

Witness: Lynne Owens
Statement No: 1
Exhibits Referred to: LO/1, LO/2, LO/3, LO/4, LO/5,
LO/6, LO/7, LO/8, LO/9, LO/10
Date Statement Made: 26 January 2012

The Leveson Inquiry into the Culture Practices and Ethics of the Press

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1. I have been asked to provide this statement for the purpose of assisting the Leveson Inquiry. In preparing this statement I have sought to address all the questions asked of me in the Notice served pursuant to s.21 (2) of the Inquiries Act 2005.

(1) Who you are and a brief summary of your career history.

2. I am currently an Assistant Commissioner with the Metropolitan Police Service. As of 1st February 2012 I will be the Chief Constable of Surrey Police.
3. I joined the Metropolitan Police Service on 21st August 1989 and spent all my time based within what was then known as Catford division, primarily undertaking uniform duties. I transferred to Kent Police on

promotion to Sergeant in September 1993 and it was during my time there that I specialised as a Detective undertaking a mixture of Borough based and Specialist Detective roles, including a period as Senior Investigating Officer on the force major crime team at the rank of Detective Chief Inspector.

4. In December 2002 I transferred to Surrey Police on promotion to Superintendent and within a short space of time was appointed as a substantive Chief Superintendent in charge of a Basic Command Unit, then known as North Surrey Division. This covered the boroughs of Spelthorne, Elmbridge and Epsom and Ewell. In 2005 I was appointed as a temporary Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) and later that appointment was made substantive. At that time Surrey had two ACCs and during my tenure I undertook both roles (Territorial and Specialist Operations). In March 2008 I was appointed as the Temporary Deputy Chief Constable.
5. I transferred to the Metropolitan Police Service in March 2009 as a substantive Deputy Assistant Commissioner in Territorial Policing. On 20th December 2010 I was appointed as the Assistant Commissioner (Central Operations), the business group predominantly responsible for providing uniformed specialist support to the Boroughs of London. I was the lead for public order policing at the time of the TUC March for the Alternative, the Royal Wedding, the visit of President Obama, the response to the London riots and many other events in this period. From August 2011 I was also responsible for the Specialist Crime Directorate.

My Time with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

(2) What were your impressions, over the years, about the culture of relations between the MPS and the media?

6. In policing we rely on the consent of the public and an assessment of police effectiveness can be made on the basis of media reporting (albeit that this is only one factor). As such it is essential that the media have an accurate account of police activity both in advance of events and in reaction to them.
7. From my personal experience, the media, perhaps unsurprisingly, have a significant interest in events in London, as the capital city. As such the demand for stories from the MPS is unrelenting. It also seems to have an impact that the national media are part of the local media as far as the MPS is concerned.
8. When I arrived in the MPS, the Director of Public Affairs suggested it would be sensible if I meet some journalists so that they got to know me in advance of any significant event. His suggestion was that this may be in a social setting. Throughout my career I have only ever built relationships with the media through the formal press office channels. Indeed early in my Detective career a wise and more senior colleague advised me never to give my mobile telephone number to journalists as that prevented contact at inappropriate times in enquiries; I have always followed that lead and it has stood me in good stead.

9. It was evident to me that others in the MPS may have taken a different view but I was keenly aware that I had not previously worked in a senior position in this organisation and had not experienced any of the recent difficult history whereby the effectiveness of the MPS and its senior leaders was judged through media reporting. I believe this impacted on the culture of relations.
10. The only reporter I met face to face at this time was a *Times* reporter, David Leppard, and we met in my office at New Scotland Yard. From memory we just had a very general conversation about policing. Later, when I was appointed as an Assistant Commissioner, I met a number of journalists (from *The Guardian*, *Evening Standard* and BBC News) at the time of a heightened protest scene to outline my views on public order policing. I was accompanied at these interviews by a colleague from the MPS Directorate of Public Affairs (DPA). The interviews led to some articles being published (see e.g. the article attached and exhibited at LO/1). I believe the interview with Andy Tighe from the BBC was broadcast on or about 28th December 2010.

(3) Describe the personal contact which you had with the media at the various stages of your career. The Inquiry would like an overall picture of the type, frequency, duration and content of your contact with the media.

