

IN THE MATTER OF:

AN INQUIRY UNDER THE INQUIRIES ACT 2005

INTO THE CULTURE, PRACTICES AND ETHICS OF THE PRESS

CHAired BY THE RT HON LORD JUSTICE LEVESON

FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF THOMAS DANIEL PETTIFOR

I, **THOMAS DANIEL PETTIFOR**, Daily Mirror, MGN Limited, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5AP WILL SAY as follows:

1. My full name is Thomas Daniel Pettifor. I am known as Tom Pettifor.
2. I have been asked to provide a witness statement further to the Inquiry's notice under section 21 of the Inquiries Act 2005, dated 3 January 2012, which was addressed to a 'Senior Crime Reporter or equivalent' at the Daily Mirror (the '**Notice**').
3. I am the crime correspondent at the Daily Mirror. I am the only specialist crime correspondent on the Daily Mirror and could therefore be described as the 'Senior Crime Reporter or equivalent'.
4. I am not authorised to waive any privilege on behalf of Trinity Mirror and nothing in this witness statement is intended to constitute a waiver of privilege on behalf of Trinity Mirror.
5. Where the contents of this statement are within my own knowledge they are true and where they are not within my own knowledge I indicate the source of my belief and believe them to be true.
6. True copies of documents to which I refer in this statement are attached as Exhibits TP-1 and TP-2 hereto.
7. The Notice asks 40 questions. I address them below in the same order as they are asked in the Notice.

Question 1: who I am and a brief summary of my career history

8. I began doing work experience as a junior reporter at the Hackney Gazette in late 2001 while studying journalism. I completed the National Council for the Training of Journalists (**NCTJ**) post-graduate course in journalism. My first paid job in journalism was as a reporter on the London based news agency National News, where I worked from January 2002 to April 2004. In June 2004 I began working as a full time general news reporter on the Daily Mirror – this role included covering crime stories from time-to-time, amongst other news stories. In May 2011 I became the crime correspondent for the paper. I report to the head of content at the Daily Mirror.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MEDIA AND THE METROPOLITAN POLICE

Question 2: My impressions over the years about the culture of relations between the Metropolitan Police and the media

9. As one of the most junior members of the Crime Reporters' Association ('CRA'), my personal experience is limited when it comes to the history of the 'culture' of relations between the Metropolitan Police and the press. I joined the CRA in May 2011 by taking the position from my predecessor after I took over from him as the Daily Mirror's crime correspondent. As explained in response to Question 1, I have only been a crime reporter for eight months, since May 2011. During this time I would describe relations between the Metropolitan Police and the media as being in state of flux. As I say in response to Questions 39 and 40, based on my experience I believe that systems and laws already exist to protect against and to deal with any inappropriate contact. However, since the phone hacking allegations at News of the World the culture seems to be marked by more uncertainty on the part of the police in dealing with the media. Prior to this time, while working as a general news reporter, my impression based on my experience in covering crime stories from time-to-time was that the relationship seemed to be more one based on mutual trust: for example and speaking generally, police officers and their press teams would help the process of ensuring accuracy in stories by indicating if details we had received were factually correct. It is more common now for them to refuse to discuss any aspects of a breaking story, apart from giving a very limited official comment.

Question 3: Personal contact with the Metropolitan Police at the various stages of my career

10. I did not come into contact with the police while at the Hackney Gazette. When I worked at National News I would talk to the Scotland Yard press office regularly as many of the jobs would involve crime in London. I would also talk to police officers while covering court cases for National News. My job at National News involved interviewing senior investigating officers ('SIOs') at press conferences when the Metropolitan Police were appealing for information from the public.
11. As a general news reporter on the Daily Mirror I would speak to the Scotland Yard press office on average a few times a week depending on the stories I was working on. I could go

for weeks at a time not talking to them. If I was working on a particular crime I might have spoken to the SIO either at press conferences or individually at court, although I cannot now recall specific instances.

