

MPA Race & Faith Inquiry

Inspector Fiaz Choudhury

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Chair: Cindy Butts

Panel Members: Anthony Julius, Bob Purkiss, Margaret Blankson

*NB: This cassette has been proof read and names (where practically certain) have been inserted.*

*Where names are not certain, they have not been inserted.*

CB ..Margaret Blankson, I understand that you do actually have biographies of all of us, so I won't go into detail on that, we've got Anthony Julius and Bob Purkiss and of course myself as, as the Chair. A couple of housekeeping bits first of all, if we can. We'd be most grateful if you could use the microphone in front of you, just press the purple button when you want to speak and press it again when you've finished speaking. We are actually taping proceeding, we are going to provide transcripts at the end of each session and we'll make sure that you get a copy of that in due course. So hope you feel comfortable about that. The way this will work, we're going to speak to you for roughly about an hour, we'll all ask questions in turn but we may dart about a bit and forgive us if we do that. At the end you will have an opportunity to say anything that you haven't said, that you would like to say. We hope that you will feel comfortable enough, I know that the Press and the media are here and I'm sure that they are going to be on their best behaviour but I hope you will feel comfortable enough to be as honest and as open as you can be. Now, thi—this Inquiry is only going to be as good as the information we get so it's really important that you give us your honest views and opinions, as well as obviously it's personal experiences that you've had yourself. So, with that, can I start with the opening question? I, I, I'd like to ask you whether or not your race and/or faith has actually experienced, actually affected the experiences you've had within the Metropolitan Police Service?

FC I think without doubt, both my race and my faith have affected the way I work, how I'm perceived within the Organisation.

CB Mm hm

FC Some is positive and some, on occasions, is perceived to be negative as well.

CB Can you say a bit more about both the positive and the negative?

FC Yes. Certainly, as far as the positive side goes, of course as an Inspector regularly conducted reviews as Duty Officer and I was able to use my faith and my race, my language skills, with detainees in, in custody in order to reassure of, of what's going on. Actually explained to them fully exactly what it is that is happening, what the procedures are and I've been able to use those skills not with, just in custody but also out operationally as well. I've obviously been able to provide the organisation with advice on cultural issues, on race issues, which are impacting on the, the workforce or the general public (inaudible) Policing. Issues which may have arisen in the, in the media, being able to advise in relation to those and on the – so those all the, the positive aspects of using the skills which I have. On the negative side, certainly the biggest one for me has got to be promotion, progression of myself and other BMEs within the organisation, especially from Inspector upwards. The processes seem to be working fine for the PC, the Sergeant, Sergeant Inspector; however, the glass ceiling appears to be the Chief Inspector rank, it is at entry into the Senior Management team on Boroughs which appears to be the biggest hurdle.

CB Can, can you provide some more detail for us on the way in which that manifests itself? So how did that come about? You, you talked about difficulties that you've had. Can you talk us through how that emerged?

FC Well, one the – probably the best example I can give is my own example and that is in the promotion process that took place in 2007. Now my line manager and my second line

manager, both of them, chose to grade me a 5 on Race and Diversity, and how I deal with race and diversity and 5 the-- for the promotion processes, the gradings are given 1 to 5. 1 is you're working below the standard and 5 is you're exceptional, working exceptionally well. Now I'm being given 5 by my line manager and second line manager; once it goes to the business group they decide to reduce that to a 2 because all the issues apparently I've dealt with relate to Muslims. The fact that I'm the Chair for the Association of Muslim Police in the Met is not taken into consideration. I'm there to provide the very best evidence that I have on my application form and that was the result and as a result of that I wasn't even invited to the Assessment Centre.

CB Sorry, let me try and unpick that 'cause I'm trying to understand what it is you, you've just said. Are, are you saying that the fact that you were the Chair of the Muslim Police Association, you were dealt with in a different type of way?

FC That's certainly the, it appears to be the imp—be the case because line managers give me 5 and then the Business Group, they look at it and they decide that I've only dealt with Muslim issues. That was the reason given for reducing the, the grade from a 5 to a 2.