11. I have attempted to answer this question as fully as possible, but the following does not purport to be a detailed schedule of every contact with the media I have ever had. It does, however, cover the key areas.
12. My first dealings with the media were as a Detective in Kent engaging in media appeals following significant events. I cannot remember every

one but I do recall the most expansive was when I was the Senior Investigating Officer for a murder following the discovery of a body of a female in Tonbridge. The involvement of the media in that case was key at one stage as we were struggling to identify the victim. I undertook press conferences, one to one briefings and appeared on the Crimewatch programme. All of these were organised by the press office.

13. I describe my contacts with the media during my time in Surrey in further detail at paragraphs 39 to 40 below.
14. As mentioned previously, on arriving in London I was encouraged to meet with reporters as detailed in paragraph 8 and 10 above. I also provided an article on public order policing for the Janes Police Review magazine, which was published on 7th January 2011 (the Police Review is no longer being published but a transcript of the article I provided is attached and exhibited at LO/2).
15. On or about 27 February 2011 I had a meeting with a journalist from *The Sunday Times*, David Leppard, in my office at New Scotland Yard. From my perspective the purpose of that meeting was to update him on developments in public order policing and I was disappointed when a story appeared the following Sunday which had a negative tone (attached and exhibited at LO/3).
16. On 2nd March 2011 I gave an interview on the *Today* programme about changes in dealing with protests. A transcript of the interview is attached and exhibited at LO/4.

17. One of the journalists I had met emailed me in advance of the TUC March for the Alternative, but since I recognised the scale of this event and knew that we were planning to do a press briefing I forwarded the email to the DPA. I believe that about the same time I accompanied Sir Paul Stephenson to his monthly Crime Reporters Association (CRA) briefing so that he could introduce me, but I am afraid I have not been able to confirm the exact date of this briefing.
18. In advance of a significant public sector march in London I spoke at a press briefing organised, at my request, by the DPA on 22nd March 2011. I was aware that there had been some public scrutiny of police actions after the student protests and I wanted to ensure that the public understood what was planned in advance. I invited the TUC and Liberty, who were independently observing the march on behalf of both organisations, to take part in that press conference. Following that event I also did some television interviews at the request of the media, again organised via the DPA.
19. On 28th March 2011 I gave interviews to *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, ITN, BBC News and BBC *Newsnight* about the protests in the West End. A transcript of the *Newsnight* interview is attached and exhibited at LO/5.
20. The period in which I had the most intense contact with the media was during the run-up to the Royal Wedding, which was of course a very large, internationally televised event. Recognising the public interest in it, I asked the DPA to arrange a media briefing on 26th April 2011 and we appointed a second person, Commander Christine Jones, to assist

in dealing with media enquiries both in advance and on the day itself. Following that I was contacted by a non-police colleague who advised that *The Guardian* were intending to do a feature on me (they knew because they had been contacted for a quote). I thought it would reflect negatively on me, both in the police service and outside it, were I to agree to participate in such an article, since others might perceive it as me trying to raise my own profile. I asked Ed Stearns from the DPA to contact the journalist and try to dissuade them. I was advised that I was one of many people being profiled to describe the planning of the day. The story went ahead (it is attached and exhibited at LO/6) but I did not contribute to it. A few days later it was repeated in *The Daily Mail* (attached and exhibited at LO/7)

21. At the end of the Royal Wedding day I was asked if I could spare time to brief the CRA. We were still running an operation overnight in light of the ongoing celebrations so I agreed to brief the CRA on the day's events in my office in New Scotland Yard; this was suggested and arranged by the DPA who were present throughout.

22. Like the Surrey Police Media Relations Office (see below) the MPS DPA has developed a relationship with the CRA. I have received invitations to events organised by the CRA and vice versa. From memory I do not think I have been to any of the CRA organised events in London. I have attended two events hosted by the DPA in the MPS's Empress State Building on 16th June 2009 and 29th June 2011. At these I have spoken to journalists from across the media spectrum in company with other senior colleagues who have been present.

23. On appointment as Chief Constable in Surrey I was contacted by two local radio stations and the local newspaper via the Surrey Police Media Relations Office. I engaged in a very general "welcome back" type interview.

(4) Describe what you seek and have sought to gain for the Metropolitan Police through your personal contacts with the media.

24. The only contacts I have ever had with members of the press have been professional ones, established to ensure the public are accurately informed, to assist in the solving of crimes, to disseminate public safety messages and to maintain public confidence.

