of work have been undertaken to support enhanced workforce proportionality in specialist units, and plans for further work are in place. DOIT runs FemDTP, a training programme to equip female and minority ethnic officers with the skills to become detectives, in order to position them to move into specialist units. A project was undertaken last year with support Internal Consultancy Group, whereby qualitative research was undertaken to identify barriers to female and minority ethnic participation in specialist units and ways they could be overcome. Through this work a generic action plan was developed, which each OCU has tailored to local circumstances. Many individual OCUs within SO, SC and TP non-borough have run a range of open days and awareness events to encourage applications.

1.2.2.7 Within SCD a Diversity Forum held its inaugural meeting in late January with participation from all SCD OCUs to identify the barriers to female and minority ethnic officers that are, or are perceived to be, in place, and to find ways to overcome them. It is planned that in future the Forum will extend its focus to include police staff.

1.2.2.8 SO has taken a similar approach, and identified that one of the main barriers was a lack of information and guidance. To respond to this and to improve transparency, the Directorate has launched a Careers Consultancy to make information accessible to all staff about the roles on offer, meeting the needs of female and minority ethnic officers in particular but also improving provision to all staff. SO also organises open days and attachments for female and minority ethnic officers.

1.2.2.9 Within TP's non-borough units, the Operational Support Unit (air, marine and dogs) has introduced a mentoring scheme to support staff interested in a career in the unit which is open to all but actively focuses on female and minority ethnic officers to assist with preparation for the selection process. Public Order OCU's positive action strategy includes a programme of attachments and a mentoring scheme, run in conjunction with the Positive Action Team, that involves a number of female and minority ethnic officers acting as role models. Selection criteria and processes and fitness tests for roles in Public Order OCU are under review to ensure they are fair and appropriate for

the roles. TSG has also introduced a mentoring scheme where care has been taken to include female and minority ethnic mentors, and is reviewing fitness testing for the Unit. TSG has also established a women's forum which is well attended and visibly supported by the OCU Commander. Similar attempts were made in respect of forums for minority ethnic and LGBT officers, but without much appetite from officers, so the OCU is working with the relevant staff support associations to develop alternative approaches.

1.3 Progression

1.3.1 Substantive Ranks

1.3.1.1 The MPS' most significant achievements in recruiting female and minority ethnic police officers have been in recent years. Since it takes two years for a police officer to complete probation, and additional time to acquire the skills and experience necessary to achieve promotion, achievements in recruitment are not yet fully reflected throughout the rank structure. For this reason, female and minority ethnic proportions among constables continued, at 19.49% and 6.79% respectively, to exceed the proportions of female and minority ethnic officers present in the force as a whole. However, the period between March 2001 and October 2003 saw real progress in minority ethnic and female police officers' progression through the ranks.

1.3.1.2 By October 2003 minority ethnic police officers accounted for a greater number and proportion of Sergeants, Inspectors, Chief Inspectors, Superintendents and ACPO ranks than had been the case in March 2001. For the reasons described above, however, the absolute numbers of minority ethnic officers in higher ranks remained small. Although the number of Chief Superintendents from minority ethnic backgrounds fell from three to one, by September 2003 the number of minority ethnic Superintendents had increased by 1.5 to 3.5, and the number of minority ethnic Chief Inspectors had doubled to 16, forming a larger potential promotion pool for the future. In the medium term, however, the small number of minority ethnic Chief Superintendents in the MPS and elsewhere might limit the MPS' potential to promote.

1.3.1.3 By October 2003 women accounted for a greater number and proportion of Sergeants, Inspectors, Superintendents Chief Superintendents and ACPO ranks than had been the case in March 2001. For example, there were 60 more female sergeants and 52 more female Inspectors. The only rank where both numbers and proportions of women declined was that of Chief Inspector, and it will be important for the MPS to support the 121 women now at Inspector level to progress into the Chief Inspector rank to ensure that improvements in the gender proportionality of Superintending and ACPO ranks can be sustained and built upon for the future.

1.3.1.4 Initiatives in place specifically to support the progression of female and minority ethnic police officers include the Active Career Development Programme, which is aimed at Inspector level and above and will support the MPS to address the issues of female Chief Inspectors and minority ethnic Chief Superintendents as detailed above. In addition to this, work has been done to maximise the accessibility of the High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS) and the Commissioner's Leadership Programme (CLP) for women and officers from minority ethnic groups. For example, a "family friendly" CLP is under development for launch in 2004, providing a non-residential London based option better suited to the needs of part time staff and parents. A support programme has been developed to assist police officers to gain a place on the HPDS, and although this does not exclude white or male police officers, it has been targeted and female and minority ethnic officers in particular.

