

STATEMENT OF ROB SHORTHOUSE

DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS,  
STRATHCLYDE POLICE

to

“THE LEVESON INQUIRY”

QUESTIONS

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

I started my career in 1998 upon completion of my studies at The University of Stirling. After working in a number of freelance and short term marketing and communications roles, I applied to join the Government Information and Communications Service in 2001. I worked with a number of Ministers within the Scottish Executive, before finally becoming a Senior Communications Officer working for the First Minister.

In 2006 I was seconded to the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games Bid Team as Head of PR and Media. Following the completion of that successful campaign I joined the Scottish Football Association as Head of Communications in November 2007.

I was appointed Director of Corporate Communications at Strathclyde Police in October 2009.

**2. Please describe the role and remit of the press office within Strathclyde Police**

The Media Team within Strathclyde Police sits within the Corporate Communications Department, of which I am the Director. There is no "Press Office" in Strathclyde Police.

The role of the Team is two-fold. Firstly, the staff are expected to react to media interest in issues and incidents that arise or take place within the Strathclyde Police area. This includes all serious crimes and major incidents.

Secondly, the Team also have responsibility for proactively promoting the work of the Force to the Public through the media. This work is primarily concentrated on finding 'good news stories' that best demonstrate our activities under our four Forcwide priorities; Public Protection; Violence, Disorder and Antisocial Behaviour; Serious Crime and Terrorism and Road Safety and Road Crime.

**3. Please describe your role and responsibilities within the press office. To whom do you report?**

I do not work in the Media Team. I am the Director of the whole Department -- which includes Marketing, Campaigns, Design, Social Media, Internal Communications, Events and the Force Website. The Media Team is managed by the Media Manager on a daily basis, with strategic direction provided by myself.

I do, however, assume responsibility for all media issues that relate to the Chief Constable personally. I also have responsibility for the maintenance

of relationships with the media at an editorial level.  
I report to the Deputy Chief Constable.

4. **Describe the culture of relations between the press office on the one hand and other Strathclyde police staff/officers on the other. Do you consider that there is a relationship of trust and confidence? What changes, if any, would you wish to make to the working relationship and why?**

I believe that the Force has a positive working relationship with the media in Scotland – with that relationship largely maintained by the staff that work in Corporate Communications. While it would be wrong to say that there is no direct contact between Officers and journalists, the overwhelming majority of contact and engagement is managed by the Corporate Communications staff.

Like all relationships, there are periods where the Force and the media may disagree on certain issues, but, by and large, we do not feel negative towards the media and I do not believe that the media are negative towards us. I believe that the staff in Corporate Communications do have a relationship built on trust with the media – something which they work very hard to maintain.

I do not feel that any changes need to be made.

5. **Does the press office have a gatekeeper function for controlling access to Strathclyde Police personnel?**

Yes.

6. **Does the press office have a gatekeeper function for controlling access to Strathclyde police personnel?**

Yes.

7. **What is your impression of the culture within Strathclyde Police in relation to its dealings with the media (the media in all its forms)?**

I believe that at more junior levels, staff within the organisation can be nervous of the media as they are concerned that the media are only interested in reporting bad news. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that the junior ranks would not typically have any type of engagement with the media and this inherent sense of nervousness could be attributed to the 'fear of the unknown.' This is not an attitude that is restricted to the Police and I am sure that such an attitude also exists in other parts of the public sector.

However, I believe that at the more senior ranks, our staff recognise that the media is an important way of speaking to the public. The same nervousness does not exist at this level and I strongly believe that our senior ranks do understand the important role that the media play in both meeting our

operational needs during investigations and in providing reassurance to the public.

8. **Describe your impression of the culture of dealings between the press office and the media (the media in all its forms)? Do you consider the relationship between the press office and the media to be a successful one? What changes, if any, do you consider should be made to the relationship?**

Due to the large array of active media in Scotland – and the inherent competition between newspapers, broadcasters and social media sources that this creates – working in Corporate Communications in a big, busy Force such as Strathclyde is a demanding role. There is a constant thirst for new information, exclusive information and/or access to senior people on a daily basis. The staff in Corporate Communications have to service and manage this demand.

They do so by being professional and by being organised. I believe that, while the media will always want more from us, they are appreciative of the job that the staff who work in the Media Team do. As mentioned previously, it is my responsibility to maintain relationships with the media at an editorial level and, as such, I would be made aware of any problems or issues that parts of the media may have with the service that we provide. My experience is that, despite occasional situations that may arise, our relationship remains strong and is built on a mutual understanding of our respective roles and responsibilities.

In direct answer to the question, therefore, on the basis that we maintain regular, largely unbroken contact with the media, I do consider our relationship to be a successful one.

While there would always be opportunities for change or improvement, there is nothing in the way that we work that I believe necessitates any profound changes at this point.

9. **Set out your understanding of the type of contact which press office staff have with the local and national media covering nature, extent, frequency and (in general terms) topics/content.**

The Media Team based within Corporate Communications is open from 08:00 – 20:00 seven days a week. We also operate an out of hours duty service which is managed in conjunction with the Police Control Room based within our Force Overview. In 2011 we logged 14,342 calls from the media on our Spotlight media management/record maintenance system.