(5) Describe in general terms and using illustrative examples what you consider the media has been seeking from you in your personal dealing with them during your career.

25. For each specific case a journalist or section of the media may want a different thing. Individually they are after a different slant or scope as it will be that which stands them apart, allowing them to sell papers/copy or increase viewing figures.
26. A few examples may assist. With the Royal Wedding, for instance, the media attention started as a desire for simple facts and figures about the policing plan, and about the specialist police officers who were going to be deployed. However, as time went on it became clear that journalists were after an angle or story that would make their article stand out. For the TUC March different parts of the media seemed to be pursuing different agenda, depending on their political leanings. More generally, public order policing has been the subject of criticism in the

media from both extremes of the commentary spectrum; some saying it has been too hard, others that it has been too soft.

(6) To what extent have you, and do you, accept hospitality from the media?

27. I do not believe I have ever accepted hospitality from the media other than attending a Janes Police Review dinner on 28 October 2009. I was there to support officers who were receiving an award.

(7) Insofar as you have accepted hospitality from the media, what has been the nature of the hospitality that you have accepted?

28. The Janes Police Review dinner was a four-course dinner with wine provided.

(8) To what extent have you provided hospitality for the media on behalf of the Metropolitan Police Service?

(9) Insofar as you have provided hospitality to the media, what has been the nature of the hospitality that you provided?

29. The only hospitality I remember being provided to the media was at the CRA, which I believe are organised and funded by the DPA. On the few occasions when journalists came to my office they will have been offered tea or coffee at my personal expense. I have been informed that there was also a local editors' dinner at New Scotland Yard on 3 February 2010 to which I was invited, but I do not recall attending.

(10) What mechanisms are in place to monitor and record hospitality as between an Assistant Commissioner and the media?

30. All hospitality, including any provided by an Assistant Commissioner, is recorded in a published hospitality register. The entries relating to me are attached and exhibited at LO/8.

(11) What mechanisms are in place to monitor and record meetings with the media generally?

31. All meetings with the media are recorded in my diary and I have maintained a separate log of contacts. Recently the MPS has adopted a policy and Standard Operating Procedure (this can be found at tab A of the MPS master bundle), which requires that the 24-hour Press Bureau at New Scotland Yard (NSY) or the relevant local Borough Operational Command Unit (BOCU) are made aware of any interviews given to national newspapers, TV and radio, or regional media. Depending on the nature of the media contact, it may be only a brief note that is recorded or it may be a full transcript. Senior officers (members of Management Board) have been required to keep a record of any media contact since July 2011 which is audited by the Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Professional Standards.

(12) Have you ever discussed the media, or media coverage, with politicians? If so, how important is such communication and why?

(13) Have you ever known, or sensed, that a politician has put pressure on you to take a particular course of action as a result of lobbying or influence exerted on that politician by the media? If so, please explain (although you need not identify the politician at this stage if you do not wish to do so).

(14) Has the prominence which politicians have given to subjects ever given rise to pressure to alter policing priorities so as to allocate more priority to the subject being given prominence by the politicians? If so, please explain.

32. I have never discussed the media, or media coverage, with any politicians. I have never known, or sensed, that a politician has put any pressure, either directly or indirectly, on me to take a particular course of action, as a result of a media story.

(15) Set out your understanding of the type of contact which Metropolitan Police personnel have had with the media covering nature, extent, and (in general terms) topics / content.

33. The Metropolitan Police Service historically restricted proactive contact with the media to those of Inspector rank and above, generally in relation to significant events or crimes. However, this is no longer sensible or tenable as we encourage officers and staff to engage with the public. Following the *Filkin report* and the riots in the summer, the MPS is re-visiting its approach to engagement and that will include media relations.

34. What is clear is that our detectives require assistance to solve crimes, our neighbourhood officers working on local priorities need to update broad sections of the community on activity undertaken and our response/specialist uniformed officers need to be able to speak openly at the scene of critical events. Generally they are encouraged to do this with the support of the DPA. Moreover, at incidents like big public order events we have suggested that officers should not be afraid to talk about what they have just encountered. This change is necessitated by the widespread use of social media but will be a big cultural shift for the service.

