

Meeting Minutes

Stop & Search and Use of Force External Scrutiny Panel

Date: Wednesday 4th September 2024 at 18:30hrs – 21:00hrs

Location: Donaldson Room, Surrey Police HQ, Guildford
(with an MS Teams link in meeting planner)



Chair

MC	Mark Cunningham	Chair of the External Scrutiny Panel
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Attendees

CD	Clive Davies	T/ACC, Strategic Stop & Search Lead
CC	Chris Colley	Superintendent, Strategic Use of Force Lead
EN	Emma Newton	Sergeant, Tactical Stop & Search and Use of Force Lead
DE	Dean Evans	Instructor for Public & Personal Safety Training
AM	Alistair Marshman	Chief TASER Instructor
RL	Robert Lovell	TASER Inspector
HAW	Herval Almenoar-Webster	Office of Police and Crime Commissioner
AH	Anita Ho	
SG	Sarah Gosling	
RC	Rajen Chhetri	
SG	Shanice George	

Apologies

AC	Angus Cleaver	
SL	Sailesh Limbachia	

	Notes	Owner
1	Welcome, Introductions & Apologies MC opened the meeting. All present introduced themselves.	MC
2a	Agree Previous Meeting Minutes Agreed.	MC
2b	Action Tracker Action 52: Review meeting minutes and amend any spelling errors. MC confirmed this was completed. Discharged. Action 53: EN, CC, and MC to agree an acceptable time parameter for distributing meeting minutes. EN updated that a meeting planner has now been created which provides dates for meeting documents to be distributed, dates of the meetings, and dates for the minutes to be circulated. MC confirmed this was completed. Discharged. Action 54: EN to send a more up-to-date list of Stop Searches and Use of Force incidents to the panel for independent review. EN confirmed this was completed and sent to AC for review as discussed and agreed in the meeting. MC confirmed AC had reviewed and provided a summary to MC. AC is not present at today's meeting. Hold action for next meeting. NEW ACTION: EN to liaise with chief Inspector to review and feedback the panel's observations to the two officers. This can then be combined with AC's reviews. Action 55: EN to confirm the outcome of that incident (45240007221) - the stop of the 4 Black teenagers suspected of robbery where one was PAVA'd. EN advised the panel that the actual robbery itself occurred just over the border within the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Police. The suspects were alleged to have taken the phones of 3 juveniles who were travelling on a bus, threatening to beat them up if they did not put their PINS in their phones and factory reset them. The father of one of the victims had followed the bus and called the police with descriptions of the suspects and where they got off the bus. The suspects were taken to a Met Pol custody centre and Met Pol took over the investigation. Final outcome therefore not known. Discharged. Action 56:	MC

	EN to develop a UoF section to the BWV review form in consultation with HAW. EN confirmed this was completed in July and sent to panel members for review. It was not completed in consultation with HAW as he was unavailable. HAW commented that the additions were helpful and useful. Discharged. Action 57: CC to update panel with outcome of PSD referral. CC can provide a further update, but the case was referred to PSD, the case was reviewed by the PST Team Leader, the actual use of force, PAVA, was deemed justified in the circumstances, but there was reflective learning practice on the officer's completion of the use of force form. AH requested to see redacted copies of statements/reports to understand in further detail the decisions made. Hold action for next meeting. NEW ACTION: EN to provide redacted statements. NEW ACTION: MC to directly feedback to the officer the panel observations and have the opportunity to ask questions about the officer's use of force and their rationale for PAVA. Action 58: Incident to be reviewed by a TASER instructor and fed back to panel. TASER incidents were reviewed by TASER instructor and will be discussed in meeting. Discharged. Action 59: Summarise TASER training. TASER training will be discussed in meeting by TASER instructor. Discharged. Action 60: How do Surrey compare nationally to other force with Find Rates? See attached document national find rates for an example of some forces from across England and Wales, as well as the national find rate as documented by HMICFRS during the 2023-2025 PEEL assessments. Discharged. Action 61: Look at search volumes and crime types and compare Find Rates. See attached document Find rate comparison for crime types. Discharged.	
3	TASER Input from TASER Instructors Chief TASER Instructor AM and Inspector RL joined the panel virtually to provide an overview of TASER use, training, and safety protocols within Surrey Police and Sussex Police. Introduction to TASER Use:	AM RL

