

MPA Race and Faith Inquiry

Ben Owusu (Race IAG)

Also present: John Azah, Marcia Da Costa and Harmander Singh

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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.

(inaudible) So, if I just start (inaudible) saying your name (inaudible)

I'm Marcia Da Costa.

Okay.

Sorry, my name's Harmander Singh.

(inaudible)

Thanks for taking the time (inaudible) to the Panel. I hope that you've already seen their biographies (inaudible) - Anthony, Margaret and Bob; I'm sure (inaudible). Format for the afternoon, we will talk to you for roughly about fifty minutes or so, there or thereabouts. I'll start (inaudible) questions and then colleagues will sort of pile in, (inaudible) too much. We are recording the session, so if you can use your mics (inaudible). At the end – not at the end, say roughly in about a week or so, we will ensure we type up a transcript, get them to you (inaudible) happy with them. I hope you'll feel comfortable enough to give us your honest (inaudible). Can I ask you just a very open question? And that is whether or not you feel – thank you. Whether or not you feel an individual's race or faith affects their experiences within the Metropolitan Police Service. From your own perspective, as members of IAGs, as having intimate knowledge of the Service. What's your views on that?

As you say, individuals. I mean, are you (inaudible) are you talking (inaudible) officers or civvies?

Officers or s—whichever. Whichever.

(inaudible)

Yes, I (inaudible) through the ranks, all grades.

What makes you say that? Why and how, really?

Why and how. Well, several years ago, 2002, we asked a series of questions from – and the - and the MPS – which were purely to tease out exactly what its position was and to date, despite two separate attempts over this, we're still waiting to hear from them. However, anecdotal evidence and the on—and the figures that the MPS has produced from time to time, seems to suggest that there is, certainly, a variance between any tranche, any intake from the officers and a, a, anybody coming in from, from the civilian staff.

Okay, (inaudible)

If you was to look at the – the different groupings, we were – those questions (inaudible) designed exactly to show whether or not, but the, the evidence seems to suggest that they're – they, they do and only the MPS can help everybody clarify that.

Right. But – but I'm still (inaudible) wondering about this question about the how, though. How, how does that manifest itself? (inaudible)

Well, it's (inaudible)

(inaudible) let, let

We'll all, we'll all chip in (inaudible)

Yeah, no, that's fine.

The difficulties, I'm going to give you a general observation.

Okay

..in terms of the question of (inaudible), in a broader sense, because, if you ask questions in terms of race, not only the – the, the Met, in terms of public bodies, there should be a debate to gender, that we've done so much on gender. Why if you look at the landscape through the programs and exercises and support, if you look at the landscape of gender, you struggle to find out whether any black and Asians has gone through, in terms of promotion through the, the, the support and the programs and all that. If that is the case, then, then the question you raise about how and why (inaudible) because if you, you say you've done good work in terms of promoting female officers or civilians, then there must be a proportion of them coming from black and Asian background. But if there isn't, then there's a question there to be – to be, to be raised.

Okay.

I think, I think – I think not just the, the, the, the police service but I mean I think society is, is generally very racist and therefore, I think, the things that, on the one hand, we – we, we take for granted, somehow unwittingly impacts on how people behave, so that if you go into any police station within the Met, you will find that the diverse communities which live in London are not represented within the Service and that's not because people are now com—not convinced that the MPS are s—a police service as a career choice, hasn't changed, but people's experiences, when they either join and - the comparators, actually, are PCSOs and, and police officers, where, somehow, there is now growing evidence that people from particular communities are content to dip their fingers, their toes in the water and if they are content that the environment that they're going to work in is going to be safe enough and conducive, then perhaps they will become fully fledged police officers and also, I think, racism generically has changed from this thing which used to be on your faith, to something which has become very sophisticated so, you know, the canteen culture doesn't exist so

much as it used to exist; the behaviour hasn't changed very much and so you don't get invited to the drinks parties and the (inaudible) which happen informally anymore and therefore, your race, or your faith, impacts on you as a – as, as an individual so that you know, they go to – you know, have a drink, if you come from particular faiths, by definition you can't go for a drink anyway, so it indirectly impacts on behaviour.