12. Since becoming the Daily Mirror crime correspondent I probably speak to the Scotland Yard press office at least twice a day on average. I also regularly speak to SIOs at court, on the telephone, or if they call me via the press office to publicise a particular case that they want highlighting. To give general examples of content, I might ask officers about details of a crime that I am reporting on, or for background information on a trial that is on-going. I might also talk to them to verify information that I have collected: ensuring that stories are accurate is a fundamental aspect of my job as a reporter.

Question 4: Contact with (a) Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis; (b) Deputy Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis; (c) Assistant Commissioners of Police of the Metropolis; (d) Deputy Assistant Commissioners of Police of the Metropolis; and (e) Head of Public Affairs

13. I have been asked to set out the contact I have had with persons holding at any given time the above positions giving the dates and summarising the gist of the communications I have had with them, as best as I can remember, stating who initiated the contact and why:
 - a. Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis: I met the current Commissioner, Bernard Hogan-Howe at the first meeting of the CRA after his appointment. I recall that this meeting was on September 27, 2011 and that about 30 CRA members attended. My recollection is that at some point he introduced himself to me, said hello and shook my hand. I do not recall there being any other conversation. I recall seeing Mr Hogan-Howe at the CRA Christmas drinks, although I did not come into contact with him. I recall his predecessor, Sir Paul Stephenson, saying hello to all CRA members who visited Scotland Yard on the day of the royal wedding (April 29, 2011). He also attended a CRA briefing that I was at on May 24, 2011 though I did not talk to him. I have a very vague memory of maybe seeing Sir John Stevens at a school event that I was also attending as a journalist, but I cannot recall this with any certainty. Otherwise, I do not recall having had contact with the Commissioner or former Commissioners, although as I come back to in my response to Question 12 below, I do attend the Commissioner briefings held at Scotland Yard for CRA members which usually take place monthly.

- b. Deputy Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis: I have never met the Acting Deputy Commissioner, although she was on a panel at a press conference on Stephen Lawrence that I was at on December 20, 2011, attended by maybe 50 or so journalists. I do not recall ever having met any previous Deputy Commissioners.
- c. Assistant Commissioners of Police of the Metropolis: I do not recall ever having met any of the Assistant Commissioners, both past and present.
- d. Deputy Assistant Commissioners of Police of the Metropolis: I do not recall ever having met any of the Deputy Assistant Commissioners, both past and present.
- e. Head of Public Affairs:
 - i. Along with fellow CRA members, I spent the day at Scotland Yard during the royal wedding while reporting on the police operation. During that time CRA members spent an hour or so with the Director of Public Affairs, Dick Fedorcio, chatting in his office about the operation – there would have been about 10-15 of us. I do not know if this day at Scotland Yard was initiated by the CRA or the police but, as the crime reporters would have spent the day ringing them, it made more sense for us all to be there and to relay information to our various newsdesks.
 - ii. Mr Fedorcio came to the Daily Mirror's offices in May 2011. I think I heard about this meeting only on the day – I was not involved in arranging it, so do not know how it came about. The Daily Mirror's deputy editor Peter Willis and head of content Chris Bucktin also attended. Having just begun the crime correspondent job, I asked Mr Fedorcio for his thoughts about this job and details of the various departments in the Metropolitan Police and the corresponding press officers. I also asked him about his previous jobs and general policing issues. I think that the meeting lasted about half an hour but do not remember this precisely. The meeting was informal and the discussion was on a not-for-publication basis. I recall that I subsequently emailed Mr Fedorcio and requested an interview with the then Commissioner. Mr Fedorcio replied, saying that I could meet him at the next CRA briefing, on May 24, 2011. However, as mentioned above in respect of Question 4(a), although the Commissioner was at this briefing I did not meet him. A copy of my email with Mr Fedorcio is attached in Exhibit TP-1. To

the best of my recollection I did not go back to Mr Fedorcio after this briefing and no interview took place.