- AM explained that TASER is a conductive electricity device, with 'TASER' being a specific brand name (the only one authorised for use in the UK). Both Surrey Police and Sussex Police use the 'X2 model', a two-cartridge device.
- AM highlighted that while TASER is available to officers, it isn't classified as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This distinction means officers are not required to be trained or carry TASER as part of their regular duties. It's essentially a choice for those who want to be trained.
- Currently, there are approximately 1,400 TASER-trained officers across the two forces, and just over 700 devices spread across 50 operational hubs. The ratio works out to about two trained officers per device.
- A panel member asked about the reported instances where people have died after being TASERED and if the electrical charge could affect the heart.
- AM acknowledged that while he's not a medical expert, most cases where death occurred after a TASER incident involved underlying health issues that were exacerbated by the TASER's use. He reassured the panel that the Home Office has signed off TASER as a safe device, but there are clear instructions in training that officers should avoid discharging it across the heart to reduce any risks.

TASER Training:

- The process of becoming TASER trained was explained in detail. Any officer or special constable approved for independent patrol can apply. There's a formal application process with five steps:
 1. Complete an application form.
 2. Approval from the line manager.
 3. Pass a PSD check.
 4. Undergo an enhanced eyesight test.
 5. Final authorisation from a divisional Superintendent or Chief Inspector.
- The majority of TASER-trained officers come from uniformed teams, particularly those in response roles. Some officers from other teams, like Roads Policing or plainclothes units, are also trained, but around 90% of TASER operators are in uniform.
- The TASER training course is a four-day program (although the national requirement is only three days of contact time). The extra day Surrey and Sussex provide allows for more practical elements and a deeper understanding of the device.
- Training is divided into three key areas, each of which is strictly pass/fail:
 1. **Range Classification** – This is a live-fire assessment, where officers are tested on their ability to operate the TASER accurately.
 2. **Knowledge Check** – Officers are tested on their understanding of the device and its appropriate use.
 3. **Scenario-Based Assessment** – Officers are placed in real-world scenarios to test their decision-making on when and how to use (or not use) the TASER.

- On the third day of training, officers also receive post-incident management input, learning about what to do after a TASER is deployed, including the collection of evidence, aftercare for the subject, and handling of the TASER cartridge and wires.
- AM emphasised that while many people think the training is all about learning to fire the device, it's also about learning when **not** to use it. The decision-making process is central to the training, especially in scenario-based assessments.

Uses of TASER:

- It was explained what counts as a 'use' of a TASER, clarifying that it's not just about discharging the device. Any situation where the TASER is drawn, an 'arc display' (demonstrating the electric current), or when the red dot is used, counts as TASER usage. Only around 10% of TASER incidents actually involve discharging the device, and on average, there is less than one TASER discharge per day across both forces.
- All TASER usage is reviewed centrally, with a particular focus on incidents involving vulnerable groups, like those under 18. Higher scrutiny is also applied if the device is discharged in confined spaces or if a person is struck in a vulnerable area.

Post-Incident Management:

- AM spoke about the procedures following a TASER discharge. If an individual is TASERED and arrested, they are taken to custody and seen by medical professionals. Officers also need to manage the peripheral aspects like retrieving barbs and the cartridge, which emits small identifying dots that help link the cartridge back to the incident for review.
- Data from each TASER discharge is recorded, with devices storing up to 2,000 uses, which is then downloaded by technicians before the TASER is put back into service.

De-Escalation and Refresher Training:

- A panel member asked whether officers are encouraged to use de-escalation tactics before resorting to the TASER, and how often refresher training is done.
- AM acknowledged there's an ongoing national debate about how much emphasis is placed on de-escalation in TASER training. While de-escalation is encouraged, the focus of training is still on competence in using the device, which mirrors the approach taken in other police safety training (e.g., baton or handcuff techniques).
- As for refresher courses, officers undergo a one-day course every year, which includes a practical assessment and scenario-based training. The content is designed to address any changes in operational practice or updated guidelines.

Internal Review and Scrutiny:

- AM and RL explained how Surrey Police and Sussex Police scrutinise TASER use. If a TASER is used on a vulnerable group or in specific circumstances (like confined spaces), the incident is referred to PSD for further review.
- Divisional inspectors also regularly review all TASER usage to ensure it's justified and proportionate. If concerns are raised about an officer's use of TASER, their authorisation and permit to carry the device can be suspended pending investigation.

