

Meeting Minutes Q3

Stop & Search and Use of Force External Scrutiny Panel

Date: Wednesday 5th February 2025 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	Chief Superintendent, 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	Lead Instructor for Public & Personal Safety Training
SL	Sailesh Limbachia	PCC Office - EDI Lead and Complaints and Compliance Lead
EVT	Ellie Vesey-Thompson	PCC Office - Deputy PCC, Children and Young People Lead
AH	Anita Ho	Director of Local Charities
AM	Abigail Marsh	Runnymede Borough Council, Community Safety Team
SG	Sarah Gosling	
AC	Angus Cleaver	Role Player for Police Training; Fraud Prevention Advice Volunteer
JC	Joan Conlon	London Borough Council, Prevent, Pursue, and Counter-extremism

Apologies

RC	Rajen Chhetri	
SG2	Shanice George	

	Notes	Owner
1	Welcome, Introductions & Apologies MC opened the meeting. All present introduced themselves.	MC
2a	Agree Previous Meeting Minutes MC and all attendees confirmed they were happy with the minutes, and no amendments were required.	MC
2b	Action Tracker 1. Recurring Action: PAVA Incident Update (CC) CC recapped this was the BWV incident reviewed previously by the panel that involved a compliant subject being PAVA'd that was escalated to the Assistant Chief Constable. A review meeting is being arranged involving PSD, MC, and relevant stakeholders. HOLD 2. ACTION: Provide an update at the next meeting on the Details of the TASER non-compliance cases and the Outcomes from the internal review panel (CC/EN) EN summarised that all TASER non-compliance cases are reviewed by TASER SPOCs, who assess BWV footage and statements to determine compliance. TASER SPOCs also participate in a TASER working group chaired by the Joint Surrey Sussex TASER Lead. From the reviews conducted, all uses of TASER have been deemed compliant. There are no recurring themes or concerns regarding TASER use. All feedback has been shared, either in person or via email, and was well received. The key area for improvement is ensuring more detailed recording on use of force forms. The SPOCs confirm that no TASER deployments reviewed have raised any concerns. CC reminded the panel that they could still dip-sample those cases if needed and that recording issues remain a recurring theme, and this continues to be emphasised in training. DE confirmed that TASER reporting and impact factor recording are included in both initial and refresher training, though there are limitations based on the College of Policing's PPST framework. AC raised a query asking about the appropriateness of an officer in a vehicle pointing a TASER out the window at a passerby to give a compliance command. EN will liaise with the Chief TASER Instructor for an expert view. ACTION AMENDED: EN to liaise with Chief TASER Instructor regarding query raised by AC on appropriateness of an officer in a vehicle pointing a TASER out the window at a passerby to give a compliance command ACTION: Revise the BWV review form to include a section for supervisor feedback and officer reflections (EN)	MC

EN confirmed that further additions have been made to the feedback review form to capture outcomes from Scrutiny Panel feedback, particularly focusing on officer response and reflective practice.

The feedback cycle is now complete, with the first full example (PC 'B') included on today's agenda for discussion. SL emphasised the importance of closing the 360-degree learning loop, where the feedback must confirm that the supervisor has discussed the feedback with the officer, and it must also include the officer's own reflection, whether they accepted the feedback, and what actions they intend to take moving forward. EN confirmed this process has now been implemented and is evidenced in the current agenda.

COMPLETED

NEW ACTION: Reflective practice to be added as a standing agenda item for future meetings to ensure ongoing scrutiny and follow-up (EN)

EN confirmed this related to adding a specific agenda item on the reflective feedback form to ensure ongoing discussion and oversight which has been reviewed and approved by MC.

COMPLETED

ACTION: Clarify whether the later strip search was post-arrest, and the outcome [not shown on the footage] (EN)

EN recapped at the previous meeting, the panel agreed a Green Plus rating for an incident involving officers dealing with a white female reportedly in possession of broken glass and/or a knife. EN clarified that the strip search took place post-arrest in custody and was authorised by the custody sergeant, not a stop and search. No glass items were found during the search; however, the individual claimed to have swallowed glass. She was taken to hospital but refused an X-ray. After a period of observation, she was returned to custody and later sectioned. No further questions were raised by the panel.