CB Right. Okay. So, so you're saying that at the level of your assessment, you felt that you were being dealt with unfairly?

FC That seems to be the case again and again. I've heard that from many, many BME officers and staff across the organisation, who are marked down when it comes to dealing with race and diversity because they are dealing, the, the – the reasons given and that's, bit of correction, minorities - this includes women as well - are marked down because they're dealing with their own community or their own agenda. Because that is not seen as being diverse enough. When they're dealing with the general public, that's not diversity because that's the general public.

CB Right.

FC So, where do the minority officers and staff get their diversity evidence from?

CB Okay. Okay. So, so, you, you, you've talked about that acting in a very negative way but yet earlier on you talked about that being a really quite positive thing, where you talked about you were advising the Service and the Organisation around the needs of Muslim staff, as well as externally as Muslim communities. I'm, I'm trying to understand why it is you're saying on the one hand it's a very positive thing but on the other hand it's a very negative thing.

FC It's a very positive thing on a day to day basis, 'cause that's exactly why, what I'm doing and that's what, exactly what the other BME officers are doing, and staff are doing, on a day to day basis. However, when it comes to promotions, when it comes to progression, that's when the, it does have a negative impact.

CB (inaudible) I'm, I'm going to come back to that in just a second. Can I just ask Margaret to come in?

MB Hi. Hullo. Have, have other officers have, have complained with, complained of a similar experience, firstly? And then secondly, how has the Association attempted to sort of address that through a sort of strategic process?

FC First of all, yes there are other officers who've expressed those same, same sort of concerns and that at the senior levels as well, more senior to Inspector, that is. They've expressed very same concerns as well. And the way we're trying to deal with this on this occasion is, I mean one, one of the facts that needs to be known is that since ninety—since 2004, the,

there've been three processes for Chief Inspector and not a single BME person has been successful since 2004. 'Til we come to 2008 when two out of ten have been successful this year, or, or last year. And the only promotion that seems to be taking place for BME officers from Inspectors, Chief Inspector appear to be either persons who are transferring into the Metropolitan Police or persons who are on the HPDS, High Development Scheme (inaudible).

MB To clarify. So what, what, sorry, what I'm asking is that, given you, you're there's an awareness of that problem and it's experienced by a number of different officers but as an Association, how has that been dealt with as an Association at, in relation to your rel—the, across the Met? How have you sort of – what's the processes you, you've used to address that?

FC Well, the concerns obviously are being raised with Mr Tiplady and the concerns were raised with Sir Ian Blair and to Paul Stephenson as well, by myself back in October, just before the start of the, the, the last promotion process to Chief Inspector and the two concerns, main concerns I raised on that occasion with Mr Blair and Mr Stephenson were, one was the fact that the BME officers' diversity evidence is not as good and secondly, and-- or not only that, but the BME officers then and staff were themselves being used by the white officers as, as their diversity evidence. They were creating situations which they would then deal with in order to provide evidence of diver—their diversity and there are examples of that again and again.

MB Am I taking from that you're saying that it's, that information is being fed back, so they've seen no actions or (inaudible) the concerns that have been made?

FC Well, (inaudible) information's fed back to the Commissioner's office. The Commissioner then asked Mr Tiplady to look into that. I haven't had a response to that particular question yet; however, the, the other question I raised was, the issue of persons promoting in their

own image. And that seems to be the case again and again, especially for one of the (inaudible) I raised was that the, for the Chief Inspectors, Inspectors are actually being interviewed by Chief Inspectors for the (inaudible) for the rank of Chief Inspector and personally, I didn't think that that was right because as soon as you sit in front of the, the panel of two Chief Inspectors you are seen as a threat to them, as you will be competing with them for the Superintendent's rank in a year or two's time, whenever that comes along. So the promotion-- the assessments that should be being done at a level which is at least one rank higher than the, the rank that is actually being aspired to. That I'm happy to say is something that has been taken on board by Mr Tiplady and the process has been changed for the, the next process that I understand for Chief Inspector is due to start in March and the way that that is going to be changed is that rather than the Chief, Chief Inspector panel making the decision, whether the person is ready for promotion or not, the – they will grade everybody according to the evidence that they've been provided with and then a panel, a senior member of the HR team, together with two Chief Superintendents, will sit as a final panel, for the final interview for Chief Inspectors and the, the same process will go on for the higher ranks as well.