CB (inaudible) Margaret. (inaudible)

Can I just add on (inaudible)? Sorry. I think, I personally think that - I think, I think what John says is, in – in terms of the (inaudible) broader (inaudible) just the Met, in, in terms of public bodies. The landscape is – is really something that you need to look at, too - to see whether or not something's going on, whether they're, whether it matches what's going on out on the street. I, in terms of faith, apart from really identifying the Sikh (inaudible) because of their turban, yes, it's very difficult, unless you state it, to identify; people don't wear, necessarily wear their faith on the – their sleeve. So I'm not quite sure how different places want it to impact their life. I mean, apart from what you do say, John in, is that, yes, not everybody will go for a drink, whether you're Christian or whether you're Muslim, whether you're Bah'ai, whether you're - I don't know. You know, not everybody will necessarily join that kind of social outlet. Because we know that's where a lot of the discussions and the jobs and the etcetera takes place. But I, I, I think there's a greater impact, in terms of race, because when you look at a landscape and you see – I go to some meetings, sometimes and large conferences in the Met and I, I mainly see white males, a few spotted females and spots of a – of a non white person, if you know what I mean. So, I – I just think, when I look at that landscape, I think, you know, okay. Not quite right here. 'Cause something is missing. So I'd, I'd say, on, on the race aspect and it bothers me that the Met seems to have taken race out of the Agenda, particularly, because I know the other diverse groups are almost (inaudible) equal, but race is a particular thing where you spot it more, in, in a sense. So,

(inaudible) what, why that should (inaudible)? What (inaudible) race has never been done?

I,

(inaudible)

Well, there's a (inaudible) across the board; in other words, the Met, that we've done race; let's move on to other areas and there's a strong lobby from other areas, in terms of (inaudible) BTN, disability groups lobbying Government, Home Office and all that, so that has then come back to the Met, because they work towards the Home Office Agenda, to say look, we've done race, (inaudible) the expertise in race in the other areas. They feel that they've done it, (inaudible) they can move on to the other areas.

I think the main streaming has been speeded up and, as a consequence, the five other equality strands have now taken precedent and where race – some of the issues, the basic tenet of, the problems that caused the – the racial issues have not yet been tackled. So they remain.

So you ask this (inaudible) you asked a question about, there's the, the message, the (inaudible) I don't want to lose that question.

No, we'll, we

(inaudible)

..we, we, weren't, we weren't wanting to lose it, and it's just that I

We don't want to lose that.

(inaudible)

No, (inaudible)

We don't want to lose that. I mean, I think it depends on where the issues are; I mean, certainly, you know, we've been around for about ten years. It depends on what the issues are, if you go back to things like, Stockwell for instance, the London bombings; that issue has the impact over London, we were involved more than less than two hours from the first devices going on and, and, and being involved quite strategically; historically, we were taking

very seriously about dealing with policies, strategic issues, we used to attend Management Board meetings, so on and so forth. I think gradually - and it goes back to the question about whether race has been done or not, gradually there are aspects of the debate where the IAG is still very strategically involved, very serious about what communities (inaudible) and desire but on mundane, day to day things which we (inaudible) it's a bit debatable in that, in fact, whether they want to continue to use independent advising, it's taken us, as groupings, to be more robust ourselves, to continue to say, we are here, you are going to listen to us and, to be fair to the – to the Service, they, they've continued to listen to aspects of independent advice.

Right. And would it be fair to characterise what you've just said (inaudible) in terms of the, the Met are - the Met listens (inaudible) following on from the bombings, you came to us because you were desperate for (inaudible) but actually there wasn't that ongoing (inaudible)

Well, I mean, is that it? (inaudible) and that, because I mean, I think, I think, you know, if, if you go back through our history, you know, the race and, and if I can call it out from convenience, the race IAG is always had quite easy access to (inaudible) - quite easy access to the Services, including the Commissioner. And therefore, it, it's – it's, it's fair to say that, when it matters, we've always had access, but as a strategists, somebody who does policy work at work, I don't feel that the mundane stuff which we used to do, dealing with anti-racist policing issues, employment issues, we used to sit on Panels for recruitment, give advice on a number of things, including mundane critical incidents where, before the Chair of the IAG would get a call if somebody was shot in London, for instance, or started so on and so forth, I don't feel that we still have a handle on those mundane issues to get the community's perspective on how Londoners feel. And, and, and, and it's not about denying us access. I think it's about the changing business, which is devolving, and, and - and you may say, perhaps, we may say that there is, there is a throughput of officers who – who share the pain of Lawrence and the (inaudible) the (inaudible) was, there's a new cadre of – of, of, of officers around, who never shared the pain; don't understand always and if they (inaudible) understanding it's been (inaudible) advice and therefore, perhaps are not as adept in engaging with communities as they were in the past.

I would totally agree with that.

Now quantitatively, as long as the door is open,

Yes

And the dialogue is going on

Yes

..then obviously

Yes

..that's a positive sign

Yes, I

Those sort of answers are questions! Sorry, my other question will be really quick. It's what I, what I'm interested in is that at, at strategic level of input you have, so whether it was ongoing. I think you've answered that, or it's whether you have a sort of, really sort of – organised way in which you speak, talk to the senior members of the Met, or whether you just talk to someone when an issue occurs. I'm not quite sure whether, whether you have a managed approach, where there is a whole process around your engagement, or it's in response to crisis that occur, occur.