- AM made a final point to reinforce that while TASER is a tool available to officers, it's still an optional piece of equipment. Officers are not required to carry it, and they can choose to stop carrying TASER at any time.

BWV Review:

- After the TASER presentation, EN provided a recap of the Body Worn Video (BWV) footage reviewed by the panel at the previous meeting. The footage featured three instances of TASER use by officers, which had raised questions among the panel. Following the last meeting, the footage was shared with TASER instructors for an independent review.
- As agreed beforehand with both the instructors and the panel, EN gave a verbal summary of the previously viewed footage, and the TASER instructors gave their perspectives. The panel then proceeded to review a new BWV clip involving TASER use, allowing them to provide feedback, hear the instructors' opinions, and ask any final questions.

Clip 1:

- The first clip involved the red-dotting of a 17-year-old male during a stop of a vehicle suspected of having occupants with a weapon, after police received a report of three to four males in possession of a knife. The vehicle they were in matched the description given. Upon stopping the car, one male fled, and the remaining occupants were red-dotted by officers with TASER due to the potential presence of a weapon and the car's ignition still being on.
- The driver complied with being handcuffed. AM observed that once Compliance was gained, the interaction with the two subjects seemed to be a nice ambient level with no animosity between them. They seemed to be they seemed to be engaging with them at proportionate level.
- AM noted that this was an intervention by a firearms team, which explains why the officers were more direct in their approach. Given the context (potential weapon and moving vehicle), the officer's firm tone and use of the red-dot were considered proportionate. AM emphasised that threat perception varies by individual, and while the male wasn't fully argumentative, his inability or reluctance to turn off the car posed a continued threat until he was detained.
- AM emphasised that threat perception is highly subjective, so he was hesitant to offer a definitive opinion on whether there was an immediate threat. However, operationally speaking, with two males in a running vehicle, the risk of being run over couldn't be dismissed lightly. The use of TASER in this instance was a measured, low-level use of force that successfully regained compliance without the need for physical confrontation, such as pulling individuals out of the vehicle or using unnecessary force. From AM's perspective, this scenario highlights the value of TASER as a de-escalation tool. It allows officers to gain control without resorting to more aggressive methods like grabbing, using PAVA spray, or forcing individuals to the ground.
- The range of the TASER was discussed, with AM advising that the optimum distance for effective use is between 7 to 15 feet, though the current TASER model allows for a maximum range of 25 feet. In this scenario, through the window of a vehicle wasn't ideal, but the red-dot tactic was deemed effective given the circumstances.

- A panel member raised the topic of TASER use for compliance, particularly whether it's appropriate to use it just to gain compliance with instructions.
- AM advised that the College of Policing guidance clearly states TASER should not be used solely to enforce compliance with instructions unless there's a clear threat. However, AM acknowledged this could be a grey area, as situations vary, for instance, whether someone is refusing to turn off a car or physically resisting officers is different from simply not following verbal commands.
- CC expanded on this by noting that the task the officers were asking, to turn off a moving vehicle, involves a higher level of perceived threat than a typical compliance request like sitting down. He highlighted that it's important to assess the overall scenario, not just the specific action being requested, when determining the appropriateness of TASER use.
- AM explained that in situations involving keyless cars, or vehicles that are not immobilised, the priority for officers is to contain the threat, such as stopping the vehicle. Officers may block the car to prevent it from moving and creating a hazardous situation.
- CC added that immobilising the vehicle is crucial to ensuring that neither officers nor bystanders are at risk, especially if the car starts moving during the interaction.
- The panel agreed that in the reviewed case, the officers acted proportionately given the information they had at the time. The TASER red-dotting was seen as a de-escalation tactic that allowed officers to control a potentially dangerous situation without resorting to more forceful measures.
- The instructors reiterated that TASER is a valuable tool in helping to manage compliance without physical confrontation, but emphasised the importance of context and judgement in deciding when its use is appropriate.