- iii. Our last meeting was at the Scotland Yard summer party in 2011 where I chatted to Mr Fedorcio along with other CRA members. I attended the summer party on the invitation of Scotland Yard – I think that the press office sent the invitation. I believe that I arrived after it had begun and that I stayed for about an hour; a lot of people were there, maybe 100 or so. I no longer have the invitation.
- iv. I do not recall having spoken to acting director Chris Webb since he took over the acting position (I recall speaking with him on a maybe a couple of occasions before then. I cannot recall when or what we spoke about, but it was after I took up my position as crime correspondent at the Daily Mirror).

Question 5: Whether I have ever had the personal mobile telephone numbers or home telephone numbers of the people listed in Question 4

14. I do not have, and never have had, the home numbers or personal mobile numbers of any of the people named above, or anyone holding the above positions at any given time.

Question 6: What was I seeking to 'gain' from the Metropolitan Police through my personal contacts with Metropolitan Police personnel?

15. As the Daily Mirror's crime correspondent, when I speak with press officers I am primarily doing so to check facts, as my job as a reporter requires.
16. Otherwise, in general conversation, for example in meeting with Mr Fedorcio as set out in response to Question 4(e), I have been interested in finding out what these people thought about the major issues facing the police at the time. To understand fast-moving breaking stories better I believe that it is important to have a good understanding of the context and the background issues involved. I wanted to learn what the big challenges that were facing the Metropolitan Police were and how they were dealing with them. This might help to give me ideas on possible stories or areas that I should look at.

Question 7: What in general terms I consider the Metropolitan Police have been seeking from me during my career

17. My experience is that the Metropolitan Police are interested in stories being reported accurately and regular communication helps to facilitate this. They can also use the press and wider media to help them to make arrests, reduce crime and generally make the public more aware of policing issues very quickly. An obvious example is the recent publication of pictures of alleged rioters from the August 2011 riots which led to many arrests.

Questions 8 and 9: Extent of acceptance by me of hospitality from the Metropolitan Police

18. I have had tea or coffee at press conferences held by the Metropolitan Police at Scotland Yard. As mentioned in my response Question 4(e) above, I also attended the Scotland Yard summer party in 2011. This had a complimentary bar with wine and beer; I do not recall there being food, but as I arrived late, I might have missed this. I do not recall any other hospitality.

Questions 10 and 11: Extent of provision of hospitality by me to the Metropolitan Police

19. To the best of my recollection, the extent that I have provided any hospitality has been, on one occasion, buying coffee for a press officer when discussing a story I was working on. On another occasion I went to a pub with a Detective Chief Inspector ('DCI') while chatting generally about his work. I recall that he had a glass of water.

Question 12: Attendance at formal press conferences called by the Metropolitan Police, what they were called for, and my thoughts on whether they were valuable

20. Before I took up my current role as crime correspondent, I attended press conferences from time-to-time both at National News and as a general news reporter on the Daily Mirror, although this was hardly ever – it would be, for example, if I was sent out to cover a crime and there was an 'in situ' press conference at the crime scene.

21. Since becoming crime correspondent, I regularly attend press conferences. I attend the Commissioner briefing, which usually takes place every month at Scotland Yard for CRA members. At these briefings the Commissioner will talk about topics of his choosing and then the floor will open up for questions. After the riots in August 2011 I attended a special briefing and otherwise I have attended up to maybe five specific briefings. Most recently I

attended a background briefing in preparation for the conclusion of the trial of two men accused of murdering Stephen Lawrence.