1.3.2 *Acting Sergeants*

1.3.2.1 In September 2003 there were 150 Acting Sergeants within the MPS, and by 31 December 2003 this number stood at 189. The introduction of Acting Sergeants is a time-limited scheme to cope with a shortage of sergeants and an urgent supervisory gap in relation to the large number of probationers arriving on borough from training school. There has been some small gender and ethnic disproportionality in the likelihood of female and minority ethnic PCs becoming Acting Sergeants: 0.52% of female PCs were made Acting Sergeants, as compared with 0.82% of their male counterparts. For minority ethnic and white PCs the gap was slightly smaller, with figures of 0.51% and 0.78%. Of the 150 Acting Sergeants at end of September 2003, 20 were women and 7 were VEMs. Of the 189 Acting Sergeants at end of December 2003, 25 were women and 7 were VEMs.

1.3.2.2 This apparent disproportionality is not, however, evidence of discriminatory practice in the selection of Acting Sergeants, but of differences in levels of experience. The selection process for Acting Sergeants emphasises experience¹, and female and VEM PCs tend,

¹ The selection process for Acting Sergeants is conducted on borough. Guidance issued to boroughs in March 2003 emphasised the benefits of Acting Sergeants arrangements in recognising the expertise of experienced operational PCs, and in providing an opportunity for boroughs to actively support the skill development of minority ethnic and female officers. The guidance stipulated that essential criteria for an individual to be selected as an Acting Sergeant are that s/he must have completed the probationary period, should consistently perform to a high standard and demonstrate good leadership qualities (as per PDR), and should have successfully completed Emergency Life Support and Officer Safety Training. Guidance also stipulated that it is desirable for individuals to have completed OSPRE part 1, Policing Safely training, and to have experience as a Street Duties tutor, PC CAD controller and/or CRIS supervisor.

on average, to have shorter length of service than their male and white colleagues respectively².

1.3.2.3 Indeed, 13% of Acting Sergeants were women and 4.67% from minority ethnic groups, which was higher than the proportion of minority ethnic and female substantive PSs (11.31% and 3.04% for female and minority ethnic officers respectively). It can be hoped, therefore, that the experience gained by female and minority ethnic police officers in the rank of Acting Sergeant will support greater proportions to progress into the substantive rank in due course.

2.0 Police Staff (Excluding Traffic Wardens and PCSOs)

2.1 Strength

2.1.1 The proportion of the police staff workforce from minority ethnic groups increased from 15.6% to 19.4% between March 2001 and September 2003. Although this represents a marked improvement, and an increase of just over 40% in the number of minority ethnic police staff employed by the MPS, it is unlikely that it will be sufficient to achieve the 21% minority ethnic strength target by the end of March 2004. As minority ethnic police staff have a lower turnover rate than white police staff³, it can be seen that this is mainly as a result of declining corporate performance in respect of the recruitment of minority ethnic police staff. The Recruitment directorate within HR is currently considering the best ways of supporting the HR function with this issue.

2.2 Progression

2.2.1 Comparisons are made between December 2002 and October 2003, because progression data prior to that uses the pre-Hay grade categories, which are not directly comparable to the Hay pay bands. When evaluating the extent of progress, it should be borne in mind that comparisons are being drawn over a short period only.

2.2.2 The MPS has been aware for some time of the need to increase the representation of minority ethnic police staff above Band E level. DOIT and the national Black Police Association have in partnership launched the Personal Leadership Programme, which is designed to address minority ethnic police staff progression and retention issues at this level and is also open to those in equivalent police ranks. Even during the relatively short period under examination, the level of disproportionality was slightly reduced:

² As of 30 September 2003, the mean length of service for Acting Sergeants was 13 years 2 months. At that time, the mean length of service for female PCs was 7 years 10 months (as compared to 10 years 3 months for male PCs), and for minority ethnic PCs was 5 years 8 months (as compared to 10 years for white PCs).

³ In 2000/2001 the turnover rate for white police staff was roughly one fifth lower than that for minority ethnic staff; by the first six months of 2003/04 the gap had widened slightly, with turnover rates for white staff almost a third higher than for their minority ethnic counterparts.

- The number of minority ethnic staff in pay bands D and above grew by 12.65%, a faster rate of growth than for white staff (10.01% increase).
- By October 2003, minority ethnic staff had come to account for a greater proportion of those in bands C and B than had been the case nine months previously. However, the number of minority ethnic staff at Band A and above declined from seven to six.

2.2.3 Female police staff progression improved, although women continued to be under-represented in pay band B and upwards. To support the progression of female managers, in 2004 DOIT will be launching a mentoring programme to support women managers. Compared to a female police staff workforce proportion of 59%, during the ten months to October 2003 the proportion of each band composed of female staff:

- increased from 52.75% to 56.44% in Band C
- increased from 25% to 28.47% in Band B
- remained largely constant at 20% in Band A and above.