The attached document is a breakdown of the number of calls our Media Team receive based on organisation for the year 2011.

10. **Are contacts with the media restricted to certain staff or are all personnel within Strathclyde Police able to deal with the media?**

Day to day responsibility for speaking to the media rests in almost all cases with Corporate Communications. However, officers do regularly speak to the media through interviews and media conferences arranged by Corporate Communications.

As explained later, however, we do operate a different system for dealing with local, community media. Responsibility for maintaining this relationship rests with Community Police Inspectors.

11. **Does the press office prioritise some sections of the media over others? For instance, does it prioritise communications and relations with the national media over those with the local media? If so, please give details and explain why.**

The Media Team in our Corporate Communications Department tends to deal exclusively with the National Media. The Force has taken the decision that responsibility for engagement with local media should rest with local Community Inspectors. This is done through the supplying of weekly 'crime file' information and direct contact. Our experience is that this is a much more effective and sustainable way of passing key information to people at a local level

12. **Are there mechanisms in place to ensure that information is disseminated widely to the media rather than to select journalists or titles? If so, please specify. If not, do you consider that there should be?**

Our information is issued through the Newslink service which means that when we issue a statement it goes to all the major outlets.

The only exception to this would be though the proactive work carried out by the Media Team. We do, as a matter of course, pitch exclusive stories about areas of our work to certain parts of the media. For example, we might offer one newspaper or broadcaster access to one of our specialised units in order to produce a more detailed feature.

However, as a general rule, all information about ongoing investigations or incidents is issued to all media via Newslink.

13. **What is the media's attitude towards the press office? In particular, are they satisfied by the provision**

As explained earlier, the media will always want more access, more information and more detail. I know that they believe that they would get more of this if they were allowed to speak directly to Officers without having to go through Corporate Communications.

That being said, I do believe that the media do have a positive attitude towards the Media Team within our Corporate Communications

Department. They appreciate that, in the main, the staff in the team do work hard in order to ensure that enquiries are answered accurately, promptly and effectively. I also know that the media appreciate the fact that we operate the hours that we work and the fact that we run an out of hours service

- 14. Describe in general terms and with illustrative examples, the personal contact which you have with the local and national media. The Inquiry would like an overall picture**

My role is not to act as Strathclyde Police's media officer. Rather, I provide strategic direction to the Force on all communications matters --- including relationships with politicians at both a local and national level.

However, it would be wrong for me to suggest that I do not speak to the media. As I have already stated, I do maintain relationships at an editorial level and this involves me holding fairly regular meetings with editors and broadcast heads who operate in the Strathclyde area. Due to the sheer number of local media titles, this is not something that I also do with local media. I tend to engage with local media editors when I have to deal with a specific problem, or issue.

I do also, from time to time, find myself speaking to journalists about specific issues. This does not happen frequently and it usually happens on the basis of it being an issue relating to the Chief Constable and his policy priorities. For example, I dealt with the media when the Chief was actively calling for the creation of a single national Police Force in Scotland and, just recently, I arranged an interview with a newspaper for the Chief that related to his view on the use of funds seized under Proceeds of Crime legislation.

I would also expect to be actively involved in major incidents that occur within the Force area. For example, in April 2011, a series of viable explosive devices were sent through the post to various high profile figures associated with Celtic Football Club. I personally took responsibility for the media strategy and was directly involved in establishing a 'news blackout' at the behest of the Senior Investigating Officer.

I also find myself dealing with complaints from media -- normally at a news editor level -- about problems that they may have encountered in their dealings with the Media Team or the Media Manager. I should make clear, however, that this is fairly infrequent.

- 15. Describe what you are seeking to gain for Strathclyde Police through your personal contact with the media**

We want to convey clear messages to the public in Strathclyde about our core policing functions. Sometimes we want to ask the public for help or to provide information and sometimes we want to put out public reassurance messages. Sometimes we want to comment on the role of the police in public life.

16. **Describe in general terms and using illustrative examples what you consider the local and national media have been seeking from you in your personal dealings with them**

As stated above, I believe that the media are looking to me to be the single point of contact at an editorial level. I also believe that during a major incident, the media would expect me to be involved in the setting of direction of the media engagement. They also look to me to settle disputes or issues or to act as someone they can appeal to when they are perhaps not getting information that they would like.

By way of example, I have been asked to make representations on behalf of the media to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service in order to request the release of certain images or productions that relate to ongoing inquiries.

I also hold regular meetings with editors and broadcast heads in order to discuss the way in which the Force is engaging with the media. This was particularly relevant over the past 18 months as the Force has been going through a period of restructuring and cost saving. This included significant changes to the Corporate Communications Department. I therefore met with editors and broadcast heads in order to consult on the changes before they were implemented.

17. **To what extent have you accepted hospitality from the media whilst working in your current position?**

I do not, as a general principle, accept hospitality from the media. The overwhelming majority of my meetings with senior media figures are held either in the offices of the editor or in my own. I have, however, on a very limited number of occasions, had lunch with people from the media. These meetings are always logged in my diary.