(inaudible) reactive (inaudible)

Yeah

In the past, we were strategic and we were - (inaudible) proactively.

(inaudible)

Right, just leave it off!

In the past, we used to sit on a PPPG.

Mm

.. (Inaudible) Police Promotions Policy Group. And we were able to advise on what the barriers would be for promotion,

Mm

..and what the contextual realisations might need to be taken on board. Admittedly, one thing has been consistent, in that we hardly ever get any closure to our advice. We never find out whether it - they've actually used it and what (inaudible) were. But that's not to say that, you know, they don't take our advice.

Mm

I'm sure that the police are – it's up to the police where they get their advice from and it doesn't necessarily have to be just from us.

Mm

We recognise that and we're ...

But how do you manage your effectiveness? How do you know you're in a effective Force? How do you know that your advice is taken; if it's not taken, how do you - I mean, how do you know you're not all wasting your time and - you know, none of your advice is really taken beyond the door?



Right. The processes, I will use one clear example. When we started in and around 2002, there were about 120 longstanding protracted cases, ET cases. We work alongside the Directory to resolve all those cases. Those, the last one that was resolved was in a (inaudible) , it was a high profile one and since then, we have been part of the proc— internal fairness at work and issues around disproportionality within the Met. But, as time goes back, they pull away from that, because the concept that (inaudible) raise, so let's move on somewhere else, so that is not really engaging proactively, as before.

So, let me just (inaudible) so perhaps on (inaudible) something so, what you're saying is that at the beginning of the RIAG, race IAG's early days, there was a set of, or a number of ET cases, to which the Met wor—you worked with them in terms of providing advice,

Yes

And, and when – when did that stop, or when did that change or...

Well, it's change after Morris. I think a Morris

So, since Morris, you haven't been involved in that process

Not proactively

So last (inaudible) - not proactively

Okay

We, we might get called – on one or two – but the process, as it was before, as a matter of course, you will call IAG, has shifted a bit.

Mm

But do you think the Met's having given up its recent cases and the ones that are coming up, do you think it's lost something by not maintaining that and, I'm just wondering, as IAG members, you haven't been saying to the Met, Look, you know, this is our history to date; look how successful we were in supporting you. You've got all these cases coming up. This is an area which we've demonstrated value and added value. Isn't this a, a time or a place that we should re-engage?

I'd like to think we are better at horizon watching than the police.

Okay.

We can see what, what's ticking within the community and what's going to be a concern in the future, much more than, perha-- police do, maybe purely because of demands on them; we recognise that, that there're increasing demands, a whole range of (inaudible) issues way beyond their control, some of which (inaudible) vertically triggered, but at least we're there to be able to tell them that and by distancing themselves from, because they think they've covered the race bit, they're actually losing out on our wider experience.

Sorry, I'm slight

(inaudible)

I, I, I (inaudible) I

(inaudible)

Yeah

Yeah

What I understand you, you were saying is that, as a matter of course in the early days, you were part of the process of supporting the police in relation to advice on ETs, the (inaudible) ETs, yeah?

Or internal processes

Internal process.

Internal grievances here.

And as things have gone on, that role has – you stopped it, they stopped it; they thought they didn't need it any more, it just

Well, it, it's, it's dissipated somewhat. But I – I think, I think – yeah in giving you examples and – and I'm in danger of straying to ground that I don't want to go into, where particular case waiting, a more proactive position, where we thought well, if we can offer some interventions, we may be able to help, deal with, clearly what was a difficult (inaudible)

Okay

And we offered some interventions and, you know, I'm happy to say that, as part of – not singularly, but as part of what the IAGs did with a couple of other partners, we were able to resolve, help resolve

Mm

..a difficult case. So

Okay

..in essence, I mean when the anti, Anti-Racist (inaudible) Group existed, we were involved in the long standing ET cases; and in fact, the Met's view, before we, we started to, to, to take that on, was that the – the cases who had been going on for, for years and therefore they were unresolvable, we took the view, we took the opposite view and, and went to the then Director, who's now Commander Ireland, to say, Look. This cohort can be dealt with and working with – with Commander Ireland, we were able to resolve what were then some really very difficult cases, but - and there wasn't then the pile-up of cases until much more recently

Okay

..when, when cases started to come out in

Just one last point. Just one last point. Just in terms of headings, not perhaps in details, what other areas do you offer support and advice to the Met on? So you've got the whole induct—HR, Human Resource area. What other sort of areas have you been engaged in (inaudible) advice?