Clip 2:

- The second clip reviewed involved a female officer responding to a request for assistance from a male colleague, who had restrained a Black male suspect believed to be involved in shoplifting. The male suspect was holding onto a fence, and both he and the male officer were affected by PAVA spray.
- The female officer approached the scene with her TASER drawn and subsequently handcuffed the male suspect without deploying the TASER.
- AM reiterated again that, as he was not present during the incident, his comments were subjective. However, based on his review of available documents and BWV footage, he noted that the incident should have been better documented in the official reports.
- AM highlighted that the male officer's BWV footage was limited as it was dislodged during the physical struggle with the suspect. However, it was clear from the footage and context that the female officer faced a challenging situation. The size disparity between the female officer and the male suspect was apparent. The male officer was already struggling due to both the suspect's resistance and the effects of PAVA, which limited his ability to assist his colleague.
- AM agreed with the female officer's decision to draw her TASER pre-emptively, given the challenging circumstances, including her colleague's reduced ability to help and the suspect's

larger size, but then once the situation was assessed, AM agreed that the decision to re-holster the TASER and resort to alternative tactics was the right one, especially considering the risks involved.

- He suggested that the officer's report could have better documented the context, such as the officer's reasoning for drawing the TASER, the fact that the suspect had fled from another officer, and the subsequent pursuit, which would have provided a clearer understanding of the officer's decision-making process.
- The panel had previously asked whether electricity could transfer from the suspect to the officer holding them during TASER deployment. AM clarified that the electricity passes only between the two barbs of the TASER, forming a closed circuit between those points. Therefore, unless the officer's hand was directly between the two barbs on the suspect, it was unlikely the current would pass through to the officer. He further explained that if one barb were to lodge in the suspect and the other in the officer, both would receive the electric current.
- However, in this case, the decision to not deploy the TASER and instead assist with physical restraint was the correct and safer option, as deploying the TASER in such a scenario could have led to unintended consequences, including the risk of missing or accidentally striking the colleague.

Clip 3:

- The third clip involved an Asian male seated on a bench in a town centre. Police had been called to respond to reports of a subject in possession of a smashed bottle and pieces of glass, with potential information indicating that the subject may also have had a knife.
- Upon arrival, the officer approached the male, who appeared compliant, and detained him under Section 1 of PACE to search for the knife. The officer, however, approached with a TASER drawn and red-dotted the subject during the stop and search. The individual was ultimately arrested for possession of an offensive weapon.
- The panel had previously questioned the appropriateness of red-dotting the TASER on a subject who, from the officer's initial perspective, appeared compliant before further information about the situation was revealed. AM emphasised that the crux of the matter lies in the officer's individual perception of the threat at the time of the encounter. While the subject appeared compliant, the officer's actions were informed by the reported presence of a potential weapon.
- AM confirmed that, in his view, the use of the TASER in this context was appropriate given the information available to the officer at the time. The TASER was drawn as a precautionary measure based on the reported threat of a weapon, which could have posed harm to either the subject or others.
- AM acknowledged the grey area in this scenario, noting that the decision to deploy the TASER in such situations is based on the subjective judgment of the officer. The distinction between using a TASER to gain compliance and using it to mitigate or manage a threat is not always clear-cut. However, based on the available information and the potential risk, the officer's actions appeared proportionate at the time of the incident.

NEW ACTION: Confirm if a weapon was found during the Stop & Search.

New BWV Footage:

- Before starting the BWV footage review, EN provided the necessary data mitigation instructions for those attending online. Online attendees were asked to confirm in writing via the chat that they were alone, using headphones, or in a location where conversations could not be overheard, to remain on camera for the entire viewing, remove any virtual backgrounds, and EN confirmed that the meeting was being recorded.
- EN explained the BWV footage clip that was about to be shown was selected from the use-of-force spreadsheet, specifically focusing on a TASER incident initially marked as unjustified based on the documented circumstances of the incident on the officer's use of force form. The clip was selected to be able to judge from the footage if the force used was proportionate, justifiable, and lawful in the circumstances.
- The incident involved two heavily intoxicated males, reported to have walked into the road and exposed themselves, with one seen pulling a sign off a lamppost. Upon police arrival, one male appeared to be holding a suspected metal pipe or pole. The event occurred early in the morning, around 9:00 AM, in a residential area.
- The footage showed a solo-crewed male officer approaching the two individuals, issuing commands to the male holding the suspected pipe to put down the object and get on his knees with his hands on his head. Despite their intoxication, the second male urged the first to comply.
- Eventually, both males, later identified as brothers, were arrested for exposure and being drunk and disorderly.
- The panel asked to re-watch the footage several times to closely examine the object held by the male.
- EN reiterated the officer's grounds for the TASER use, where he believed the male was holding what appeared to be a metal pipe. Upon closer inspection, it was revealed that the object was not a metal pipe but something more flexible. EN confirmed that from the officer's point of view during the incident, it was reasonable to assume it was a metal object, justifying the TASER red-dot challenge.
- AM noted that the officer was solo-crewed, managing two suspects, who were intoxicated. Based on the initial information that they may have been in possession of a weapon, AM felt that the use of a red-dot TASER challenge was a proportionate and appropriate response. While the scenario might appear different in hindsight, given the officer's belief that the suspect could be in possession of item that could be used a weapon, the use of the TASER provided the officer with a safe distance and control over the situation.
- AM also commented on the effectiveness of the TASER red-dot challenge in gaining compliance, as the suspect followed the commands without requiring further force. The officer's decision to put the TASER away after gaining compliance was noted as the correct course of action.