(16) What levels of awareness and experience are there in the Metropolitan Police Service of "media crime" and in particular: (a) unlawful interception of communications (including the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act); (b) bribery of officials by the media; (c) blackmail; (d) harassment by paparazzi and journalists; (e) traffic and/or public order offences committed by photographers and journalists pursuing stories; (f) inciting officials to communicate confidential information held by the MPS / conspiring with them to obtain such information; and (g) crime within media organisations other than the foregoing (e.g. dishonest expense claims).

35. Each of the offences listed in this question has its own elements which have to be proven and some are more complex than others. As such I would suggest that there is a good and detailed level of knowledge throughout the MPS in relation to the simpler or clearer offences, such as those under the Public Order Act or blackmail. The other areas would require more specialist expertise. London is well served by the Specialist Crime Directorate, which has extensive experience in dealing with complex cases and case law.

(17) What sort of priority is given to, and what level of resources are available to deal with, the above?

36. As for what sort of priority is given to such cases, I can speak only generally. Prioritisation decisions are regularly made in policing and the level of resource allocated is adjusted in accordance with policing priorities, public interest and seriousness criteria.

(18) Since you returned to the Metropolitan Police in 2009, has contact with the IPCC and/or the Surveillance Commissioner and/or the Information Commissioner ever give rise to questions about the leakage of information to the media and/or private detectives? If so, please explain?

37. During my time in London I have seen a few stories in the media which have caused me to question their origin. Most notable was the investigation into the activities of a crime squad in London, for which I was the Gold Commander. In different time periods different media outlets published material that was not in the public domain. It was never clear whether it came from the officers themselves, someone else in the MPS or the IPCC, all of whom would have had access to the material.

(19) What is your current impression of the culture within the MPS in relation to its dealings with the press?

38. The Metropolitan Police Service recognises the importance of the media in maintaining the trust and confidence of the communities it serves. The Filkin report articulates the work being done internally to understand the culture. The recommendations Ms Filkin has made, to adapt and improve the culture of relations between the MPS and the media for the future, have been accepted by the Commissioner.

My Time with Surrey Police

(20) Describe the personal contact which you had with the media whilst serving with the Surrey Police. The Inquiry would like an overall picture of the type, frequency, duration and content of your contact with the media during your time with the Surrey Police.

(21) Describe what you were seeking to gain for the Surrey Police through your personal contacts with the media.

(22) Describe in general terms and using illustrative examples what you consider the media has been seeking from you in your personal dealing with them during your time with the Surrey Police.

39. When I became a Borough Commander in Surrey I was more engaged with the local media than I had been previously. I cannot remember specific detail but I know I met the editor or editors of the local newspapers to ensure they were briefed on local issues and to introduce myself as the local Borough Commander. The Janes Police Review also did a feature on my appointment.

40. As an Assistant Chief Constable and Temporary Deputy Chief Constable in Surrey, I had almost no dealings with the print or television media. I would have provided quotes on specific policing initiatives and incidents or appeared before public meetings that were subject to

coverage but I had minimal one to one interaction with journalists at that time. For example, I approved 'lines' to take with the media in relation to operations for which I chaired Gold Groups (such as Operation Lintel into the death of Badri Patarkatishvili, the Georgian billionaire) but did not personally meet or brief the press on these occasions. The Surrey Police Media Relations Office did develop a relationship with the CRA and used to host events with them. These were usually informal gatherings in a bar, usually in Guildford but sometimes in London, and the snacks would be provided by Surrey Police. I believe I went to one of these with other colleagues and met a variety of reporters who had been invited. Although I was invited to other such events, I do not think I attended any, apart from possibly a local editors' event hosted by the Surrey Police on 15th July 2004, whilst I was Chief Superintendent, although I cannot remember precisely.

(23) To what extent did you accept hospitality from the media whilst serving with the Surrey Police?

(24) Insofar as you accepted hospitality from the media, what was the nature of the hospitality that you accepted?

(25) What did you consider that the media was seeking to gain from affording you hospitality?

(26) To what extent did you provide hospitality for the media on behalf of the Surrey Police whilst you were with that force?

(27) Insofar as you provided hospitality to the media, what was the nature of the hospitality that you provided?

(28) What were you seeking to gain by affording hospitality for the media?

41. I have already explained above the (very limited) contact with the media I had whilst at Surrey, and any hospitality involved.

(29) What mechanisms were in place to monitor and record hospitality as between yourself and the media?