Well now, across – across the board, actually

Cohort

..I mean, I think, I mean, if I start from the top, I mean, as I say, we used to attend regular Management Board meetings, depending on the issues

Mm

..which were coming up, so if there's – if there was a race equality issue coming up and there was a report which was going to Management Board, we would get sight of that report

Mm

..and then be, be invited to, to, to attend and comment

Mm

..on those – those reports. As time went on, that, that, again, fell by the roadside and I don't know whose fault, in fact, that was; we were invol—involved in critica—well, our main role was advising on – and it was advice, rather than influencing critical incidents, so we gave advice on

Mm

..a whole series of critical incidents – we were given draft policies on which we were able to comment on, during the, the whole strengthening of the Race Relations Amendment Act; we sat on a whole series of groups and reviewed the policies and commented on Race Equality schemes and so on and so forth;

Okay, great. Thank you.

..so, it was right across the police, really.

Right, thank you.

Yeah. And I just (inaudible)

Whe—when did that stop?

Well, I think most of these things started moving away after, after Morris.

So, what's that? Three, three years ago.

Three years ago now.

(inaudible) but what, what's it about Morris?

Well, there was the issue around - some of the recommendations about Morris, that the IAGs are now trained – they are not whereas in ig—, where we are (inaudible) by some of the constituents around the table, anyway, so

Right

BP Okay. Let me just, please, probe you on a couple of things. You said you, you know, you're, you're listened to. At what level are you listened to on a regular basis?

Commissioner.

Commissioner level.

BP So you have regular meetings now with the Commissioner?

We do. We have had, continually and we have gone to Management Board; I've gone a number of times to Management Board.

BP Do you, I know – you know, the role of the Advisory Groups in, in, in the main. Have they sought your – your advice on the public perception of non-representational discrimination internally?

(inaudible)

They have.

They, they are the questions we are – posed in May 2002 and

BP Yeah, no I mean

No, they have. They have.

But –but they have and we continue to

We continue to advise them.

..help, suggest what w(inaudible); (inaudible), the (inaudible) has attended our meeting's last queries. The promotional aspects are – and the actual training packages. We actually look at each specific area, from – you know specialist areas to broad, main stream.

BP Okay, (inaudible). A--, as an advisory group, you, you made a point (inaudible) staff. Is there not a report back lessons learnt culture (inaudible) you know, (inaudible) – is there not a process (inaudible)?

Well, what, what happens is, there is a process, whereby advisers, advisers seek through the Directorate. The Directorate then contact the Chair; the Chair then nominate someone. The feed go – the feedback goes back to the Directorate, but the outcome of that feed back is where there's a gap, i.e. whether the advisor was (inaudible) or why wasn't (inaudible) there's a big gap there, which need to be, be (inaudible).

You, j--just to add to that, sorry, sorry, Bob.

(inaudible)

Just to add to that, I mean, you know, what we also do regularly is that we meet monthly and we take copious Minutes and notes. They have action points where we – we, we passed the, the Directorate and, and the Director of the Directorate and, and the Director comes to most of our meetings,

Okay

..so that Alf, at present or Denise Milani, would come to our meeting and part of the actions generated out of those, those Minutes would, would, would either out of meetings be, be, be reported back to the Chair or come to the next meeting, so there is the secondary reporting mechanism. I, I, I have to add that as bureaucracies work, that we as volunteers, there is not always, you know, possible to,

Sure.

.. to take those, those, those ashes and, and get a proper closure and, and, and that, you may say, is a two way process some of our – our Force, we, we, we haven't got the kind of consistent closure as we might. (inaudible)

BP Okay, I've just got two more points. One is, have you – have you been, has your specific advice been sought by Trident?

No, Trident, Tri, Trident is a different area.

(inaudible)

(inaudible)

Oh, they have their own?



Yeah.

Okay. Right.

Although, we – we have (inaudible)

No.

No, okay.

(inaudible)

BP I understand that you, you're the advisory group to the Constabulary, yup?

Yeah

On race.

BP On race.

Yeah

BP Th—there were some interesting points that you'd put to the Morris Inquiry, in terms of appraisal systems

Yeah

BP ..and things like that. Have you ever given any advice or, or been involved in any advice or any views on the Metropolitan Police Association and how they carry out their functions?

(inaudible)

(inaudible)

Right. No.

BP The MPA.

The MPA.

BP Authority, sorry, sorry.

MPA.

BP MPA, sorry. I'm sorry (inaudible)

Okay

BP I'm going to ask about the BPA later, that's my last point!

We, we had to meet Toby

Yes

When Toby was Chair

Yes

We used to meet Toby regularly and basically, share some of our views, in terms of policing and (inaudible) round and I think we carried on with them as well, by (inaudible) Toby because David (inaudible) was a Vice Chair to Toby, was an IAG member, so before you cross over to become a Vice Chair. So that also give us a lot of room to basically engage with Toby on solving difficulties. But it wasn't proactive (inaudible) as – as, as it was with Toby, so we have given advice.