- RL agreed with AM's assessment and emphasised that, given the uncertainty of the situation and the fact that there were two subjects, maintaining distance with the TASER was a sensible option. Engaging physically could have escalated the situation and led to unnecessary risks.
- RL explained that the act of drawing the TASER and using the red dot was sufficient to de-escalate the situation, which is a key factor in operational decision-making.
- A panel member queried whether the officer should have considered using PAVA spray as an alternative to the TASER.
- RL noted that PAVA could have been an option but raised concerns about its effectiveness in this particular scenario. Given the intoxicated state of the individuals and their proximity to a road, PAVA might have disoriented them and posed additional risks. Ultimately, it is the officer's judgment at the time that dictates the most appropriate course of action.
- AM highlighted the advantages of the TASER as a tactical tool, noting that in most cases, the TASER is not discharged but instead de-escalates situations through the red-dot challenge alone. This approach often avoids the need for physical force, such as PAVA spray or hands-on tactics, which can lead to injury.
- AM emphasised that although TASER use is scrutinised, it remains an operationally effective method for resolving incidents without further escalation.
- The panel then wanted to complete the BWV RAG Assessment Form for the use of force clip. In discussing the points on the form, the panel wanted to understand what 'de-escalation' actually meant, noting that if the officer was shouting at the subject, was that not actually escalating the situation and in other videos, the officers don't raise their voice, and if the person is not in a good state of mind, they might do the opposite of what they are asking you.
- The panel also wanted to understand the differentiation between 'proportionate' and 'justifiable' in the circumstances.
- DE confirmed in PST training they cover off various communication models, but they may not have been appropriate in this situation due to the level of threat. Officers are taught to dominate, be assertive, get control, and de-escalate once we've got that control.
- CD surmised that justified is asking is the officer doing what they are doing for the right reasons. In most of what we see, the force used will be justifiable because it will normally be for a legitimate reason.

NEW ACTION: Swap around the proportionate and justifiable questions on the BWV RAG Use of Force form.

- The panel asked about the grounds of the form and how use of force forms are reviewed.
- EN explained the process for reviewing Use of Force forms, outlining the following key considerations:
- The form must provide a clear description of the incident, ensuring the circumstances are accurately captured and link to the events as described. Is the subject behaviour accurately described and does it align with the level of force used. For example, if the subject was compliant or resisting, this should match the tactics and force applied.

