

Structuring a Police Response: the Diversity Directorate

A summary of the anti-hate crime structures set up within the Metropolitan Police Service.

Community safety units were launched by the then Commissioner Sir Paul Condon in June 1999. They offer a range of services to those suffering the hurt of hate crime and are supported centrally by the Diversity Directorate.

The Diversity Directorate itself was created on 1st September 2000 by (recently retired) Deputy Assistant Commissioner John Grieve, bringing together the prevention and detection of racist and violent crime, the implementation of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry recommendations and community safety policy. Commander Cressida Dick now leads the Directorate.

Improving public confidence in the prevention and detection of hate crime is a policing priority, and the Directorate has overriding responsibility for this within the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). The diversity strategy 'Protect and Respect – Everybody Benefits' sets standards for hate crime investigation within the Metropolitan Police District.

In addition to community safety units, the Directorate oversees victim care, family liaison, the use of intelligence to combat hate crime, third party reporting, and a number of other responsibilities. The Directorate also ensures that appropriate training is delivered in these areas.

Three major investigation teams operate within

the Directorate. Investigations of unsolved murders or unexplained deaths where the victim is linked to a minority community; race crime offences with particular sensitivity; and other major crime investigations and reinvestigations affecting the relationship between the MPS and minority communities are dealt with by these teams.

External scrutiny of the Metropolitan Police Service is achieved through the Independent Advisory Group and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender Advisory Group. Both groups have an influential role in policy development, and a wider role in critically appraising MPS practices and procedures. An advisory groups team within the Directorate acts as the point of reference regarding use of independent advice within the Service.

This month, the Directorate published the MPS *Race Equality Scheme* under the implementation of the *Race Relations (Amendment) Act* which came into force in April 2001 as a direct result of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. It places a general duty on all UK public authorities to tackle institutional racism, promote equal opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups.

The MPS scheme sets out what the service is doing to promote race equality, and includes topics such as public access to information and services,

complaints, recruitment and ethnic monitoring, language and disability issues. The Met's scheme has been praised by the Commission for Racial Equality and cited as an example of best practice for other forces.

The work of the Directorate has also been praised by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary HMIC as "a beacon of good practice for the police service nationally".

Information provided by the Directorate of Public Affairs, Metropolitan Police Service.