MB Thank you for that. What I'm trying to get a gauge of, right, (inaudible) in asking that, is – is the relationship between the (inaudible) the Police Association and the senior, and the processes by which you've seen (inaudible) to Strategic Management Board of the, of the Met. Can you explain, I can understand (inaudible) what's happened is that (inaudible) have been dealt with, or one issue you've raised has been dealt with –

FC Yes.

MB ..and some issues you've raised haven't been dealt with but what I'm trying to understand is, what's the structure and by, by which you engage with that Board?

FC The, the structure is, is—on *ad hoc* meetings, at, at, with Mr Tiplady or the, the Commissioner's office.

MB *Ad hoc* relationship (inaudible) meet, when you have an issue (inaudible) regular process, is it built in?

FC At the moment it's *ad hoc* meetings, certainly I would like to for the future for there to be more structure to these meetings.

(inaudible)

FC Yes.

(inaudible)

FC I'm involved in that. However, there are so many other issues being dealt with at the (inaudible) meetings which are quarterly, that these issues never get a, a look in.

(inaudible) thank you.

BP Yes, thanks, (inaudible) It's widely understood that any organisation on, on issues like this is there needs to be the leadership on the organisation and the ownership. Do you feel there's effective leadership and ownership within the MPA? On diversity and equality issues?

FC Diversity and equality. (inaudible) FD has – has a Directorate used to sit in the Deputy Commissioner's command. For reasons unknown to me, certainly, it's now been moved across to (inaudible) now.

BP Shouldn't it be at the top?

FC It certainly should be at the top. There is no (inaudible) leading on diversity any more. As a result of that it is certainly the, the Staff Associations or the ones I've spoken to, seem to be of the impression that either diversity is not very important any more, within the organisation, or that the diversity box has now been ticked and everything is fine and we no longer need to do that, or it is that only (inaudible) need diversity. The others don't, and no longer need it any more, diversity training any more. When you look at the, the, the Leadership Academy I've been led to believe that for the courses from Sergeant Inspector, DC Sergeant, Sergeant Inspector, there is no longer any diversity training. There's no longer any diversity input on those courses. And the reason, you know, I've been given for that is, is that diversity is the golden thread that is run through everything that we deal with.

BP I mean, you seem to be saying from the, the answer you gave to the first question of Cindy that, there seems to be an internal and external message, that externally that (inaudible) numerically etcetera, etcetera that the MPS has come a long way but you seem to be saying that internally, hadn't kept pace with that. Am I correct in that?

FC No, I wouldn't go that far; I would certainly, there's some truth in that. However, it would be wrong to say that no progress has been made. Enormous progress has been made. The Service is nothing like, the Service I joined back in 1982, not in the Metropolitan Police, I was in Thames Valley Police at that time and, you know, we've moved on quite considerably in the last ten years, since the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry; of course we've moved on quite, quite considerably but there are still issues there and those issues are not really that different from the issues that go—going back ten years ago.



BP In terms of progression, you've, you mentioned-- you know, people being supported. You, you have the Equip Program and then you have your H(inaudible)S. This, this is about trying to pick people out, that have ability and then giving them support. Do you think there's effective support given at, at Commander level with, within the thirty-four Boroughs? Thirty-three plus Heathrow, (inaudible)

(inaudible) yes.

FC These particular initiatives help small number of (inaudible); however, the, the vast majority of promotions that take place (inaudible).