BP Has that ceased now, or...?

No, it hasn't – it hasn't ceased. It hasn't - (inaudible). We are, we are still going on with that.

Okay

The other thing we used to do was to attend the MPA's Equalities and Diversity Board and – and, in essence, I mean, when it was appropriate we contributed information into that meeting, but again, some of the attendants at those meetings were, were *ad hoc*, were depending on, on who was (inaudible) to attend those meetings and how much time we had to, to, to contribute to those meetings really.

BP So - what was the relationship between the BPA and yourself as an advisory group?

How long have you got (inaudible)?

B, BPA has got a seat. It's the only staff association that have got a seat on the IAG.

Yeah

Because of the way we came about, following Lawrence, BP has a special seat on the IAG.

Right

BO But there has been occasions where waters has been muddled, so, basically, they, they — leave the table, because they don't agree on all the issues, but we can only advise based on the evidence. We cannot just give advice (inaudible), because this is usually to do with black, black or Asians. We're (inaudible) to advise based on perceptions. We ask for evidence and if the evidence is not coming, then obviously our advice w—w—will be the same, based on the

Okay

BO ..evidence.

BP Thanks, Ben.

CB Many of you are, sort of, long standing members of the IAG. How, how do you refresh your membership?

A variety of ways, really. I mean, there's, there's, we went to a, a, a review process that — there's a present review which is either finished or not finished, depending on your perspective. And some of us have taken the view that there has to be a kind of time limited membership of the IAG. Some of us have taken the other (inaudible) view, which says that over a period of learning how policing works, and I take myself as — as a statistic, it took me about four or five years to understand the language I do when speaking and then another couple of years to understand what the policy, practical and strategic issues were and therefore it takes a long time to understand what was happening to advise the Service and so, if you have a short time limited view to just do this, then you could have people passing through, without actually understanding the business at all. So, some of us felt longevity has helped to understand the business; having said that, I think we've gone through some frustrating periods where we've advertised London wide and have found very little evidence that people want to, to, to, to, to

Okay

(inaudible) so we *ad hoc*-ly recruit

Okay

..from people who are interested in abrogating their working with the police.

CB Okay. Okay. Pockets of stupidity and bigotry or institutional racism. Which is it to be?

Definitely institutional racism, in my book.

Okay

AJ What, sorry, what do you understand by institutional racism?

I am a Race Advisory Officer and that's what I do at work.

AJ So what – how would you define

Institutions, institutions like the Met, historically (inaudible) better to deliver a set of rules by certain people. Over the years, over the 175 plus years of, of the Met and policing in this country, its function in the (inaudible) is designed its business in a certain way, to equip certain parts of community to deal with parts of other community and in my work, the organisation has programmed people in a certain way and to behave in a certain way. And therefore, when those before who either come from the ou—outside of the organisation, very bright, come in experience the training and the behaviour which is internal to the organisation, to survive within those organisations, there is a certain behaviour that they take on. And the stupidity which people are presumed to display is based on a number of

things and because the organisation fails, through its own, either unwitting behaviour or ignorance or other things, to deal with it, people continue to behave in that way, because they feel safe in the knowledge that the organisation will very rarely take them on if they behave in a particular way and that's what gives them the insurance to behave in a certain way.

I'll also give you a live case, or cases, whereby the organisation

CB Be careful, if you're going to say live.

No, no, no, no.

CB Just – careful, that's all.

Organisation has dealt with an incident involving officers. The officers got suspended, a case was heard by an AC, the AC reverted the decision, we called the AC into question into one of our meetings, at the time IPCC was seeking (inaudible) judicial review, it went to the High Court and found that what we were saying was right. This is an institution whereby they look after each other's back and not if, if we haven't intervened, these officers have been invited back to work, because of what they did. So, it's a process might be right, the further the (inaudible) have got police (inaudible) proceedings on diversity and equalities, is positive but if the money gets interpreting those policies, put barriers in their way, then obviously (inaudible) it's not the policies that are at fault, it's that those who (inaudible).

AJ But, sorry, but you think that – you think that organisations that defend themselves when they're under attack are institutionally racist?

I don't think (inaudible)

Is that your understanding of institutional racism?

My, no, my understanding is

(inaudible)

My understanding is, any public body we use police but you'll find the local (inaudible) are just as bad.

Mm

Any organisations need to recognise that because of the size of the organisation, then there is a tendency that there will be racist behaviour within the organisation, what then they need to accolate – articulate is the processes that they p – they put in place to deal with those things when they come to that light, they cannot do that, then obviously they are part of the, of the, of the racism.