42. Surrey Police had a hospitality register in place from 2006 onwards, where all hospitality and gifts were recorded. A copy of the policy as it stood in 2008 is attached and exhibited at LO/9. The policy (which applied to all staff and to all third parties, with no difference for the media) was that if a gift or hospitality was offered a declaration form should be submitted via the recipient's line manager to the Head of the Professional Standards Department. I am told by Surrey Police that the register shows no record of my having received any gifts or hospitality during my time in Surrey.

(30) What mechanisms were in place to monitor and record meetings with the media generally?

43. In Surrey all pre-arranged meetings with the media were logged on the database kept by the Media Relations Office (which was called Solcara). This included any requests for interviews and details of any actual interviews given or press releases, including when press "lines" about a particular case or issue were approved. The Solcara database also captured any incident whereby the press requested an interview via the Media Relations Office. I never engaged with the media outside this process during my time at Surrey.

(31) Did you ever discuss the media, or media coverage, with politicians whilst working with Surrey Police? If so, how important is such communication and why?

(32) Whilst you were serving with Surrey Police did you ever know or sense that a politician was putting pressure on you to take a particular course of action as a result of lobbying or influence exerted on that politician by the media? If so, please explain (although you need not identify the politician at this stage if you do not wish to do so).

(33) Did the prominence which politicians gave to subjects ever give rise to pressure to alter policing priorities so as to allocate more priority to the subject being given prominence by the politicians? If so, please explain.

44. As I stated above at paragraph 32, I have never discussed the media, or media coverage, with any politicians. Nor have I known of any pressure from politicians.

(34) Set out your understanding of the type of contact which Surrey Police personnel had whilst you served with the force with the media covering nature, extent, frequency and (in general terms) topics / content.

45. A range of staff at Surrey Police will have had interactions with the media, from releasing appeals for information, to updates on Neighbourhood issues, to crime prevention campaigns. Contact frequency ranged from the ad hoc for some staff, to weekly for others (e.g. Neighbourhood Inspectors), to daily for staff in the Media Relations Office.

(35) Were contacts with the media restricted to certain staff or were all staff able to deal with the media?

46. The Surrey Police policy during my tenure stated that staff should refer any questions or approaches from the media to the relevant divisional or HQ Media Relations Office. The further involvement of that staff member and/or the Media Relations Office would depend upon the nature of the request and the experience of the staff member. Some Safer Neighbourhood staff were afforded more discretion in terms of direct contact with the media but, in practice, all but the simplest queries would still be handled by, or in conjunction with, the relevant media office.

(36) What did you expect the Surrey Police to gain from such contacts with the media?

(37) What did the media seek from such contacts with your personnel?

47. My understanding of what Surrey Police and the media sought to gain from contact with each other was the same as my understanding during my time at the MPS. To an extent, as in London, it depended on the circumstances. Please see my answers to questions (4) and (5) above.

(38) What hospitality were your personnel permitted to accept from the media? Inter alia, were they entitled to accept a meal or a drink from a journalist?

48. The current Surrey Police hospitality guidance (attached and exhibited at LO/10) states that: "There is a clear distinction between a gift, which may create an implicit obligation on the part of the police, and refreshment that is an integral part of routine policing and builds public confidence. This procedure should not be interpreted in a way that would, for example, prevent neighbourhood staff from drinking a cup of tea with a Surrey resident..."

49. However, it goes on to state that: "It is important however that officers and staff be fully aware that in circumstances where an unsolicited offer of a personal gift or gratuity is made, the assumption should be that it will be politely declined...If presented with a gift, which it would be discourteous to refuse, it should be accepted and the hospitality, gifts and declaration of interest pro forma submitted to the intended recipient's line manager...The donor should be advised that permission to retain the gift will be sought and that they will be advised of the outcome." I have no knowledge of this policy not being followed.

(39) What hospitality were your personnel permitted to afford to the media?

50. To my knowledge there was no guidance or policy regarding hospitality afforded to another party (including the media) by Surrey Police. I do know that Surrey Police has, over a number of years, arranged meetings where refreshments are available. These have included buffet-style snacks and soft drinks, but to the best of my knowledge no alcoholic drinks have been supplied by Surrey Police to the media or any other third party. I am informed that in 2002, whilst I was Chief Superintendent, the Surrey Police Media Relations Office won an award for excellence from the Association of Police Press Relations Officers (APPRO), which included a financial prize. In 2003 the then Press and Publicity Manager, Tim Morris, arranged for his staff to each spend a day with a journalist from the Crime Reporters' Association, to gain a better understanding of each other's work. The Media Relations team then made a presentation at the APPRO conference in November 2003 and, to thank the journalists for their assistance, the 2002 prize money was used to take the team and journalists out for a meal. I was not invited to this meal or otherwise involved.