	- The form should include a detailed account of the tactics employed by the officer. If any force is used, it needs to be documented thoroughly, and the description should correspond with the actions taken. Are there any relevant impact factors, such as size, strength, or any specific circumstances that might have influenced their decision to use force. Was the force used was proportionate, lawful, necessary, and ethical. Ultimately, we are looking for a clear justification of the actions taken. - EN emphasised that while some forms may be brief and concise, others may be more detailed depending on the complexity of the situation. Officers should not be copying and pasting in MG11 statements as they are overly lengthy with unnecessary information that then doesn't provide the critical details about the actual application of force. - For the specific case being discussed, EN pointed out that several key details were missing. Without having reviewed the BWV footage, it would have been difficult to fully assess the justification for the use of force based solely on the form. - HAW referenced ideally wanting to digitise the panel's BWV RAG review form and have it in a public facing dashboard.	
4	Use of Force Headline Briefing & Discussion: - CC provided an update on the current status of use of force. There has been a notable increase in the number of Use of Force forms submitted, with a 17% rise over the last 12 months, amounting to a total of 16,134 forms. CC stated he was comfortable with the upward trend, attributing it to continued scrutiny regarding the use of force. The increase is not seen as a negative development but reflects ongoing efforts to ensure accountability. - For the first time, there is a noticeable discrepancy in the distribution of Use of Force forms across divisions. West Division accounts for 35% of total use of force forms, which is significantly higher than other divisions. This disproportion is even more pronounced in the Under-18 category, with an 18% increase in incidents (up by 229) overall, and 37% of those occurring in West Division. - The use of force on subjects under the age of 18 has risen by 3% (an additional 158 incidents), with 37% of these incidents again in West Division. CC raised the need for further investigation into the operational or policing factors in the West Division that may explain this increase. - The number of incidents involving Black, Asian, and Ethnic Minority subjects has increased by 21%, with 105 incidents recorded. Despite this rise, CC noted that compliance remains the most common subject behaviour observed in these subjects, with 41% of Black subjects being compliant, compared to 39% overall. - In both total incidents and incidents involving Black subjects, the second most common subject behaviour is active resistance, with 36% in total incidents and 31% in Black subjects, indicating consistency in behaviour patterns across ethnic groups. - EN's qualitative reviews of TASER usage found that 6 out of the cases reviewed were not justified, with one case (discussed in the meeting) potentially requiring additional documentation to justify the use of force. All 6 unjustified TASER uses involved white subjects,	CC

	with no cases of unjustified use of force against Black individuals. These cases will be referred to the internal panel for further review by the Chief Inspector SPOCS. • EN conducted random qualitative reviews on 88 cases this quarter, evenly split between White and Black subjects. Of these, 5 cases involving Black subjects and 3 involving White subjects were deemed unjustified. • The activation rate of BWV remains a focus area, with 15% non-activation, though this figure has improved compared to the previous meeting. BWV usage is a priority in officer safety training to reinforce the importance of capturing incidents. Compliance with BWV activation during TASER deployments is higher, currently at 90%, which CC views as encouraging given the unique nature of such incidents and the complexity of deployments. • The panel asked what the reasons were for the percentage of BWV that was not activated. • CC acknowledged that some incidents are highly dynamic, leaving officers without time to activate BWV. However, he emphasised the importance of scrutinising cases where BWV was not activated, as it could be a potential indicator of unprofessional behaviour by officers. • CC stressed the need to thoroughly investigate these occurrences at the internal panel level and made it clear that the organisation should not become complacent regarding this issue. • EN highlighted an advantage of the Use of Force form that it includes a section where officers can provide reasons for not activating their BWV. Common reasons include batteries dying, or other colleagues had activated their BWV. Officers often explain that BWV was not activated because the incident took place in custody, where other cameras are present. EN confirmed the message is continually reinforced at internal panels, and supported by the Professional Standards Department (PSD), is that every officer is expected to activate BWV during all interactions, regardless of if there is CCTV, or other officers are present. • MC confirmed that during the last internal panel meeting, this issue was strongly emphasised by CC, highlighting the importance of ensuring BWV is activated for every interaction. The expectation for officers to switch on their BWV is clear and reinforced. • CC provided an example of the effectiveness of BWV in protecting officers and ensuring transparency where in a case where an allegation of assault was made against an officer, due to the presence of BWV footage, the allegation was reviewed within 30 minutes, and the allegation was disproven without the need to remove the officer from duty or conduct an investigation. • CC emphasised that BWV not only promotes transparency but also serves to protect officers by providing objective evidence of their actions during incidents.	
5	Stop & Search Headline Briefing & Discussion • CD provided an update on Stop & Search headlines. Section 60: • For Section 60 searches, this is where a senior officer authorises blanket stop-and-search powers for a specific geographical area. This means that officers can search individuals in the	CD

designated area without the need for reasonable grounds, though they must still justify why the search was necessary.

- There have been no Section 60 searches conducted in the county since last October. However, policy around Section 60s has been slightly strengthened relating to briefings.
- Officers who conduct these searches must be well-briefed, and these briefings must be recorded to ensure transparency and accountability. This will also allow us to monitor the use of the powers and confirm they are being utilised correctly in line with briefings.
- In previous audits, we found that some officers were not recording sufficient grounds for the searches they carried out under Section 60. There was a perception that because they had this blanket power, they could search anyone without proper justification. We need to ensure that even under Section 60, officers clearly explain and record why the search is necessary; this has been briefed to officers.