Yup

FC I mean, for, for instance, the Chief Inspectors, sometimes there's up to 100 promotions that take place. Whereas the H(inaudible)S and the Equip to Achieve program, they're looking at twos and threes. Those well intentioned initiatives will assist at some individuals; however, what's needed is the, the vast majority of officers and staff across the MPS to be able to (inaudible) the promotion, the recognition that they deserve.

BP So what is, what, what in your opinion, then, or your Association's opinion, right, (inaudible). Are those barriers that the -- that stop people coming through, Muslims coming through to Chief Inspector level or BMEs coming through to much higher levels?

FC I think I would go back to again, to people promote in their own image. That, that is, it is very much to be the case. I mean, I was given one example by a black officer who actually said that (inaudible) in my case assumed a pseudo name. It's a really good indication that

I'm, I'm not a white male officer whereas his name was Christian and (inaudible) he walked into the assessment, assessment the first thing that happened was the two individuals who were going to be assessing him looked at each other. That caused him a lot of confidential note taking, I'm sure.

BP You, you also have stated that where, in terms of gender, woman who are ethnic minorities or Muslims have additional challenges. What, what do you mean by that? Can you expand on that a little bit?

FC I think the (inaudible) challenges are, that the gender issue hasn't fully been dealt with; we're still under-represented in numbers-wise with (inaudible) women officers and certainly at higher ranks. And they tend to be feeling not only the (inaudible) for BME, they, they're obviously feeling it, the discrimination that exists whether it be from the gender side, as well as from their ethnicity or their faith.

BP Just -- my final question, (inaudible) time is, this is not just an inquiry into the MPS, as you know; this is an inquiry into the MPA as well, who have that responsibility for the scrutiny and oversight of effectiveness and efficiency. How do you feel that they've carried out their role, in terms of the oversight? If it's about po—you know, policy terms, of how progress is made or whatever, have they been effective in carrying that role out?

FC No, I don't think they have. Not at all. I think that's where the, one of the biggest failings has been, is that the scrutiny doesn't seem to be there. There don't appear to be any measurements; there don't appear to be any targets that they, that have been set. Had the MPA looked at the promotion process of the last few years, I'm sure some difficult questions would have been asked, in relation to the fact that no BMEs have been promoted to Chief Inspector over the past six years. Three, four years. And, and some of those things would have been addressed. I mean, one of the things we did was together with the HMIC. We brought together a group of BME officers from right across the country in order to talk about

their experiences, the, their issues that they were, they have had to face and there were exactly the same issues being faced by officers in the counties as were being faced within the Metropolitan Police and as a result of that, you know, that that was – I did a report as a result of that and which is part of the MPS and also to ACPO's role and just the report, yet another report that's been (inaudible)

BP (inaudible)

(inaudible)

CB Just another report. We hear, time and time again, about the various reviews and scrutinies and the like and analyse the problems in the Met, come up with recommendations but somewhere along the line the recommendations are not implemented. What, what are the barriers, in your view, to, to implementation? What should we, as a Panel, be looking out for and doing, in order to make sure that our recommendations get..

FC I think the first thing is that there should be only one recommendation that goes out from this Panel and that is, to set up a Committee to look at all the other recommendations. I heard recently that there's something like a thousand recommendations which have been made through various reports to the MP – to the MPS. How the hell can they deal with thousands of recommendations? There must be a lot of (inaudible) recommendations who are now completely and utterly out of date

Mm

FC They, they have no pla—others which—were being been dealt with, to some extent or the other but somebody needs to sit down and look at all these recommendations and see what

they are, 'cause the issues we're going to come up with are, (inaudible) as a result of this Inquiry are no different to the issues which were raised (inaudible) the Morris Inquiry, or the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, in—inquiry, or many, many other Inquiries have been held. There's, there's themes that are exactly the same.

(inaudible)

FC The situations therefore doesn't need to change. Somebody's got to look at those recommendations and bring the number down in order to, for them to be a manageable number to be up to date

MB Right

FC .. with it.