AJ So, if you, if you just go back ten years

Yes

AJ Just arbitrarily. What's better, what's the same and what's worse? In race terms, between '99 and 2009 in the Met?

I want to just go back and I, I think that you also have to look at communities and how they see it

AJ I understand that, but could I have an answer to my question, (inaudible)

Get a word in (inaudible)

Well, I mean, I, you, you, if you look at, if you look at ten years ago, I mean I was at the Lawrence (inaudible), I could not believe that paid, very senior paid officers were saying that

they didn't understand laws of arrest, that they really, they didn't know what to do, in investigative terms, to arrest those culprits. That's what happened ten years ago. In today's terms, officers and in fact, you asked the question earlier on about the MPA. The MPA has made officers accountable, stop and account; it's a process which was introduced where we now tell young people on the street that if an officer stops you and you feel that they are going to treat you with disrespect, what you do is, you ask for your, your copy of your – your (inaudible) because your mother's asked you to, to, to ask for the copy. And so, behaviour on the streets. Everything (inaudible) stop and search is still a challenge; behaviour on the streets, it's improved. Case like the IAG came along and, and ten years ago, if I rung Scotland Yard, I – you know, get a whole series of questions and I will be told that the Commissioner will write to me in two weeks or three weeks or four weeks. Nowadays, I can 'phone direct and therefore, in terms of access and communications, things have changed. In terms of recruitment, we gave you an example about the cases where the Met thought it couldn't solve the cases, that we went and gave ad--, advice, just as recently as critical cases, critical incidents and so on and so forth. The organisation is behaving in a way that is engaging positively with communities. That's not to say that, when it's under attack, it doesn't revert to type.

AJ No, I understand; I understand that. So, so – so it's – things have improved,

Things have changed.

AJ On a, on a kind of – day by day, every day basis

Oh, and as for (inaudible)

AJ ..but a critical, a critical moment of crisis, when the organisation is under a--, feels under attack, it, usually in the context of some kind of litigation, then, then old attitudes assert themselves, the, the, the organisation takes up a defensive position and then one finds wh— becoming manifest a kind of latent race—institutional racism? Is that the point?

I've often heard that the first priority (inaudible) police officers

Can you turn the mic. on there?



The first priority for a police officer to look at any issue facing them is what is the risk to the organisation?

Right

That, to me, is rather defective.

Right. And what should the question be?

What's the solution to that crisis? A--and to be

AJ Or, or, or what's the truth of the complaint?

Yeah; well – there, there are things called fact. You know, you need fairness, you need accountability, you need consistency and you need transparency. Some of those fact--, some of those issues tend to be lost by the wayside in dealing with – trying to minimise a risk to the organisation and the subtleties have changed in the past, for example we talked about employment generally and why most of the BME - visible BME 'cause they – we, we tried with the, the Irish question of whether they're BME or not, tried to inflate the figures at one time – here, Borough Commanders will employ and be quite happy to tick the number of diverse groups of people that they have under their command. By giving them the same types of work all the time, because that's the need of the Service, then prevents them from saying, when they're looking for promotion, that they have a wide range of skills and experience. And the fact that the – who need the line manager's approval before you can even apply, means that those old, inherent, innate prejudices, which we all have, are disproportionately affecting BME staff in a negative way.

Right. I think – I think I'll be very robust on this. Over the years since Lawrence, the Met can deal with external critical incident

Sorry, deal with a - ?

External critical incident.

External

Yah.

External, right

In terms of how they deal with families,

AJ Right

With family liaisons, independent advice

AJ That's got better?

Yes. It's absolutely better,

AJ Right

..and it's received national recognition. I mean, if you take my (inaudible) family liaisons have their IAG concept, I've travelled beyond the UK. But when it comes to internal critical incidents, it becomes a bomb shell.

AJ Right

And that is the question we need to ask: Why?

Even case closures. (inaudible)

I, I (inaudible)

AJ And what's the answer? Sorry, I, I really

Well, the answer really

(inaudible) Marcia could come in

Yeah

CB And then answers. Or you might have answers, Marcia.

Yeah. Internally, I, I think organisations do kind of look in on themselves. I mean, doctors are – you know – are great protecting their - each other, so

Mm

..in professions, different professions come together to protect each other. My (inaudible) is that the Met is such a large organisation and the way it's governed, I see it in a sense of, in a sense lacking a sense of corporacy (sic). Sometimes I've sat in management meetings and listened to what's gone on and I, I feel the - you know, when I look at it in a, in, in a smaller kind of local government type Health Service organisation, (inaudible) whole sense of corporacy (sic), for me, is what seems to be mi—somewhat missing.

AJ I don't understand the term.