Vetting Requirements:

- The Chief Constable has agreed that vetting will no longer be a requirement for this panel. This is something we've raised several times because we recognised that the vetting process was acting as a barrier to potential members joining.
- Instead of full vetting, there will now be a 'light-touch' screening process. This will involve basic checks to ensure that individuals with serious criminal records or motives that might undermine the integrity of the panel are identified. We will also ensure that individuals who are serial complainants, particularly those who regularly file complaints against the police, are identified, as their impartiality might be called into question.
- It is hoped that the removal of the vetting requirement will encourage more people to join the panel, especially those from minority groups or those who were previously deterred by the vetting process.
- There was some discussion about whether the vetting process was deterring people from minority backgrounds from joining, particularly those who might have a negative experience with policing but whose voices are crucial to ensuring balanced oversight.
- There was agreement that while light-touch screening is necessary to protect the integrity of the panel, we must also ensure that we are encouraging diversity and not unintentionally excluding people who would otherwise offer valuable perspectives. The removal of vetting requirements was well-received.

Disproportionality Research:

- We've been waiting for some time for Cambridge University to progress their research on disproportionality, but due to their commitments and the need for further funding, they've informed us they won't be able to do anything anytime soon, so as a result, we are exploring other options.
- CC and CD recently presented to the Race Advisory Group, and the Chair, who is an Assistant Professor at Kingston University, knows someone who is a Professor of Policing who may be able to assist, and if not, we will try other local universities, and we'll keep pushing this forward through alternative avenues. HAW from the OPCC expressed a strong interest in being

involved in the research, having recently gained a related PhD, and will liaise with CD outside the meeting.

Improved Communication on the uses of the powers:

- Panel members may have seen on our force website and social media more information around the uses of these powers, following the HMICFRS inspection and their identification of areas for improvement, particularly around communicating how Stop & Search and Use of Force powers are used.
- There is now much more content available on our internal and external platforms. This meeting is covered there, the 'so what' element that comes from this, and also on social media, especially Facebook, about what this meeting discusses.

Other Forces:

- Dorset Police have done some work with Professor Larry Sherman on disproportionality, and we're keeping an eye on that research to see if there are insights we can use.
- Cambridgeshire Police have been recognised by HMICFRS as outstanding in their work on police powers, including stop-and-search. They are hosting a knowledge-sharing event in October, and we plan to attend, learn from them, and adopt some of their best practices.

Disparities in Search Outcomes:

- Recent data has flagged some areas of concern, particularly in East Surrey. Historically, East Surrey has had the highest disproportionality in Stop & Search outcomes, with Black people being searched at disproportionately higher rates than White people and more so when compared with other divisions. What stands out now is that the Find Rate (the rate at which searches actually result in discovering a prohibited item) is significantly lower for Black people compared to other ethnicities in that area. We plan to dive deeper into these figures to understand what's driving this disparity.
- Across the county, Section 1 searches (searches for items like weapons or stolen goods) have a much lower find rate for Black people compared to other ethnicities. Additionally, the arrest rate following searches is higher for Black people, but the rate of community resolutions is lower. We will be commissioning further research to explore the reasons behind these figures and will hold divisions accountable for addressing these issues.

Auditing and Oversight:

- A number of regular audits are carried out to monitor the use of police powers. Every quarter, we review:
 - 96 stop-and-search forms for the legality and grounds of the search,
 - 48 body-worn video clips for procedural justice,
 - All Section 60 searches are reviewed (though none have taken place since last October).
- EN also audits body-worn video compliance and strip and intimate searches to ensure correct procedures and grounds are being followed.

	• We are also particularly focused on identifying repeat issues among officers. If certain officers are consistently found to be carrying out poor searches or failing to record sufficient grounds, even after feedback, we will look into their performance more closely. • This extends to supervisors as well—if a supervisor is consistently signing off on searches with inadequate grounds, this will be issues to address. • We will be tracking these issues more clearly moving forward, and recurring themes from the audits will be used to inform future training and development initiatives.	
6	A.O.B None raised. Next meeting: The next meeting is on Wednesday 13th November 2024 [to discuss Quarter 2 which will be July to September 2024, and rolling year data to 30th September 2024]. MEETING ENDED	MC