(40) What mechanisms were in place to record hospitality as between the media and your personnel?

51. Please see my answer to question (29) above - there was a hospitality register kept.

(41) How (if at all) was hospitality between the Surrey Police (including yourself) and the media policed?

52. Current Surrey Police policy dictates that the recipient's line manager should approve or decline the gift or hospitality in the first instance, and details should then be sent to the Professional Standards Department (PSD) for listing on the hospitality register. The policy goes on to state that, "The register will be audited by the Deputy Chief Constable via the Portfolio meeting. The register will be subject of a quarterly dip check by the Audit Committee of the Police Authority to ensure that the type and level of gifts and hospitality being received are appropriate. Entries relating to Chief Officer Group will be formally reported to the Committee by the Head of PSD on a quarterly basis."
53. This policy was created in November 2011. As far as I am aware there was not a formal monitoring or auditing process for hospitality records when I was the Temporary Deputy Chief Constable, although as stated above a hospitality register was kept.

(42) Were the hospitality rules governing contact between Surrey Police personnel (including yourself) and the media different from those covering contact with other third parties? If so, what were the differences?

54. The hospitality rules covering contact with the media were the same as for contact with all other third parties.

(43) What policies and procedures were in place to record contact between: (a) yourself and the media; (b) senior managers and the media; (c) other personnel and the media? For the avoidance of doubt, the reply to this request should cover both on the record and off the record contacts.

55. I have described the process of logging all pre-arranged meetings with the media on the Solcara database. This included both "on the record"

and "off the record" contacts, and the process applied to all staff of all ranks.

(44) Were records of hospitality and/or contact with the media audited and/or policed and, if so, how and by whom?

56. As explained above at paragraph 53 there was no formal process for auditing or policing the hospitality records or records of contact with the media that I was aware of during my time at Surrey Police.

(45) In your opinion did the policies and procedures described above: (a) work effectively; (b) were they sufficient; and (c) were they capable of improvement?

57. The policies in Surrey have clearly been reviewed since I worked there. Of course the operating context has changed, in that the police service is more keenly aware of how its interaction with both the media and in terms of hospitality is received publicly, with the potential for negative impact on public confidence.

(46) What systems, policies and procedures were in place in the Surrey police to ensure that all members of the force (including civilian employees) knew what was and what was not appropriate contact with the media?

58. I cannot recall precisely what systems, policies and procedures were in place to ensure that members of the Surrey force knew what was and was not appropriate contact with the media. However, all policies and procedures were available to officers and staff via the Connect intranet. I am also aware that there was more specific guidance given to all staff during high profile cases via global emails and training was provided to particular groups of individuals who might have more contact with the media (e.g. Neighbourhood Officers, Neighbourhood Inspectors,

Neighbourhood Specialist Officers (NSOs), Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and Senior Investigating Officers).

(47) Are you satisfied that the policies and procedures described above were sufficient and working effectively?

59. I do not remember being given any indication during my time at Surrey that there were any problems with the existing policies and procedures which meant they were insufficient or working ineffectively.

(48) What training was in place in the Surrey Police, whilst you were serving with that force, to ensure that all members of the force (including civilian employees) knew what was and what was not appropriate contact with the media?

60. As stated above in response to question (46) I do not remember exactly what training was in place. From memory the training for staff likely to come into contact with the media would range from a two-day course delivered by an external media consultant for senior officers, to locally delivered input from the Media Relations Office for NSOs and PCSOs. Staff would be given bespoke refresher input by an external consultant for specific incidents (for instance if a high profile criminal case was coming to trial).

(49) To what extent were leaks from the Surrey Police to the media a problem during your time with Surrey Police?

(50) What systems and procedures were in place to identify, respond to and detect the source of leaks?

(51) How many investigations were conducted into actual or suspected leaks from the Surrey Police to the media during the time during which you were Temporary Deputy Chief Constable (if you cannot access statistics please state your recollection in subjective terms as best you can) and how many led to the successful identification of the source of the leak. What was the outcome of the other investigations to the best of your recollection?