Corporacy (sic) is that your identity with the organisation and working together? You're cascading down and you all have a kind of - a similar sense of purpose - and, and, and a mission that you do, as opposed to everybody doing their own thing in their own little areas.

BP Could be the ethos of the organisation, then.

Yes. Yes. The ethos of the org—organisation. And I think that yes, there are some things that are dealt with you know - locally li—like the FLOs and, and, and some crit—critical incidents, but to me, there seems, 'cause feel what - I'm here to represent community and community on the ground has a different view, depending on the community, of how the Met deals with them and, and I don't o—and, and, and therefore how they will then deal with it, up above. They come (inaudible) we work well with, with, with the Senior Managers, I think I - I, personally, do; I don't know what other people do. I think we work fairly well with Senior Managers and no, they don't always like us digging underneath, because when you dig underneath you do find certain hornets' nests and I think that's where our involvement comes in, because we have really helped them deal with communities, in terms of some, even internal, internally to - to save their necks sometimes, I would say. So I, I think that we have been very useful in terms of - of, of our - the background and experiences that we come from, in - in helping minimise the damage to the organisation a lot more.

(inaudible)

Well, it, it's not

(inaudible)

It says it's a learning organisation.

(inaudible)

It, it's --

CB (inaudible) role in relation to ETs

Mm

CB ..in kind of making sure they don't, you know, they don't blow up or they don't hit the headlines and you talked about protecting the organisation and, and damage and I'm just wondering whether or not that's a good thing. (inaudible)?

I think what, the difficulty with this organisation that has such a shifting of, of – quite high staff turnover, in terms of where they're at, at the time, of anything and I, I don't always think things get embedded as they should, because people will move on to the next rung and the next promotion and the next quite quickly,

Mm

..so I think sometimes that that, that – that doesn't help us.

Most organisations, it's like (inaudible) you don't (inaudible) because everybody is afraid of being

Liability.

.. (inaudible) culture. So I don't see the (inaudible) different to that, but what we want is an organisation that is open and transparent and dealing truthfully on the ground.

Mm

I think the other thing is, when we have – you know – it is a learning organisation and we've said this often enough, but it's not a retaining of that knowledge organisation; it tends to forget very quickly, because the same issues keep on coming every time one (inaudible). It may well be because the cohorts move up,

Mm

..they take the good practise with them

Yes

..and those coming underneath, which is why the basis of our questions were, can we compare the c—the cohorts going through, both in staff and police officers and those questions remain unanswered. The other issue's that bad practise also follows. That those officers will drag their mates along to their Borough Commands and therefore that whole ethos changes. For any effective promises, then you need structures, you need procedures, you need the ethos and you need a political or executive will power to drive it. Any weakness in any one of those four aspects will actually (inaudible) weaken the actual effectiveness.

CB Mm hm. Margaret, you wanted to come in and then

Yes, (inaudible)

CB We're going to have to ...

MB Do you think there's good leadership around race and faith? (inaudible)

I think there is – there is good leadership, as far as the, the former Commissioner and the others go and I think – I hope (inaudible) Commissioner who take the mantle, but anything around that should be under a Deputy Commissioner, because race and diverse issue (inaudible) all, all staff, anyway, like the, the lead should come from the top; not an AC, a Deputy Commissioner. That is, that is my, my (inaudible)

(inaudible)

I would say that – I would agree with that. I think – I think, I don't think it's dealt with at the right level at the moment. I, I do sit on the Diversity Board and I feel that it needs to take a, a higher ownership, you know, I – I mean, it'd be interesting

End of Side A

SIDE B

... from, from discussions that we've had, with him. But I feel that, I think, I think there's – there needs to be – it has to be at the right level and I think it has to be at a high enough level to ma--- to have clout. What I, what I want to do more is clout, as it goes down the ranks. (inaudible) Does that make sense? So that, so that people know that we're really serious on these things and there is no if or but about it. So if it's – if, if it's, if - this is a very hierarchical organisation and people – people will, you know, people will operate to certain levels and not for others and it's more persuasion and cajoling, whereas I feel that if you have (inaudible), even at Deputy Commissioner level, a, a – a responsibility and accountability, then I think it would work if, if – and, and calling people to account, it would work better, you know,

Okay.

...as far as I'm concerned.

CB We've got five more minutes and we're not going to do what we need to do in five minutes, which is to talk about solutions, about what we as a Panel should – you know, ideas on what we should be recommending, what are the key things, in your view, would help the situation, so we've got five minutes and I don't expect that we're going to get through it all, but I would

(inaudible)

Right.

CB If you could have a go at that.

At the moment, as I mentioned early on, about landscape, if you look at the whole landscape in terms of promotion,

Yeah

..and if I mention, I won't mention BME, because the issue is around black and Asians and the struggle to find them in strategic positions.