22. I have found the briefings which I have attended valuable. They tend to give a fuller understanding of the issues and background knowledge. This helps when reporting as it helps to identify the news line (ie what might be newsworthy) and facilitates accuracy.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER POLICE FORCES

Question 13: My impressions over the years about the culture of relations between police forces other than the Metropolitan Police and the media

23. To give some context, as I return to under Question 15 below, generally regional reporters cover the regions, so my contact with other police forces is not regular. My experience is that police forces have different approaches to the media. Some will have press offices that can be contactable at any time, while others will only be available during office hours. This can be the case for example with smaller forces that have smaller budgets and less staff. Generally though I have found that forces try to be open.

Question 14: Personal contact at Chief Constable, Deputy Chief Constable, or Assistant Chief Constable level

24. I do not recall having had any personal contact with any persons holding these positions.

Question 15: Personal contact with other police forces at various stages of my career

25. I have always been a London-based reporter and though I have had contact with other force press offices, this has been relatively infrequent and I do not recall any contact whilst at National News. Until I became crime correspondent, I did not speak to other forces unless I was sent to cover a story in a different police force area. Now, roughly speaking, I might speak to a regional press office maybe twice a week. If the press office gives me the name of an officer on a case, I sometimes try to call that officer, but my contact is usually with the press office.

Question 16: What I was seeking to 'gain' from contacts with other police forces

26. Further to my response to Question 15, usually I would be calling a local force press office to try to get more information about a crime that had occurred on that force's patch. I would also usually be calling to check the accuracy of facts.

Question 17: What I consider other police forces have been seeking from me in personal dealings during my career

27. Sometimes, police want national coverage for a regional story. Other times they want to put information in the public domain and to ensure that it is reported accurately. They might be looking to publicise good work that they have done.

Questions 18 and 19: Acceptance of hospitality from other police forces

28. I do not recall ever having received hospitality from other police forces.

Questions 20 and 21: Provision of hospitality to other police forces

29. I do not recall ever having provided hospitality to other police forces.

GENERAL MATTERS

Question 22: Formal or informal prior notifications to me from the police about proposed arrests, raids or other action

30. On April 14, 2011 I went on a pre-arranged Metropolitan Police job involving the SCD9 Human Exploitation and Organised Crime Command. The team was searching coaches coming in to Victoria station from abroad. This was just before I became crime correspondent, but after I had learned that I had the job. I am not sure how it came about, but I think that it came from a campaign which the Daily Mirror had run in relation to people trafficking. The Metropolitan Police offered to take me along – I recall that this offer came via the Daily Mirror newsdesk. As far as I recall, no story came of this, although there were maybe a couple of arrests – I do not know the details precisely of what for. Otherwise, I do not recall any other prior notifications. In my experience the police will sometimes let media outlets attend planned arrests, raids and other such action, but will not reveal much detail in advance.

Question 23: Offers to me of 'off-the-record' briefings by the police

31. 'Off-the-record' information is sometimes provided at CRA briefings or at other background briefings by the police during an ongoing trial and I have received information in this way. An example of this came fairly recently when a man was arrested on suspicion of murder following the death of his friend. A local news agency had reported that the dead man had been beaten, but an officer confirmed to me off-the-record that this did not appear to be correct. The officer also told me that the arrested man was now no longer being regarded as a murder suspect. Otherwise, I might myself ask for off-the-record information when a story is breaking and I am trying to check the accuracy of facts.

Question 24: Mechanisms in my workplace to monitor and record hospitality as between the police on the one hand and me, or my fellow journalists on the other

32. As far as I am aware there is no specific mechanism at the Daily Mirror for monitoring and recording hospitality, although I refer to my answers to Questions 8 to 11 and 18 to 21 above insofar as this has been relevant to me in practice.
33. Trinity Mirror does have an expenses system, with which journalists who are reclaiming expenses (eg for hospitality) are required to comply.