(52) Was disciplinary action taken against any member of staff (whether civilian or uniformed) for leaking information to the media during your tenure as Temporary Deputy Chief Constable of Surrey Police? If so, please identify the number of cases and their outcome. There is no need to identify the person or persons the subject of the disciplinary process.

61. Leaks from Surrey Police to the media were not a significant issue for Surrey Police while I was the Temporary Deputy Chief Constable. Having asked for a check to be made I am advised that there was only one allegation regarding a leak to the media, and this was found to be unsubstantiated. There are five records of intelligence regarding leaks for the period, and all have been filed as unsubstantiated or similar.

62. The Surrey Police Professional Standards Department (PSD) Anti-Corruption Team was formed in 2006, to act on intelligence received and to undertake proactive activity. Information can be passed to the team by members of the public or by staff anonymously, and intelligence is developed. If a formal complaint is made, that would be investigated by PSD and appropriate discipline or criminal action taken.

(53) To the best of your recollection what procedures were in place to prevent and/or detect data leaks?

(54) To the best of your recollection what protections (if any) were in place to ensure that databases used by Surrey Police, including the CISS internal crime system, personnel were not misused?

63. Some computer systems (e.g. the Police National Computer (PNC)) are subject of random validation checks, whereby a user's line manager is required retrospectively to confirm that a check was made for a legitimate policing purpose. In other cases (e.g. the Crime Information System (CIS)), PSD will investigate any intelligence that it receives

indicating that a member of staff has improperly accessed or disseminated data.

(55) What payments (if any) were considered to be legitimate financial transactions between Surrey Police personnel and the media?

64. I am not aware of any situations in which payments made by the media to Surrey Police officers or staff might be permissible, and I cannot think of any legitimate payments from Surrey Police to media professionals other than payments to external consultants or contractors for services such as campaign development or training delivery.

(56) To what extent did you believe bribery of personnel by the media to be a then current problem for the Surrey Police (if at all)?

65. I was not aware of any allegations of bribery of Surrey Police personnel by the media.

(57) What steps were taken: (a) to educate your personnel about bribery; (b) otherwise to prevent the bribery of your personnel; (c) pro-activity to detect bribery; (d) retrospectively to investigate bribery; and (e) to discipline personnel (if any) who were found to have accepted bribes from the media?

66. I cannot recall any action taken to educate personnel about the issues of bribery, but the hospitality policy and hospitality register had been well publicised and the policy makes clear what is, and what is not, acceptable practice in terms of receiving gifts or hospitality from other parties. Any intelligence received regarding issues of bribery is acted upon and, if found to have merit, would be investigated.

(58) What role did the Surrey Police Service Press Office fulfil? What, in practice, did it do?

67. The role of the Media Relations Office is proactively and reactively to manage relationships with the media, preparing staff for pre-planned events such as high profile court cases and responding to enquiries from print, broadcast and online media with regard to spontaneous incidents. Their remit includes: operational matters relating to criminal cases or police incidents; corporate issues relating to force policy, performance or statistics; and features such as requests from the media to accompany police officers on duty or visit departments.
68. In support of operational incidents they will support the investigation (for instance by issuing appeals), avoid prejudice to future legal action, keep the public informed and reassured, and maintain positive relationships with the media, thus allowing officers to concentrate on resolving the issue at hand.

(59) To what extent did the Surrey Police Press Office exist to manage the Surrey Police's corporate image?

69. The police service is highly dependent upon the support and cooperation of the public, whether that is to help identify offenders, respond to appeals for witnesses, or spread public safety information. In order to gain and maintain that support and cooperation, the public needs to be able to trust and feel confident in their local police; in other words the police service must maintain a positive and professional reputation. The Media Relations Office has a vital role to play in this, by working with the media to keep the public informed, ensuring that the media report accurate information in a timely and non-sensational manner, and by ensuring that any inaccuracies are corrected.

(60) Why was it necessary for the Surrey Police to have a press office and what is your view as to its utility and role?

70. Surrey Police requires a Media Relations Office to manage the Force's relations with the media and keep the public provided with accurate and timely information. Moreover, with the advent of 24/7 news channels and Surrey's proximity to national media based in London, even relatively small incidents or criminal cases can receive a significant amount of coverage which will be difficult for an operational commander to manage. At such times, a small team of experienced media relations professionals is essential to assist operational officers in managing the media, allowing police officers and operational police staff to focus on their primary role of policing.