ACTION: Dip checks on Under 18's in West and East due to the significant increases of use of force on this age range in these divisions (37% and 35%) to explore potential underlying factors contributing to this trend. (Tasked Internally).

CC reported a significant increase in the use of force involving individuals under the age of 18 on West division. This will be discussed in more detail at an upcoming internal meeting, but early findings highlight a link between use of force and mental health, particularly in West Surrey. In one example, 18 separate uses of force involved a single under-18 subject detained under the Mental Health Act.

Mental health continues to be a prominent factor in West Surrey, featuring in 45% of cases, compared to 40% in East and 35% in North divisions. Acknowledging this trend, the force has initiated a pilot project led by the Force Mental Health Lead in West Surrey to reduce police involvement where more appropriate support from partners is needed.

CC referenced the former SHIPP programme, which focused on preventative mental health responses through partnership action plans. This approach is now being revisited to ensure police are only involved when necessary, especially in safeguarding children and young people in crisis. CC emphasised that any use of force involving under-18s should be

accompanied by appropriate safeguarding referrals to partner agencies, and this will be explored further in the upcoming internal panel.

Feedback from recent reviews of cases involving young people was also shared. Many of the children involved were already known to services and had absconded from mental health facilities or care placements. AC updated he had reviewed around a dozen such cases involving mental health, noting that officers generally acted appropriately. However, there was one instance where a young female claimed to have been touched inappropriately during restraint. The body worn video footage could not confirm or refute the claim due to limited visibility, and the case had been marked for referral to Professional Standards for further consideration.

There was also discussion around the geographical variation in mental health-related use of force figures, with speculation that the presence of mental health facilities like Farnham Road and St Peter's may be influencing numbers in certain divisions. However, it was acknowledged that this alone may not explain the disparity, and the pilot aims to explore this more deeply. It was recognised that some young people involved were looked-after children or living in care settings rather than in hospital.

Concerns were raised about the broader issue of police being asked to fulfil social care functions, particularly in crisis situations involving children. Officers are often called upon to restrain individuals when other services are unable or unwilling to do so. While police remain committed to preserving life and preventing harm, the discussion emphasised the need for better partnership working and for agencies such as the NHS and social care to be equipped to manage these situations more appropriately.

The use of body worn video was highlighted as a key tool for evidencing what officers face in these encounters, and any cases of concern should be escalated to the Right Care Right Person forum chaired by the Force Mental Health Lead.

The panel agreed that that systemic solutions are needed. While the police will always step in to protect individuals in immediate danger, there is a clear need for better resourcing, training, and coordination across health and social care services to reduce the reliance on police in managing children in mental health crisis.

COMPLETED (tracked internally and can be reported back in the Use of Force update standing agenda item)

ACTION: Review of Black individuals in Spelthorne due to the elevated rate of disproportionality in this borough (7.1) which is significantly higher than the force average.

CC discussed the disproportionality in use of force against Black individuals, particularly within the Spelthorne data. The current disproportionality ratio stands at 6.6, which is slightly down from a previous peak of 7.1, but still significantly above the force average. This remains a clear outlier.

The North Chief Inspector had reviewed the relevant cases locally and will report his findings to the next internal board. His initial review found that all uses of force appeared justified, with no major concerns. However, there was agreement that it would be