MB So, so what you're saying is that the reason why recommendations are not implemented is because there are too many?

FC I think it's 'cause – I think that's one of the reasons and most certainly, the—the where do you start? What is today's priority?

M Yes.

Yes, sure.

MB If we were in Committee before, (inaudible) had the chance to look at the recommendations, what would you expect to see in the top three teams that (inaudible)?

FC Promotion progre—progression is definitely going to be one of the first ones. The, under-representation through, over all, i.e. recruitment and retention, obviously would be the second one and thirdly, what (inaudible)? Can't think of the third one at the moment but I'll come back to that.

MB (inaudible) give some detail, (inaudible |) under those, under those headings (inaudible) in your (inaudible) , I mean, in principle we're here to look at the issue of progression, of retention and recruitment so what's the details of some of those, those headings?

FC The (inaudible) of those is, obviously as I've already mentioned, what I'd like to see is that more progression at the high ranks, both for, for Police officers and for Police staff.

MB (inaudible) that

FC Yep

MB But what, what, (inaudible)? What, what, what would you say is some solution to actually change the position without another report, so what's the actual activity, you think that needs to take place, so is it that the way in which, for example, that one of the – there's the lack of identified leadership (inaudible) in (inaudible) around diversity related issues on the Senior Management team should be replaced. I mean, what (inaudible) perhaps intangible things that you'd say, "This will make a difference to the (inaudible) and more general we need to get issue progression or something."?

FC As I mentioned earlier on, the one of the (inaudible) that I, I believe there should be for promotion seems to be the fact that they promote in their own image. There's the lack of BME assessors. Now, there are only a handful of senior officers within the MPS who are from a BME background. Now they're all of them – even if all of them were to become assessors, there still wouldn't be enough in order to deal with the situation. So therefore why don't we come out with (inaudible) other forces, where there are other senior officers? Why don't we go out to other – (inaudible) – the Civil Service and other places where, similar sort of promotional processes are taking place with a bit of training, they could become effective so that the, the Boards, there-- there's more diversity within the assessment boards?

CB Okay. So, if we had more diversity on assessment boards, that wouldn't have helped you, would it? Because you're saying that you were discriminated against at the front end of the process, but in a sense I'm, I'm asking you to extend the question that Margaret has asked, in – and just to think about the long, the whole entire process as a continuum, what other things did you think needs to be dealt with and done differently?

FC I was asked some time ago for some advice on recruitment I was asked if I would like to be an observer on the Recruitment Panel in order to make sure that we are not discriminating against anybody. And my response to that was, well, it wouldn't be enough for me to sit and be as an observer at that – at that level because the discrimination (inaudible) takes place well before that.

CB Yes.

FC The policies and procedures which are written down, are very transparent and they're excellent and they'll pass any test. However, it's the unwritten and the unofficial processes that take place well before that, and those processes are it's the first chat with the Line Manager for instance, that I'm considering applying for this particular post or I'm

considering applying for promotion and it is “Well, no, you’re not quite ready yet, (inaudible) you need to do this, you need to do that”, but another year, different supervisor comes along, line manager comes along the following year, you make the effort—you have the same sort of chat, the a year later and there’s something else. You’ve dealt with that part now; there’s something else that, that crops up. And that’s, I’m not saying that that’s just for the BME officers and staff – there is something that happens to all officers and staff within the, in the organisation. That the, the barrier, the first barrier is the Line Manager’s chat.

BP So are you saying, even if there was a Positive Action program, there is still an existing culture of negative thinking that would prevent that (inaudible) from moving forward?

- FC Yes, it would. And on some occasions what would happen, what actually happens is, somebody who’s actually well thought of on a team, will be marked low because they don’t want to lose that individual from the (inaudible). There’s no way of (inaudible) proving that. And certainly, that that, exactly what I’ve said, as far as the TS process goes, but at which stage do you want me, to actually sit in and oversee the, oversee this? At the application system-- process, or further back when the chat actually takes place?

