

TAYSIDE JOINT POLICE BOARD

14 May 2001

Report by the Chief Constable No. PB 19/2001

SUBJECT: THE RACE RELATIONS (AMENDMENT) ACT 2000 - UPDATE

Abstract: This report provides the Board with an update on a range of issues being progressed by Tayside Police at both local and national level as requested by the Board in January 2001.

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Board note the terms of the report on measures being taken to ensure compliance with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 as requested by the Board in January 2001.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Reference is made to Paragraph 8 Minute of Meeting of Tayside Joint Police Board of 29 January 2001 wherein the Board noted Report PB 7/2001 by the Chief Constable.

3. CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 Tayside Police received a copy of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, 2000 on 11 April 2001 from the Commission for Racial Equality (Scotland). The terms of the legislation in relation to the general duty placed on police authorities remains as outlined in the report to the Board in January 2001.
- 3.2 The Board will note that in anticipation of the general duties provided in draft by the Commission for Racial Equality advisory document, the Tayside Police Racial Equality Strategy sets out a framework for the Force to ensure compliance with the Act. This document is attached at appendix 'A'.
- 3.3 In addition specific mention is made of the use of Stop and Search powers to ensure that ethnic minority groups are not disproportionately or unjustly subjected to stop and search. The Board will note that Central Division of Tayside Police and its staff associations are currently supporting research being conducted on behalf of the Scottish Executive Central Research Unit.
- 3.4 This research will examine the tactical use of Stop and Search powers in relation to white and minority ethnic young people. It is anticipated that the research findings will be available in June 2001.
- 3.5 The Board may also wish to note that further research is being undertaken by the Scottish Executive to evaluate the effects of the new offences created by sections 33 and 96 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Tayside Police are again involved in

providing data for this research which is being conducted locally by Dundee University.

- 3.6 Tayside Police will conduct further work to develop its recording and reporting systems on racist crime and following consultation with the Commission for Racial Equality it will adopt the ethnic classification codes used in the 2001 Census. This will allow for comparative data analysis when the Census information becomes available in 2003. The Board may wish to note that the need for a generic Code of Practice in this area has been promoted by the Force through the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland and is now under review by the Justice Minister's Steering Group on the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. There is a clear need for a generic Code of Practice to be adopted by Local Authority bodies to facilitate multi-agency working arrangements.
- 3.7 In addition discussions are presently being undertaken to review the information contained in standard police reports to the Procurator Fiscal to ensure any element of perceived racist motivation is identified. This work is being progressed through the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland who have formed a working group with the Crown Office.
- 3.8 Overall Racist Incidents have increased by 6 (2%) from 302 to 308. Traditionally the City of Dundee, with the largest ethnic population, has recorded the bulk of racist incidents but within the city the level of such incidents fell for the first time since detailed recording was undertaken. This reduction, from 238 to 230, although small is welcomed. In the Perth and Kinross area racist incidents have risen from 35 to 37. There were 41 racist incidents in Angus.
- 3.9 Although not all racist incidents are crimes these are recorded as such by the Force. They may relate to housing disputes, schooling or employment issues, and if reported to Tayside Police they are recorded and processed in an identical fashion to criminal investigations.
- 3.10 Of the Racist incidents which are criminal in nature by far the largest proportion take the form of racist abuse (223). Vandalism accounts for 35 of the crimes recorded with 42 individuals being the victims of minor assaults. There were no recorded racist assaults of a serious nature and no racist fireraising incidents during 2000-2001 period. A further 8 individuals were the victims of racist theft and robbery.
- 3.11 There were no allegations of racially motivated misconduct or behaviour made against any employee of Tayside Police during the period 2000-2001.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Clerk and the Treasurer have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Overall this report is intended to indicate the range of cross cutting issues which provide the focus for ongoing work within Tayside Police to refine and develop its response to racist crime and incidents. The force continues to operate a transparent policy and has established continuing consultation with Tayside Racial Equality Council, The Commission for Racial Equality and ACPOS. Progress on Multi-Agency initiatives is being hindered by a lack of momentum on the adoption of generic codes of practice and it is anticipated that this can be overcome by participation through ACPOS in the Justice Minister's Steering Group on the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry.

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