Question 25: Training, guidance, policies and practices in place in my workplace governing contact between me and my colleagues on the one hand and the police on the other

34. My NCTJ post-graduate course included a large module on media law, including the Contempt of Court Act. I have recently completed training on the Bribery Act 2010. The PCC code is on the wall in the office and a copy of the new 2012 amended code was recently sent to my home address by Trinity Mirror. All reporters on the Daily Mirror are expected to know the PCC code.
35. My training has also been significantly 'on the job'. I have learned, for example, by going to Court and reporting on Court proceedings, talking to the in-house lawyers at Trinity Mirror, and reading material relevant to my work. When I took on the role of crime correspondent, my predecessor helped me to prepare for this job. Fundamentally, I am expected to know what I can and cannot do and I know that I must act within the law.

36. I am familiar with and have read Trinity Mirror's formal written policies relevant to dealings with the police. They include Trinity Mirror's Code of Business Conduct, Business Expense Policy, Fraud Policy and Disclosure Policy / 'Whistle-blowers' Charter, and Code of Conduct Policy.

37. I refer to my response to Question 28 below in respect of payments to the police.

Question 26: Editorial or management oversight, or control, over communications between journalists and police at the Daily Mirror

38. As mentioned in response to Question 1, I am accountable to my line manager, the head of news. He is accountable to the editor. As explained above in my answer to Question 25, I am expected to behave within the law and the PCC code and in a responsible way at all times.

Question 27: The ethical issues that I consider arise, or need to be held in mind, by a journalist communicating (in the course of his or her employment) with the police, or anyone else serving with, or employed by, a police force

39. A system exists where only SIOs are normally allowed to talk to the press and my impression is that they know what they can and cannot say. I do not recall ever having been asked for anything in return for information from a police officer or member of police staff. Ethically, I would have the welfare of victims in the forefront of my mind when talking to police officers. I would consider any on-going legal proceedings and witnesses, as would police officers. I would be careful not to appear to offer anything financial or by way of hospitality in return for a story. My intention is to stay within the law and the PCC code. I would say that these considerations should apply generally for journalists communicating with the police.

Question 28: What payments (if any) are considered to be legitimate financial transactions between persons serving with or employed by a police force and journalists at the Daily Mirror?

40. To the best of my knowledge and belief, no payments to anyone serving with or employed by a police force are considered legitimate and I am not aware of any.

Question 29: Role that I consider the Metropolitan Police Service Directorate of Public Affairs (especially its Press Bureau) and corresponding parts of other police forces to fulfil and what in practice they do

41. Police press offices act as an interface with the public. They allow information to be disseminated in an organised way and allow front line officers to get on with their jobs. Apart from the press office, I do not know what the rest of the Directorate does.

Question 30: How, in practice, I get access to the police

42. My first port of call is usually the press office. I may request to speak to an officer on the case. As a journalist it is my job to try to get accurate information and the best way to do that is to talk to the people at the heart of a story. The press office allows access in an organised way. I currently have mobile phone numbers for 12 officers, which I believe are all work mobiles, and which they gave to me willingly either at press conferences or briefings. I have called them from time-to-time to ask about a particular investigation I know they are working on. Sometimes I will contact the Scotland Yard press office by email.

Question 31: Does the Head of Public Affairs at the Metropolitan Police Service and / or corresponding persons in other police forces act, or seek to act, as gatekeepers controlling access by the media to other police personnel?

43. My experience is that the Head of Public Affairs will manage access to senior officers, though it will be up to the officers who they talk to. As mentioned in response to Question 4(e) above, after meeting Mr Fedorcio when he visited the Daily Mirror, I asked if I could interview the then Commissioner, but this interview did not come about.

Question 32: My attitude to the above state of affairs

44. My experience is limited, but I think that the system has seemed to work fine.

Question 33: The extent to which, in my opinion, the Metropolitan Police's Press bureau, and corresponding parts of other police forces, exist to manage the relevant police force's corporate image in the media

45. While doing its job the Press Bureau will be trying to manage the corporate image of the Metropolitan Police. Like any other public body, they have an interest in portraying

themselves in a good light. This is something that I keep in mind whenever I am being provided with information by them, but so far as I am aware this has not affected the accuracy of the information which I have received.

