



The Police Federation's response to the Flanagan Report

Responding to publication of the Review of Policing by Sir Ronnie Flanagan published today, Jan Berry, Chairman of the Police Federation of England and Wales, says:

"There is much in the report to be welcomed, as collectively many of the recommendations have the potential to release significant numbers of police officers back onto the street, and return some healthy common sense into policing.

"The recommendations would also help restore police officers' discretion; something this government has been eroding through the imposition of nationally set targets.

"Whilst we must be accountable for our actions, recommendations to overhaul crime recording, stop and account, RIPA and rationalise stop and search bureaucracy is to be applauded.

"Cutting central targets will also allow police officers to deliver the type of policing that local communities want, and will eliminate the ridiculous arrests that officers are often compelled to make to satisfy Home Office diktats.

"Rationalising the governance process will also ensure that we don't end up with a top heavy police service, with more people deciding what we should be doing, than numbers available to actually deliver.

"However, as is often the case with reports of this magnitude, the devil is in the detail. There is an assumption that the workforce modernisation programme, advocating a mix of police and support staff in operational roles, provides greater efficiencies, flexibility and resilience. It is premature to reach such a conclusion as the demonstration sites are not due to commence until spring and there has been no evaluation. This government has a tendency of declaring pilots a success as soon as they launch them. This report assumes they are a success before they have even started.

"I don't dispute that we have become a 'risk averse' service. Perhaps if officers received better ongoing training and there was less of a blame culture and or a witch hunt if they make genuine mistakes or errors, then the 'risk aversion' trend may just turn."