

‘The Ethical Issues Arising from the Relationship between the Police and the Media’

In July 2011 there were concerns that phone hacking at the News of the World may have been more widespread than previously identified and that the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) may not have investigated these matters thoroughly. The then Commissioner of the MPS, Sir Paul Stephenson, asked me to review the relationship between the MPS and the media and provide advice to the Commissioner and his Management Board. Sir Paul and an Assistant Commissioner subsequently resigned.

My inquiry commenced in August 2011 and continued under the new Commissioner, Bernard Hogan-Howe. My report was published on 5th January 2012.

My terms of reference were:

“To advise the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis and his Management Board as follows:

- Generally as to the ethical issues arising from the relationship between the police and the media;
- The proper purpose of the relationship between senior officers/staff and more junior officers/staff and media executives and reporters at all levels;
- Steps that should, or might, be taken to improve public confidence in police/media relations;
- Whether there are practicable steps that should be taken to improve transparency of police/press relationships;
- What, if any, hospitality is acceptable for police officers/staff to receive or provide from/to the media;
- What evidence in relation to these issues should be led by the MPS to the Public Inquiry announced by the Prime Minister on 13 July 2011”

I considered much written material and carried out discussions with 137 people, mostly individually, but some in small groups. The interviews were with police officers and staff from all levels of the MPS, the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA), Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) the Independent Police Complaints Commission, reporters, newspaper editors, people in business and politicians.

I also met with staff from the MPS operational inquiries – Weeting, Elveden, Tuleta and Appleton. I consulted with HMIC on their Integrity Review and with the MPA on their Anti-Corruption Survey. A full list of those providing information is set out at Appendix C to my report. Reference material is set out at Appendix B.

The Commissioner announced on January 5th 2012 that he would implement all my recommendations.

Elizabeth Filkin
February 2012

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