	beneficial to have an independent or external view, especially when dealing with sensitive disproportionality data and incidents involving young people. The discussion moved to under-18s, where there has been a noticeable countywide increase in use of force, with East Surrey standing out as the area with the highest number of incidents. AC has already been reviewing a number of these cases, primarily focusing on those with mental health links, but agreed to extend his review to a wider sample of under-18 cases not related to mental health, time permitting. The group agreed to follow up with AC and share relevant cases as needed. SL raised a key point about repeat children – those who come into repeated contact with police either through stop and search or use of force. He stressed the importance of understanding what wraparound support is in place from partners to prevent these young people from becoming entrenched in the system. CC agreed and assured this would be explored further through internal processes. COMPLETED (tracked internally and can be reported back in the Use of Force update standing agenda item) ACTION: Review of Black females who have been searched to understand the reasons for the higher find rate and whether additional vulnerabilities were present, identified and had appropriate safeguarding (CD and Tasked Internally) EN confirmed that divisions were asked to dip-check stop and search records involving Black females. EN and CD have been analysing the data to identify any patterns. So far, their review hasn't revealed any immediate concerns. The written grounds for the searches appear appropriate, and the outcomes are justified. No clear themes emerged in terms of location, age group, or specific divisions, suggesting no geographical or demographic concentration, and there were no safeguarding issues. EN highlighted that this particular quarter may show anomalies due to the seasonal impact of Thorpe Park. October alone sees around 1,200 additional stop and searches countywide due to the event's high footfall, including many visitors from outside the county and of diverse ethnicities. This spike can skew the data. COMPLETED (tracked internally and can be reported back in the Use of Force update standing agenda item) ACTION: Send out planners for the next year (EN) Dates confirmed with panel members. COMPLETED	
3	Reflective Practice Updates EN summarised the reflective practice case to be reviewed by the panel. This case had previously reviewed by body worn video at the previous panel meeting. The panel agreed it would be beneficial to revisit the full reflective practice form.	EN

EN recapped the incident, which took place on 10th September at 14:00 hours in a central Redhill park. Two proactive officers had been patrolling the area and came across a male and female with a dog. The grounds for the stop were based on their earlier observation of the male walking the dog 20 minutes prior while regularly looking behind him and appearing to keep an eye on an unmarked police car. The male was later found in the park in the company of a known gang member, reportedly linked to recent violent incidents. When approached, the male walked off, even after being told to stop. The female was quickly arrested, and the focus of the body worn footage shifted to the male subject, who was handcuffed during the subsequent stop and search.

The panel had previously reviewed the body worn video and completed the new reflective practice form, which includes a section on whether force was used and how procedural justice was applied. This led to an overall amber rating from the panel. On the positive side, the officers were seen to conduct the search professionally and gave the GO WISELY explanation. However, concerns were raised about the officer's approach being aggressive, there was an unlawful search of the individual's phone, and no paper receipt being offered.

EN then talked through the officer's written reflections in response to the feedback he had received from his Inspector. The officer acknowledged watching his body worn footage and said he accepted that his approach at the outset was robust, something he could justify to himself but understood might look aggressive to others. He noted that he had taken some of the learning points on board, while also providing his own context in response.

One of the key issues discussed was the officer initially telling the subject he was not being detained, then detaining him shortly afterward. The officer acknowledged this could appear confusing but explained that the subject's behaviour had changed, warranting the shift. He argued that he had handled it openly and honestly, contrasting it with what he had seen from other officers who avoided clearly answering questions about detention, which often caused more confusion.

Another concern was around the officer's initial approach, which was described by the panel as confrontational and lacking in de-escalation. The officer responded by saying that while calm and soft-mannered approaches are always ideal, they're not always effective. He felt that a robust and direct approach was appropriate given the circumstances, particularly since the subject had made a verbal comment that could be interpreted as a threat and had agitated his dog. However, the officer emphasised that once the subject was under control and handcuffed, his own tone and manner became calm.

The panel also raised the issue of the phone search, which was deemed unlawful. The officer admitted that at the time he believed it was permitted based on documentation circulating from another force but acknowledged that Surrey Police had since clarified this was not allowed.

There was also feedback about the PACE requirements, specifically the officer informing the subject about their right to a search record after the search, rather than before. The officer pushed back on this, saying he believed he had advised the subject of this entitlement beforehand and that it may have been missed on the video due to the presence of the second subject and background noise.