CB Okay. So you’re saying that one of sort of Whitehall parts of the process is around the power, if you like, that managers have to determine whether or not you get on the (inaudible) particular promotion process?

FC Yes.

CB And you’re saying that the issue isn’t about the – I took from your example that, that, that that doesn’t necessarily mean discrimination; it could mean that actually if there’s a high turnover of managerial staff, information isn’t (inaudible) doesn’t get fed back to them, not enough records are kept on your performance and what you’ve done. Now, is, is that the

issue? Is it about turnover and the way in which records are kept of achievement, (inaudible) the lack of (PDR?) to formally show what you as an individual have achieved? Is that the problem?

FC I th—I ---

CB Or is in built discrim—or is it discrimination? They're, they're two different things; there's one about the, the, the poorness of the process, if you like and there's something else that I think you might be saying but I'm not sure that you are, which is about the discrimination of the managers themselves.

FC I think it's – it's the, the processes are poor. There's no doubt about that. There is, I have absolutely no doubt on occasions there is discrimination, but I don't think that's widespread. I think the vast majority of the time it is those other reasons where-- which I've given, (inaudible) the lack of clarity in the, the (inaudible), the less, less rigour in the, the PDR process

CB Right.

FC The PDR is a meaningless document, to be perfectly honest, within the MPS. It's, it's completed at the end of the year, it's never looked at again by anybody, it's not looked at for promotion processes or any selection processes, so what, what's actually there for?

CB Okay. Going to move on to, to Anthony (inaudible).



AJ I'm always glad to accommodate (inaudible) one of the questions I want to ask you (inaudible) what extent (inaudible)

FC Excuse me. I'm trying to think of the examples that there has actually been any – one particular exa– there is one example (inaudible) mentioned, simply because it's ongoing (inaudible) at the moment, of somebody who's actually been targeted by a supervisor because of their faith and been reported to (inaudible).

AJ Is that person (inaudible)?

FC Yes. This is being investigated at the moment.

(inaudible)

FC Yes.

AJ (inaudible)

FC Apart from – I'm, no, I don't, don't think there're any anti Muslim feelings of any sort, no. However, the-- one of the things that happened back in 2007, there were two articles in the papers regarding the Metropolitan Police – I think one was the Metropolitan Police and the other one was nationally, of Al Qua'ida infiltration of the, the Police service. Which had enormous impact on the Muslim officers and staff in (inaudible) within the organisation, nationally. Comments were being made – inappropriate comments were made – no doubt in jest, but jest or remarks were (inaudible) and -- but there was no response whatsoever from any ACPO rank. Now soon after that, there was the issue with the DCSO who failed to

jump into water in order to rescue a child who was drowning, because of health and safety and so on. And ACPO ranks nationally were falling over each other in order to make comments in support of the DCSOs. Now I've raised this issue with Sir Paul Stephenson (spelling) and I asked him on the second occasion for some reassurance to be provided to the members of the ANP, certainly within the MPS here and I was told that the reason was given that that was not going to be happening. However, I'm assured that in future he has decided that if any such thing happens again that he will have to re-think that issues of (inaudible)

AJ (inaudible)

FC There's lack of – in order words, there's lack of support

(inaudible)

FC .. when support is needed.

When the, when the (inaudible)

FC Yes

(inaudible) with the lack of (inaudible)

FC I think the, the biggest problem is that the Met doesn't record faith, for example, on individuals. All the re—the records are that it's voluntary, the Met self service scheme as it's

called, where you record your ethnicity, your faith, your gender and so on and so forth, is voluntary. So therefore the, the figures are difficult to get hold of as to how many Muslims are being promoted, not being promoted, as the case may be. And one of the things that the MPA inquiry into terrorism, and the SO15 who (inaudible) very, very few Muslims within the SO15 comm-- counter terrorism command. When asked how many there are, the MPS were unable to provide that number. Now, I was able to get hold of (inaudible) Muslims that I was aware of, (inaudible), within the counter terrorism command very, very quickly; I was able to get hold of the, the number. As a result of which I (inaudible) approached Mr Tiplady and asked for myself to be seconded to the National Association of Muslim Police with a view to increase the number of Muslims within counter terrorism.