Question 34: Is it necessary for police forces to have a press office, and what is my view as to the utility and role of police press offices?

46. I believe that police press offices are very important in allowing information to be given to the public and thus in ensuring the police are accountable. They are normally very experienced and well-trained and help officers to understand what the media needs, for example the kinds of questions likely to be asked by the press, such as the ages of those involved in a story. Press offices help to provide information more in one go, rather than going backwards and forwards. This also lets the investigating officers get on with their jobs.

Question 35: Is it common for persons working for police press offices to have a background in the media?

47. I believe that this is common, although as I explain in response to Questions 36 and 37 below, I do not myself know.

Question 36: The proportion of personnel working in police press offices that I estimate to have a media background

48. I do not know the backgrounds of the vast majority of press officers so I do not feel that I can answer this question.

Question 37: Is any particular form of media background predominantly found amongst police press officers?

49. Please see my response to Question 36 above. I can only think of one police press officer whose background I am aware of (he was at another newspaper – not a Trinity Mirror publication), but I do not feel that I can comment on whether any particular form of background is predominantly found amongst police press officers.

Question 38: To the best of my knowledge, are there any discernible patterns in the movement of personnel from the media into police press offices and vice versa?

50. To the best of my knowledge there are no discernible patterns, but as I say above in response to Questions 36 and 37 above, I do not know as I do not know the backgrounds of most police press officers.

ABOUT HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY ('HMIC')

Question 39: My view of the recommendations contained in HMIC's report, '*Without fear or favour: A review of police relationships*' insofar as they concern relations between the media and the police

51. I would say, based on my experience, that there are already systems in place to monitor risks arising from relationships between the police and the media. I have not myself encountered any issues with this. I therefore do not have any particular view on the recommendations in HMIC's report.

Question 40: Do I consider that there are further or different steps which could and / or should be taken to ensure that relationships between the police and the media are and remain appropriate?

52. I consider 'appropriate contact' between police and the media to be communication that does not compromise police enquiries, victims of crime and witnesses. Officers must be independent and be seen to be independent of all media organisations.

53. I believe the laws are already in existence to deal with inappropriate contact between the police and press. As mentioned above in response to Question 39, I have not myself encountered any issues with inappropriate conduct in practice.

DOCUMENTS

54. I am requested in the Notice to provide any documents relevant to the matters that I have been asked to deal with above in my statement. The documents which I believe I hold which might fall within the scope of this request might be in my notepads and my emails, in that they might contain material that shows the fact of contact with the police:

- a. In relation to my notepads, these contain my shorthand notes of communications that I have over the years with many different people, not only police. In order to establish what might be relevant to the Inquiry I would need to go back over my notes – of which there are many, both at home and at the office – to work out which were communications with the police. I would need to black out other information and also the names of the sources with whom I have spoken, as well as to ensure that they could not otherwise be identified from content. This would take a lot of time and be a very onerous exercise for me to undertake, which I do not believe would be proportionate.

- b. As for my emails, I am on Scotland Yard's distribution list so I regularly get emails from Scotland Yard with information. I have other emails relating to questions that I have put to Scotland Yard press officers in relation to stories. I attach examples from the period 13 November 2011 to 3 February 2012 in Exhibit TP-2. I would note that some emails contain information which is expressly stated by the police as 'not for publication'; others contain pre-verdict briefings. I would ask that all emails containing information that may not be in the public domain are kept confidential by the Inquiry (although I note that they might also be disclosed by the Metropolitan Police without any restriction in which case they would cease to be confidential).

55. My understanding is that Trinity Mirror has already given copies of the policies that I mention in response to Question 25 above to the Inquiry.

Signed.....

Thomas Daniel Pettifor

Dated: February 2012

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Signe



Thomas Daniel Rettifor

Dated: February 2012

10/2/12