Sure

And my understanding, also, is, other (inaudible) so pretenders come quick for work, to go for the (inaudible) exams.

Mm. Mm

When it come to the Met, it got to be Chief Superintendent. And if black and Asian are struggling to move away from Chief – from Inspector to Chief Inspector and you've got only about three Superintendents, then, I'm afraid, ten, ten, fifteen years' time, we'll be talking about (inaudible) in terms of promotion. (inaudible) by the end of the day, who decides, who goes to (inaudible). What picture goes on the wall. You might have many recruits, but, if they are – they are not in strategic positions, they're not (inaudible).

One of the things I would really recommend from other practices elsewhere (inaudible) and level five equality standard authority in the past, having got them there, would be instead of having mentoring, at the level that you are now, why not mentor them, or you get on the job training at the next level? Why do you actually, you know, you, you find that many BME officers are being mentored by colleagues who they used to

CB Sorry about that.



..by colleagues who, who used to be – you know, beneath them, only a few years ago and they've, they're now being, sort of, like, told, Well, maybe you want to do this, maybe you want to do that. Why is it that the temporary and acting grades only go to white officers? That forms a major part of whether you actually are going to gain that experience.

(inaudible)

AJ That, that's – that's just true is it, that,

That's true, that's – that's true

AJ ..that, that the Acting jobs only go to white officers?

It would seem, from the figures that I have come across, a large proportion of them, seventeen of them (inaudible) the Met seemed quite happy to have forty-nine vacancies (inaudible) standards to be lowered

(inaudible)

..make it quite clear, but what we do want is that people be given those acting and temporary grades across the board and one of the major factors is, is who your mates are. If your – if your line manager is not happy with you, because or – and you have personality conflicts, you cannot just give it to the next level up. He or she will still be the mate of your manager, so why (inaudible) that like in any other job, in any other field, we can apply for the jobs and we only ask the line manager once we've passed the interview stage. Why is it that (inaudible) has to be based on recommendation?

AJ So

So these are positive things that we could suggest.

AJ So, so there's a specific positive recommendation here, that acting up positions should be - that the, the discretion to appoint acting up -

That's one part of it.

AJ ..positions should be taken away from local - whatever and giv—given to some central, colour blind organisation.

We're saying it should be more equitable. How it's done would be a matter for people to (inaudible)

AJ But that would be a, that's a split line.

Yeah, the second one would be to mentor at the higher grade and not necessarily at the grade (inaudible) lower; these would possibly help.

(inaudible)

Yes, exactly. I mean, if I was to apply for another job.

(inaudible) It's a bit of a problem (inaudible)

No. There isn't.

(inaudible)

But if I was to apply, my name would give it away, that I'm not

Well,

..exactly Anglo Saxon white.

(inaudible)

I mean, the, the, the other thing we have looked at and, I mean, since some of us have been doing (inaudible) you know, series of reviews and Inquiries and, and recommendations, really and – and, you know. We talked to Jonathan Cresswell, he'll tell you that recommendation after recommendation follows each other. So – I mean, they're quite useful, as part of this process, to look at a number of Inquiries which have, have been in existence and the recommendations which are outstanding, because, in essence, someone's there, (inaudible) go from Viridi to Ghaffur to Lawrence to Morris to s-- (inaudible)

(inaudible)

(inaudible) you know, they are outstanding issues which, yeah, (inaudible) so

(inaudible)

... and it's, it's, it's –

(inaudible)

(inaudible) a different line with them. I think it's about making sure those recommendations are being acted, enacted and how the scrutiny of them takes place, to make sure they are, because there's no point (inaudible) which will just be, (inaudible)

Perennial Inquiry.

But, but the last one,

(inaudible) determine whether or not they are

Yes

.. still available.

The last point I want to make is that – I mean, you asked a question about institutional racism. I think the problem of organisations - and if you compare the Met, as a Police service, to a number of public organisations in this country, I mean, the Met is always under the spot light and therefore, if you compare it to any public authority in this country, the Met is doing great.

Yeah. I (inaudible)

The comparators that the Met has,

Mm

..as a competition, is, is, is, is, is not a big deal, really, but internally if you look at the critical incidents that the Met has, that's where its problems are and then it's trying to make progress, but as a public body, it's, it – it, it, it allows itself to have - the criticisms to come out and then obviously, (inaudible)

Very, very useful. I'm so sorry we didn't have another (inaudible)

But we – we are going to give you also a written submission.

Yes

..in two weeks' time, if that is okay.

Oh, that's wonderful; thank you very much. And we'll get back to you (inaudible)

All right.

Thank you ever so much for (inaudible)

Thank you

Thank you. Thanks for your indulgence.