As for articulating the grounds for the stop and search, the officer accepted there was room for improvement. He explained that the search began under Section 1 but later included Section 23 (Misuse of Drugs Act) powers due to the discovery of a grinder and known intelligence. He also pointed out that his initial assertive tone came immediately after the subject had made a threatening comment, which influenced his approach. Still, he acknowledged how that could have been interpreted and took the panel's perception on board.

The officer reflected also on his day-to-day role, noting that he frequently engages with members of the Black community and works hard to build rapport and trust. He stressed that he's mindful of the challenges and mistrust that can exist between policing and Black communities, and he made an open offer for members of the scrutiny panel to join him on patrol to observe his working style and interactions firsthand.

SL praised the overall purpose and quality of the reflective practice form, saying it was achieving exactly what it was meant to: prompting thoughtful responses from officers and providing a valuable learning tool. However, he raised a note of caution. He advised the group not to fall into a 'ping-pong' dynamic where officers make claims and the panel re-checks the video every time to verify them. This could become unproductive. Instead, he emphasised the importance of focusing on strategic learning and looking at whether the officer has genuinely reflected on what happened, whether their perspective adds helpful context, and what they are taking away from the experience.

The group agreed that while some factual points might warrant revisiting, the greater value was in examining whether the officer had acknowledged the issues, engaged with the feedback, and demonstrated learning.

There was a quick check on whether there was another reflective practice case to review. It was highlighted that a particular officer's performance had been exceptional, and it was suggested that when outstanding feedback is given, like it was to that officer, it should also count as reflective practice. This way, frontline officers can see the balance, while some colleagues get called out for not doing the right thing, others are acknowledged for doing an excellent job. Everyone agreed that it's important to recognise both sides.

EN noted that although this wasn't formally done in this session, moving forward, we should record these moments and capture the officer's responses to positive feedback. There was some discussion around whether there is a formal mechanism to commend officers for good work identified through things like body worn camera reviews. While there isn't a structured system for automatically flagging good practice, there is a manual process where line managers or others can recognise outstanding efforts. This recognition can feed into awards and ceremonies, from letters of thanks up to Chief Constable's Commendations.

Finally, there was the idea that once the feedback and scoring process is well-established, the panel could analyse the data at the end of the year, including how many cases were green, amber, or red, and then use that to provide individual officers with performance feedback. This would help reinforce positive practice and support ongoing development.

Clip 1 – Summary of Footage and Panel Feedback:

During the stop and search interaction, the officer initially directed the individual to stand in a specific spot and asked to see their ticket. The individual immediately challenged the legality of the search, refusing to comply with requests to remove their hand from their pocket. The officer explained the grounds for detention clearly, noting the individual's behaviour of paying close attention to police officers, moving around the station barriers, and wearing a COVID mask which partially covered their identity. These observations led the officer to detain the individual under Section 1 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act for the purpose of a search, primarily focusing on potential weapons.

The individual expressed frustration, insisting they had done nothing wrong and accusing the officers of being aggressive and unjustified. The officer calmly outlined why the behaviour was suspicious, including the individual's attempt to avoid certain officers and their route choices near active police engagements. The individual disputed these claims, denying avoidance and accusing the officers of lying. The officer requested that the individual listen and allowed them to explain the rationale behind the suspicion without interruption, stressing the importance of clear communication.

The officer acknowledged the individual's right to feel unfairly targeted but reiterated that the stop was based on observed behaviour, local crime context, particularly frequent stabbings and robberies in the area—and public safety concerns. The officer emphasised that the purpose of the search was to protect everyone, including the individual being searched. The conversation touched on the individual's perceived racial profiling. The officer acknowledged the individual's feelings of being racially targeted but explained that the search was driven by behaviour and situational context rather than race.

