



House of Commons  
Home Affairs Committee

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**The Macpherson  
Report—Ten Years On:  
Government Response  
to the Committee's  
Twelfth Report of  
Session 2008–09**

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**Fourth Special Report of  
Session 2009–10**

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## The Home Affairs Committee

The Home Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Home Office and its associated public bodies.

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Tom Brake MP (*Liberal Democrat, Carshalton and Wallington*)  
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### Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the Internet via [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)

### Publication

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at [www.parliament.uk/homeaffairscom](http://www.parliament.uk/homeaffairscom). A list of Reports of the Committee since Session 2005–06 is at the back of this volume.

### Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Elizabeth Flood (Clerk), Eliot Barrass (Second Clerk), Elisabeth Bates (Committee Specialist), Sarah Petit (Committee Specialist), Darren Hackett (Senior Committee Assistant), Sheryl Dinsdale (Committee Assistant) and Jessica Bridges-Palmer (Select Committee Media Officer).

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# Report

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On 22 July 2009 the Home Affairs Committee published its Twelfth Report of Session 2008–09, *The Macpherson Report—Ten Years On*, HC 427. The Government’s response to the Report is in the form of a letter dated 19 September 2009 to our Chair from Mr David Hanson MP, Minister of State at the Home Office, and is published as an Appendix to this Special Report.

## Government response

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Thank you very much for the HASC report. The government welcome the Committee's report. The report's acknowledgement that the police service has made tremendous strides in the service it provides to minority communities and in countering racism within its workforce is especially welcome. We remain firmly committed to ensure the promotion of race equality in the police service and are focused on this and will continue to work with the police service and our policing and community partners.

However, we agree with the Committee's view that there are still a number of areas to be fully dealt with. A number of reports have been written to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of the Macpherson report. On 21 July 2009 the Government published a consolidated response to reports by Dr Stone, the Runnymede Trust and the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The response can be found at:

<http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equality-diversity/stephen-lawrence-inquiry/10-years-on-government-response?view=Binary>.

These reports, including the Committee's Report, highlight consistent themes which point to where effort should be focused. The themes relate to issues around:

- Recruitment, Retention and Progression (including at senior levels and in specialist roles)
- Workforce representation / employment targets
- Stop and Search
- National DNA database
- Reporting and recording of racist incidents

Also published was a report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry 10 Years On conference and an action plan: which sets out work being taken forward to address these and other key issues. The report and action plan can be found at:

<http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equality-diversity/stephen-lawrence-inquiry/10-years-on-conference-report-Ju?view=Binary>

Work on these issues is a priority. On the **National DNA database**—the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) has now completed a Stage 2 EIA which looks in greater depth at equality issues and this will be published on the NPIA website shortly.

The Government has undertaken a 3 month consultation exercise on proposals for a retention framework to implement the S and Marper judgment, which closed on 7 August 2009. The Government also introduced an amendment at Commons Report Stage of the Policing and Crime Bill to allow the introduction of regulations on the retention, use and governance of biometric data. The Government will consider these measures further in the light of the results of the public consultation and of Lords' consideration at Committee

stage of the Policing and Crime Bill in October. The NPIA will also further review and revise the EIA to take account of this work.

On **workforce representation / employment targets**—the Race Employment targets played a major part in improving the representation of black and minority ethnic (BME) officers and staff in the police service. Despite progress of more than doubling representation since 1999 (from 2.0% to 4.4%), the proportion of BME officers has fallen short of the 2009 national target of 7%. Moving to local target setting was a key proposal of the Policing Green Paper. Police authorities are now responsible for setting ambitious local employment targets in agreement with forces and in consultation with communities, police officers and staff to enable local representation. Local targets will also feature in the 2010 Workforce HMIC Inspection process. This local approach provides more local ownership of targets and will help to reflect the needs of local communities.

The conference report sets out work being taken forward through the Ministerial Ethnic Minority Steering Group that I chair. The Group is represented by a number of key policing stakeholders including the National Black Police Association (NBPA) and the National Association of Muslim Police. An independent perspective is provided by high profile community representatives including Mrs Doreen Lawrence. An ambitious programme of work to improve the representation of BME staff is being driven through an action plan including work to ensure that BME staff are represented at the most senior levels such as the creation of a national career development framework to encourage talent management and track careers of BME staff; and the extension of the National Senior Careers Advisory Service (NSCAS) to include BME Chief Inspectors. This service was previously for superintendents and above.

I will now turn to a number of issues highlighted by the Committee:

**Role of Family Liaison Officers (FLOs):** FLOs are the vital link between police investigative teams and the victim's family. Although one of their roles is to gather evidence and information from families, they also provide support and information in a sensitive and compassionate way to families who are themselves victims; ensure that families are kept up to date about the progress of the investigation, and that they are referred to the practical or emotional support they need. We are wholeheartedly committed to ensuring that the right support is in place. In 2009/10, the Government is investing £300,000 from the Victims Fund to develop support for families and friends of victims of homicide. This will provide core funding to organisations in England and Wales that deliver services and support to families and friends of homicide victims.

**Race and Diversity Training:** The examples of overt racism reported in the media are disappointing. The training of frontline officers and leaders is only one part of a response to this issue. All officers are required to take mandatory race and diversity training, which can be either classroom based or through e-learning. There have been over 17,000 completions of the Diversity and the Police e-learning package. Similarly, race and diversity is integral to leadership training.

The Police Race and Diversity Strategy 2004–09 requires all staff to demonstrate their occupational competence in this area. The benchmark for this is the successful assessment

of all staff against the national standard by December 2010. Police forces are continuing to make progress towards achieving this requirement.

**Disproportionate use of disciplinary procedures against BME Officers:**

The EHRC also reported on this issue and made a recommendation that research should be undertaken to determine whether BME officers are disproportionately subjected to disciplinary procedures and why. Page 21 of the Government response explains that the Taylor Review led to the introduction of the new Police (Conduct) Regulations 2008 and Police (Performance) Regulations which Parliament approved and became effective from 1 December 2008.

A Police Advisory Board for England and Wales (PABEW) working party is monitoring the effectiveness of the new arrangements. Since our response to the EHRC report, I have written to the Chair of the PABEW to reinforce the importance of this monitoring work and that the PABEW should report on the effectiveness of the new arrangements at a suitable time. ACPO has been asked to provide an assessment of the use of disciplinary procedures on BME officers in February 2010. This will allow a full year of data on the new procedures to be assessed.

**Pursing allegations of racism made by members of the public against police officers:**

Police officers are subject to the Standards of Professional Behaviour which reflect the expectations that the police service and the public have of how police officers should behave. These new standards were introduced as part of the Taylor Reforms of the police officer disciplinary arrangements.

The standards introduced a duty on police officers to challenge, report or take action against the conduct of colleagues which has fallen below the standards expected. This applies to all police officers and not just those in supervisory or management roles. Any breach of the standards may lead to disciplinary action being taken.

The police complaints system sets out the requirement for the recording and handling of complaints against any person serving with the police. Serious allegations are required to be referred to the Independent Police Complaints Commission, who have the power to conduct their own independent investigation or manage or supervise a police investigation.

We have highlighted in our response and the conference report that there are clear steers on what needs to underpin future work:

- **Public confidence:** it is essential that the police service and other public institutions have the confidence of—and serve—all communities and this is the outcome upon which the success of action on race equality will be measured.
- **There is further work on race equality to be done:** while there is an acknowledgement that progress has been made over the past 10 years, it's clear that there is much more work to be done.

I have given my personal commitment to help make a difference. My Ministerial Equality Groups' meetings will help maintain a hard focus to drive this work forward.