



Federation response to EHRC review of stop and search

15.03.10

Responding to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) review of stop and search entitled 'Stop and Think' published today, Simon Reed, Vice-Chairman of the Police Federation of England and Wales, says:

"Stop and search can be an effective tool in the fight against crime, but it is one that is often the subject of intensive scrutiny by a multitude of agencies.

"Modern day policing is highly complex with competing demands from society. On the one hand we have communities requesting strong robust policing, particularly young people, who are most at risk from the gang, gun and knife culture; on the other hand we have those who, at any opportunity, are critical of policing and tactics they perceive to be intrusive.

"This report is critical of the processes surrounding stop and search, but we must be mindful that it is using outdated information from the last census nine years ago. However, it is clear that the service must be more focused and purposeful when using these powers. We must also ensure that officers understand the law and its practical implementation and are properly trained and supervised.

"The implementation of the 'Next Steps' programme by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) is a positive approach. It sets out guidelines on the role of individuals, the use of intelligence and the briefing process, proper supervision, together with advice on 'reasonable suspicion'.

"This report again highlights an issue we identified over ten years ago - that with growing and competing demands, we need to know precisely what society expects of its police service. The government needs to engage with the public through a thorough independent review to determine what people want and expect of police officers and the police service."

ENDS.