Throughout the interaction, the officer maintained a professional and measured tone, inviting the individual to engage in an honest dialogue about the reasons for the search. They discussed how masks could be used to conceal identity rather than solely for health reasons, and how certain behaviours and circumstances can understandably raise suspicion in a high-crime area. The officer also recognised the individual's work as a painter and decorator, expressing respect for their efforts, and reinforcing that the goal was to prevent harm, not to unfairly target innocent people.

The individual continued to express frustration and questioned why their personal details were being taken during the search, despite not being found with any prohibited items. The officer explained that collecting details was part of the process when someone acts in an antisocial manner during an interaction. The conversation ended with the officer encouraging the individual to communicate openly and explaining the broader context of policing in the area, highlighting the shared goal of community safety.

Context of the Incident:

- The officer was part of a team on an official operation at Croydon train station.
- He stopped and searched a 19-year-old mixed white and black male.

- The grounds for the stop were that the male was observed monitoring police activity while concealing his identity (wearing a COVID mask and hat pulled down), avoiding uniformed officers, moving back to a previous location and an alternate exit.
- The area was experiencing high rates of robbery with weapons at the time.

Grounds for Stop and Search:

- Panel members expressed concern over the subjective nature of these grounds, describing the officer's interpretation as odd and reliant on assumptions.
- There is interest in reviewing the officer's stop and search records to identify any recurring patterns in grounds used.
- The panel felt the grounds for the stop and search were weak and largely based on assumptions rather than evidence or genuine suspicion.
- The panel was divided on whether stopping the individual to ask questions was reasonable, but generally agreed that the escalation to search was not sufficiently justified.

NEW ACTION: EN to review Officer D's stop and search records to see if there are any reoccurring patterns in grounds used.

Officer's Approach and Interaction:

- Concerns raised about the officer's initial approach being very robust or even aggressive, with the approach likely impacting the subject's defensive response.
- The officer's comment 'people like you don't like me, and I don't care' was noted as passive-aggressive and inflammatory, likely inflaming tensions.
- Panel members questioned the validity of treating the subject's questioning as antisocial behaviour, viewing it as a defensive reaction to perceived aggressive policing.
- Once the individual was handcuffed, the officer calmed down, but the initial engagement was critical and not handled sensitively.

Procedural Justice and Communication:

- The importance of procedural justice was highlighted: the individual should have had the opportunity to provide feedback and understand the grounds of the search.
- The officer seemed to lack curiosity and did not engage in open questioning before commencing the search.
- The body cam was activated late, missing some initial engagement and dialogue, making it difficult to fully assess the interaction.

Contextual Understanding:

- Panel acknowledged historical and generational distrust between Black communities and police, which can explain guarded or evasive behaviour.

- Some members expressed that the subject's behaviour (changing direction, concealing identity) would warrant at least a conversation from an officer, if not an immediate search.

Positive Performance Factors:

- The officer was persistent and ensured the subject remained engaged during the interaction.
- BWV was used and provided some evidence for review, despite being turned on late.
- The panel recognised the officer's effort to investigate suspicious behaviour in a high-crime area.
- The calm demeanour exhibited after handcuffing demonstrated some control over the situation.

Areas for Development:

- Need to ensure grounds are based on genuine suspicion and concrete evidence, not assumptions or subjective interpretations.
- Avoid inflammatory or passive-aggressive comments to reduce tension.
- Ensure body worn cameras are activated promptly to capture the full interaction.

Clip 2 – Summary of Footage and Panel Feedback:

- This was a stop and search involving a 34-year-old Black male suspected of drug supply. The vehicle involved had a history linked to drug supply and large amounts of cash were found previously. The subject was seen loitering in a known drug supply car park.

Grounds for Stop and Search

- The panel reviewed the justification given on the form, which mentioned loitering and previous convictions. However, these reasons do not strictly meet the legal threshold for reasonable suspicion.
- It was also unclear if the subject's proximity to an ATM or the vehicle was the main reason for the stop.
- The panel noted some confusion over whether the subject was actively observed before the stop and if officers clearly explained the link between the individual and the vehicle during the search.

