

Last Chance For Police Race Equality

8th March 2005

The Metropolitan Black Police Association (MBPA) today slammed the absence of enforceable solutions within the CRE formal investigation report. The Association described the report into the police service, calling it as a bridge too short and maintaining the status quo.

Chair George Rhoden said 'this report has not delivered the vehicle of change that we were looking for. I believe it is a huge opportunity missed in providing a strategy that could be used for radical change in police reform' As a result the Association have stated that they have no intention in participating in any further inquiries into Race. Mr Rhoden said "We want tangible outcomes and not a set of recommendations that will gather dust on police shelves". Whilst acknowledging the inclusion of some positive recommendations, which include giving further guidance on race impact assessments, the Association believe that the inquiry missed the critical link between service delivery and its impact on recruitment and selection.

The MBPA demand changes to legislation to bring about affirmative action in recruitment, based on the Patten model for The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). Mr Rhoden stated 'Five years after establishing national targets it is concerning that Chief Officer's are now asking for targets to change'. The Police Service have had five years implementing and sharing best practice around positive action, and still we find ourselves in the disappointing position in the service of not achieving the employment targets.

The Association described as shameful the complete omission of black women's experience in any detail across the areas examined. Deputy Chair Bevan Powell said "As a matter of urgency Police Services must look at immediate ways of removing the double racist and sexist barriers that impact and compromise the development of black women in the Police Service". The Association asserts that

like all other similar inquiries on race that most assume the experience of black men and women are the same.

The Association believe that grievance and discipline processes provide a barometer of internal relations in the service. Mounting evidence establishes as fact, that black staff are disproportionately subject of these processes. The Morris Inquiry and CRE report and the soon to be published Taylor Review all indicate flawed processes with an adverse impact on black staff. The Association now calls for a completely independent review of The Department of Professional Standards in force area's.

The Association additionally calls for national minimum standards in respect of the support for local Black Police Associations up and down the country.