(inaudible)

This is the third; this is the third one he has listened to.

(inaudible)

FC I've certainly suggested that, that all diversity information that the MPS is asking for should be mandatory, an—and should be recorded. The simple fact is all this information is already recorded. When somebody applied, I can remember 22 years, 26 years ago when I applied to join the Police service, one of the questions in there was faith. And I put down Islam. And I'm sure that's recorded somewhere. And I've had a—recently had a look on the Internet for the, the National Application Form for the Police service and exactly the same question is, appear there as well. Not only that, a few weeks after I actually asked HR for the number of Muslims within the MPA, (inaudible) and was told that because it's not recorded we don't know how many there are, and, and Mr Blair was able to, at a conference to actually declare that we have now got three hundred Muslim Police officers within the Met. Where did their (inaudible) come from?

(inaudible) Just building on (inaudible)

Yes.

(inaudible)

FC The reason I said there's no anti Muslim force within the Met are because there's no recorded cases of successful appeals or successful challenges within the Organisation.

AJ That sounds like an equivocation to me.

Mm

AJ I mean, I asked you before a couple of times, is there anti Muslim prejudice in the MPS and you said No. You said there was one example which is under investigation at the moment, you couldn't think of any other examples, you weren't talking about recorded examples; you were talking about examples in general and you also said that (inaudible) was not widespread; I think you used the word, used the phrase "not widespread" so , so the question then arises: if, as the matter of fact, Muslim officers are underrepresented and as a matter of fact, your understanding of the (inaudible) Muslim (inaudible) not widespread and you couldn't think of any examples, other than one which is under investigation, (inaudible) presumably therefore the question is still an open one, why is it that there is (inaudible) I mean obviously there are various possible (inaudible) aren't enough Muslim officers coming through and maybe, and then there's this problem about recruiting in one's own image

Mm

AJ ..which I understand, I mean, I'm interested to know because there obviously has to be an explanation and once you eliminate the obvious one of prejudice, or, or at any rate, if not altogether eliminate it, you recognise that it may be one of a number of (inaudible) I'm interested to know what you think the other reasons might be, because plainly we have to make recommendations which address this problem.

FC Certainly to the best of my knowledge, as I said earlier, I'm, I'm not aware of any prejudice in as far as the faith goes, the most (inaudible) cases that come across they come across have been in relation to race or ethnicity, in the vast majority, the ones that are recorded and they're the ones that I'm aware of. They – it's probably because that is the easiest thing to pick on, ie, somebody picking on my faith, or somebody's picking my ethnicity, it's probably more obvious if it's ethnicity than it is race, race.

AJ One, one last question.

CB Of course.

(inaudible)

CB I, yes, just before you do, though, how many members do you have in your Muslim Staff Association?

FC It's about five hundred; there's three hundred Police officers and about two hundred Police staff.

AJ Can you (inaudible)

FC At senior levels, I, I think (inaudible) we go back to the, the promotion in, in your own image. This is the lack of persons of the senior BME officers and staff of senior ranks to do the paper slips or to be part of the assessment centres.

MB Is it specifically on race?

CB Okay. Margaret and then Bob.

MB (inaudible) how you think the, the Met's Equip and Achieve programs or the variety of Positive Action recruitment processes have done anything towards (inaudible). Effective (inaudible)

FC Well, the Equip to Achieve has only just started so it's difficult really to answer that in, in relation to that particular one; however, I'm, I've been with the Metropolitan Police now for five years. Other colleagues who've obviously been with the Met a lot longer, speaking to them there are been a whole array of initiatives that have been started and a whole load of development needs of the BME officers and staff which have been catered for and yet there's still no promotions (inaudible), there's no progression. The numbers are still very low.

MB So in fact then, (inaudible) the present (inaudible) put in place don't work?