Officer Approach and Procedure

- The officers' tone was calm and non-aggressive, which the panel saw as positive. The handling of evidence, such as wearing gloves when handling money, was appropriate and showed good health and safety practice.
- However, concerns were raised about how clearly officers communicated the reasons for the search to the subject.

	- Some panel members felt that, despite unclear verbal explanations, the overall context (subject's behaviour and vehicle association) justified the search operationally. - The panel recommended officers improve transparency by clearly explaining the grounds for stop and search to individuals during the encounter. They also suggested directly asking the officers involved for clarification on their reasoning. - The vehicle search lasted around 20 minutes and resulted in no further action. The panel found the stop and search generally satisfactory with solid operational grounds but noted communication needed to be clearer. - The overall rating was green, with some amber to reflect the feedback on communication clarity rather than the validity of the grounds. Positive Performance Factors - Officers demonstrated a calm and reasonable tone during the interaction, maintaining professionalism. - Use of gloves when handling potentially contaminated evidence showed appropriate health and safety awareness. - Officers showed good practice by quietly discussing control measures prior to detaining the subject. - The vehicle search was thorough, and the decision to take no further action was appropriate based on findings. Areas for Development - Grounds for the stop and search were not clearly or consistently communicated to the subject at the time, leading to confusion. - The verbal explanation given to the individual did not fully align with the documented justification on the form. - Officers should ensure clearer, more transparent communication of search grounds to those being stopped to avoid misunderstandings. - The linkage between the subject and the vehicle needs to be explicitly communicated and justified.	
5	Use of Force Headline Briefing & Discussion: Over the last 12 months, use of force incidents have increased slightly by 2%, with 204 additional forms submitted. The distribution of these incidents is fairly even across the three policing divisions, though West division accounts for a slightly higher proportion at 36%. Incidents involving individuals under 18 years old have risen by 234 forms (18.2%), with a disproportionate 39.3% of these occurring in East Surrey. This disparity will be further examined in the internal panel, with AC already conducting additional reviews focusing on this age group.	CC

Forms representing White individuals have decreased by 895, equating to a 20% reduction, the first such decrease remembered by CC. However, forms involving BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) subjects have increased by 187 forms (18.2%), contrasting with the trend for white subjects.

Use of TASER has decreased by 10% overall, with 52 fewer incidents; however, its use involving BAME subjects has increased slightly by 3.2%.

Subject behaviour trends show compliance remains the most common reason for force application at 38%, followed closely by active resistance at 37%. The most frequent tactic used is compliant handcuffing, accounting for nearly 60% of use of force incidents. Black subjects continue to exhibit higher compliance rates (41.6%) and a higher rate of compliant handcuffing (61.2%) compared to overall subjects, a pattern that has been consistent and previously reported.

Additionally, there is an observed prevalence of mental health-related factors influencing incidents in West Surrey, with ongoing work led by the Force Mental Health Lead to address this.

A particular point of interest is the sudden reduction in use of force forms involving White subjects, which contrasts with the increase in forms involving Black, Asian and minority ethnic community subjects. This discrepancy will be explored further in the Internal Governance Board, including results from a recent review involving 30 randomly selected White subjects and 30 Black subjects to better understand the reasons behind the decrease in White-related forms.

EN explained findings from qualitative reviews of 70 use of force forms across various divisions and specialised units, including traffic, dogs, and firearms teams. Of these, 86% were justified based on written grounds. Six forms were deemed unjustified due to insufficient description of force tactics or missing details like crime or occurrence numbers. These forms are returned to officers for amendment and feedback and tracked via the spreadsheets. Minor administrative errors were also noted, such as incorrect force tactic selections, which impact annual reporting to the Home Office.

An audit of 120 TASER forms from the last quarter found that the most common use was TASER drawn, followed by aiming (red dot), and then discharge, with 10 discharges justified across the quarter – seven involving White subjects and three involving Black subjects. Three forms were identified as unjustified due to poor descriptive detail and will be sent back to divisional Taser leads for feedback and correction and tracked through the Internal Governance Board.