(61) What was the media's attitude towards the Surrey Police Press Office? In particular, were they satisfied by the provision of information and the routing of communications through your press office or did they prefer direct contact with individual personnel within the Surrey Police?

71. I understand that the relationship between the Media Relations Office and the media was good, with no significant complaints. While there may be times when the media request more information than the police service is in a position to give (for instance, confirmation that certain people are under investigation) the policy of the Media Relations Office is (as explained above) to maintain as open a relationship as possible.

(62) What role did the Surrey Police Authority play in relation to oversight of the Surrey Police's relations and communications with the media? Do you consider that it would be in the public interest to make any changes to this role? If so, what changes?

(63) What level of contact and oversight was there from the Surrey Police Authority in relation to the Surrey Police's relations and communications with the media whilst you were the Temporary Deputy Chief Constable?

72. I am advised that now (since December 2011) the Surrey Police Authority (SPA) audit the hospitality register. This may have occurred prior to this date, but there was no policy to this effect so far as I was aware, and there was not any record that they did so. Other methods of oversight include the Force Risk Register and the Force Performance meeting should a media issue present a significant risk. Media issues regarding significant incidents and enquiries are discussed at Gold groups, on which an SPA member may sit. Gold groups are established to oversee an effective police response to critical incidents, a critical incident being any incident where the effectiveness of the police response is likely to have a significant impact on the confidence of the victim, their family and/or the community.

73. The changing governance arrangements in policing will mean that Police Authorities do not operate in the future. Police and Crime Commissioners and their corresponding scrutiny panels may be best placed to undertake this role in the future.

(64) What level of contact and oversight was there from the Surrey Police Authority in relation to the Surrey Police's policing of the media whilst you were the Temporary Deputy Chief Constable?

74. I am not aware of any specific incident of us "policing the media" during my tenure as Temporary Deputy Chief Constable, so there is nothing which the Surrey Police Authority would have had any contact or oversight in relation to.

(65) What limitations, if any, were there on staff from the Surrey Police leaving to work for the media and vice versa?

(66) Were records kept of those who joined the Surrey Police from the media, or who went on to work for the media after leaving the Surrey

Police? If so, please describe the systems in place to the best of your recollection.

(67) To the best of your recollection were there any discernible patterns in the movement of personnel from the media into the Surrey Police and vice versa?

75. As far as I am aware there were no limitations on staff from the Surrey Police leaving to work for the media or vice versa. Nor were any records kept of such moves. I am not aware of any discernible pattern in the movement of personnel between Surrey Police and the media.

(68) What level of awareness and experience were there in the Surrey Police of "media crime" and in particular: (a) unlawful interception of communications (including the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000); (b) bribery of officials by the media; (c) blackmail; (d) harassment by paparazzi and journalists; (e) traffic and/or public order offences committed by photographers and journalists pursuing stories; (f) inciting officials to communicate confidential information held by the Surrey Police / conspiring with them to obtain such information; and (g) crime within media organisations other than the foregoing (e.g. dishonest expense claims)?

(69) What sort of priority was given to, and what level of resources were available to deal with the above?

76. Please see my answer above in relation to question (16). During my tenure as a chief officer at Surrey Police I was not aware of "media crime" generally nor the 7 specific types of it particularised in the question. I refer to my previous response on the topic. More recently I have been made aware of the "hacking" allegations; initially via the media and now, more specifically, as a result of my appointment as Chief Constable.

(70) Whilst you were the Temporary Deputy Chief Constable of Surrey Police did contact with the IPCC and/or the Surveillance Commissioner and/or the Information Commissioner ever give rise to questions about leakage of information to the media and/or private detectives? If so, please explain.

77. I cannot recollect any contact from the IPCC, Surveillance Commissioner and/or Information Commissioner during my time as Temporary Deputy Chief Constable at Surrey Police which gave rise to questions about leaks of information to the media or private detectives.

(71) What was your impression of the culture within the Surrey Police overall in relation to its dealings with the press?

78. My overall impression during my tenure was that Surrey Police, like the MPS, understood the importance of the media in maintaining the trust and confidence of the communities it served. I was not aware of any negative aspects of the culture in relation to the conduct of the Media Relations Office, the Force generally, or its officers and staff.

I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true

Signed... ASSIST. Commissioner.
Dated..... 26th January 2012