FC Don't work. They haven't.

MB And what do you think, what do you think leads to the contents of those programs that could, could achieve a change, an increase?

FC I haven't got a clue.

FC Bob.

BP Can I, just a –a different way of asking of what Anthony asked, actually – you say you have five hundred members in the Association, that's probably far more Muslim officers than or than more of that – in the MPS. And in terms of best use of resources, do you think that Muslim officers are used in the most effective way, for example with AIGs with Prevent, the Prevent program and (inaudible) job? Quite (inaudible) aspects and, and the specialist areas that Muslim officers (inaudible). Is that recognised and used in an effective way?

FC It is starting to happen, especially in relation to Prevent. The intention at the moment is the supply and recruit as many Muslims as possible for the, the Prevent – Prevent Engagement Officers' roles and that's (inaudible) and certainly the Association has been trying to encourage Muslims to apply for those particular posts. In the past, no, that's not been the case and the probably the best example I can provide is the Forest Gate shooting, where advice had not been take—sought upon the ANP (?) as to the timing of the, the raid and the how to deal with the individuals once the officers actually get into the premises and there's a whole widespread criticism of the fact that male officers were in rooms where only females were present, and so on and so forth. And the fact that the raid took place about three o'clock in the morning, expecting everybody to be fast asleep, (inaudible) devout Muslim family, they were up for their morning prayers, for the sun comes up so early at that time of the year. So therefore, had that-- somebody from the ANP (?) been consulted, you probably would have said that that's probably not the best time to actually go and do that. As a result of that we were asked to provide some feedback on how things could have been done differently and about three months later there was another operation in East London

where I did receive a 'phone call at ten o'clock at night, asking for some advice, again it was a Muslim target and provided advice, make sure there's female officers, make sure that we've got some bilingual officers in the area who can do some community engagement, have the Press statements ready, have leaflets in English and the language of the, the second language within the local community which on this occasion turned out to be Bengali and as a result of this I was actually asked to provide some Bengali speaking officers and staff which we were able to do so and it turned out that on the day of the operation the Taser was discharged at two of the addresses, CS was used at other addresses and not a murmur from the community because DS had got it right – DSE used the skills of, of the officers (inaudible) in order to do the community engagement.

BP Is there, is there a record kept, then, of people's – you know - wider ability and skills in terms of being bilingual, is there, is, is that a natural resource that's I-- identified?

FC There is a process wh-- which is the CCRU but not everybody, again it's voluntary so not everybody is, has put their names forward. However, because the, the database that we have for the ANP, we've actually recorded other skills as well and as a result of that we were able – excuse me – we were able to identify the Bengali speaking officers on our team.

CB Okay (inaudible) further questions that anyone wants to ask? I don't have anything further to ask. Is there anything that you thought we were going to ask you that we haven't, for which you'd prepared the most wonderful response, 'cause if that's the case we'd love to hear it.

FC (inaudible)

Only availability of Halal food is one of the things is, is, one of the questions I was given as-- the concerns of the Association members and one of the concerns from the Association



members is the inavail—inavailabilty of Halal food. I know for a fact that where I'm based over at the Empress State Building, Halal sandwiches used to be on display quite regularly, but they no longer are there. They disappeared for absolutely no reason, no explanation given and the, the incredible thing I used to find was that the – exactly the same sandwich, which is non Halal would be priced differently to the one that's Halal, the Halal one being about 50p to a pound dearer. And, I couldn't understand that, why that was, so as a result of that, what we've actually done now, the ANP are doing this, with the Catering Department actually surveying where the majority of the Muslim officers and staff are actually based, at what locations and would they actually eat in the Canteen if Halal food was available and once we have that information, hopefully we'll be able to provide a better range of food (inaudible) and staff (inaudible) MPS at the locations where they actually work.

CB But the Met are being very receptive of that?

FC They're being very receptive to that, yes.

CB Well, if there isn't anything else, we thank you much for spending just over an hour of your, your life with (inaudible)