A recurring issue highlighted was that when TASERS are drawn in a 'ready' position, officers' body worn cameras are often obscured, resulting in a lack of visual footage for critical moments. This has been noted in previous internal meetings, with reminders to officers about camera positioning. The panel discussed potential solutions such as integrating camera mounts or anchor points on officers' uniforms, particularly for Authorised Firearms Officers (AFOs), to improve footage capture during use of force incidents. It was noted that while AFOs typically have multiple cameras capturing various perspectives, some officers (such as in Surrey) may not have cameras mounted on their AFO helmets, potentially limiting coverage.

	NEW ACTION: AC to continue and update on further reviews related to use of force incidents involving under 18s. NEW ACTION: Investigate and report on potential improvements to body-worn camera mounting or uniform anchor points to prevent footage obstruction during Taser deployment, with a focus on AFOs and other specialist units.	
6	Stop & Search Headline Briefing & Discussion CD discussed how to further involve the panel as independent observers in proactive policing operations. Drawing on examples from other forces, particularly large-scale operations in London, the aspiration is to develop similar partnerships locally. The panel members were encouraged to engage with ongoing and upcoming operations, such as the Clear Hold initiative in Redhill – a national program involving clearing and holding areas, then working with partners and communities to rebuild those spaces. Another key operation is hotspot policing, targeting crime hotspots across the county with quarterly reporting on the use and outcomes of stop and search powers. CD noted the disproportionality in stop and search between Black and White individuals is notably lower in these targeted operations than in wider policing. An events calendar is being developed by Chief Inspector Andy Hill to allow panel members to attend and observe these operations more easily. CD updated that the force is exploring academic partnerships with local universities that have policing research units, working alongside forces like Staffordshire and Hampshire, to investigate how geography influences disproportionality rates. This collaboration is currently in early stages with agreements and data protection discussions underway. The meeting reviewed recent data showing that Black females had a higher find rate from searches compared to White females, though the gap has narrowed recently. The searches were reviewed, and no concerning patterns were found. An ongoing area of concern highlighted is in West Surrey, where Black people subjected to stop and search are arrested at a higher rate than White people and receive fewer community resolutions. Initial research suggests that arrests among Black people are often for more serious offenses or because individuals are wanted, indicating proportionality in those arrests. However, the force is now investigating whether White people in similar circumstances are being treated differently, which could reveal disparity. Overall, there has been a 5% increase in searches force-wide, with find rates remaining consistent at about 28%. North Surrey has a higher find rate (around 39%) but has also seen a reduction in the number of searches conducted, prompting questions about the reasons behind this trend. Data on what is found during searches was also shared. Drugs account for approximately 65% of all searches, followed by offensive weapons and going equipped offences. The majority of searches are focused on drug offenses, which aligns with national trends. Officers have shifted from searching for low-level offenses in low-crime areas to focusing	CD

	efforts on higher priority locations and targets, such as drug dealers and harm hotspots, which is viewed positively. Additionally, the panel discussed the use of stop and search powers under operational orders and intelligence tasking, which has increased and indicates more focused, purposeful use of these powers rather than random searching. The disproportionality ratio for Black individuals being stopped and searched has increased slightly to 5.9 times more likely than White individuals, up from 5.5 previously, a change that is slight but monitored closely. Potential academic research is also expected to provide more insights into these patterns. Activity is reviewed, actioned and scrutinised via the stop and search and use of force internal governance board. Finally, there was a brief mention of a legal power allowing police to ban the wearing of face coverings (e.g., balaclavas) in specific situations to prevent violent incidents, which officers should be aware of when authorised by a senior officer under strict criteria. NEW ACTION: Finalise and distribute the operational events calendar for panel attendance planning.	
7	A.O.B None raised. Next meeting: The next meeting is on Wednesday 21st May 2025 [to discuss Quarter 4 which will be January to March 2025, and rolling year data to 31st March 2025]. MEETING ENDED	MC