18. **Insofar as you have accepted hospitality from the media, what has been the nature of the hospitality that you have accepted? What records have you kept of such hospitality?**

As stated above, I do not accept hospitality as a general principle. However, on one occasion (01/10/10) I had lunch with the news editor of the Scottish Sun and this was paid for by the Sun. The estimated value of this lunch was £20 and it was logged in my hospitality register

19. **To what extent have you provide hospitality for the media?**

I do not provide hospitality to the media.

20. **Insofar as you have provided hospitality to the media, what has been the nature of that hospitality? What records have you kept of such hospitality?**

I do not provide hospitality to the media.

21. **Have you ever accepted gifts from the media? If so, please give full details (including who gave you the gift, when, what the gift was, and why you believe they gave you the gift)**

I have never received any gifts from the media.

22. **Have you ever discussed the media, or media coverage, with politicians? If so, how important is such communication and why?**

I have discussed media coverage with Politicians. As stated above, I have responsibility for the Corporate Communications -- which includes the Media Team -- and also responsibility for maintaining good relationships with politicians. I would consider it a matter of course for issues relating to media coverage to crop up in conversations with politicians. Due to the high profile nature of some of the incidents that the Police deal with, I believe that it would be odd if such conversations did not take place. Such conversations are important to preserve good relations (in the sense that not having such discussions would make such relations more stilted and awkward) so having as the content of the discussion is appropriate.

23. **What do you know about the level of hospitality accepted by Strathclyde Police, including by officers of the rank of Assistant Chief Constable and above? Do you consider the level to be appropriate now and to have been appropriate in the past? In addressing this issue please give your reasons and set out what you consider to be an appropriate level of hospitality for police personnel to accept from the media (if any). What records are kept of such hospitality?**

As a general principle, Senior Officers in this Force do not accept hospitality from the media on a regular basis. Any hospitality that is received should be modest and would be recorded on the hospitality register.

I believe that this is entirely appropriate. Hospitality, if received, should not create a relationship where the recipient feels in some way beholden to the donor; nor should such an impression be created in the mind of the external observer.

24. **Do you consider that you have been adequately trained and/or given sufficient guidance on the appropriate handling of the media?**

Yes. I have been working in roles that involve working with the media (and doing so at a senior level) for almost 14 years. I believe that I do have sufficient knowledge as to how to work with the media

25. **Do you consider that you have been adequately trained and/or given sufficient guidance to enable you to give sound advice and/or leadership on handling the media to your staff?**



Yes. As above, I have been working in roles that involve working with the media for almost 14 years. I believe that I do have sufficient knowledge as to give sound advice to staff on how to work with the media.

26. **Do you provide training or guidance to your staff on (i) conducting and maintaining appropriate relationships with the media; (ii) accepting/offering hospitality; (iii) bribery; and (iv) requests for 'off the record' comments? If so, please specify. Does that training/guidance reflect/follow the ACPOS guidance?**

I do not provide regular training on the issues raised in the sense of my establishing training seminars, or the like). However the Media Manager – who runs the Media Team on a day to day basis – has responsibility for ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities when it comes to maintaining appropriate relationships with the media. All questions that arise that require any clarification as they relate to the points in this question would be referred to the Media Manager by the staff in the first instance and, if necessary, to myself if required.

For the avoidance of any doubt, we do not permit the staff who work within the Media Team to accept or offer hospitality to the media. Also, I do not believe that we have a culture of 'informal hospitality' i.e. Media Team staff associating with journalists. This is not a culture that I would, in any way, encourage

27. **Do you consider that press office staff feel confident that they understand what is, and what is not, appropriate contact with the media? When answering this question, please explain what you consider to be "appropriate contact" with the media.**

I believe that an appropriate relationship between the Media Team staff and the media is one that is in accordance with the job descriptions of the staff and in accordance with the law.

As stated previously, I do feel that the relationship the staff have with the media is appropriate. We do not have – nor do we encourage – a culture of socialising with the media and we do not permit staff to accept, or offer, hospitality to the media.

I am, therefore, confident, that the staff fully understand what the Force deems to be an appropriate relationship with the media.

28. **Do you consider that press office staff generally feel comfortable briefing the media and responding to media requests for information?**

Yes. I believe that the staff who work in the Media Team at Strathclyde Police are both highly skilled and highly experienced in dealing with the media. Therefore, I believe that the staff are comfortable in dealing with

media requests for information.

Should they have any doubts or questions about specific requests, they are able to discuss these requests with the Media Manager or, if necessary, myself.

29. **Do incidents that attract national media interest present particular challenges? If so, what are those challenges and do you consider that the press office is adequately equipped to respond effectively and appropriately to such media interest?**

Strathclyde Police is the largest Police Force in Scotland – having responsibility for providing policing to roughly half of Scotland’s population. It comprises around half the entire strength of the Police Forces in Scotland. It is also the case that, statistically and historically, the area that the Force covers is, sadly, home to most of the serious and violent crime in Scotland.

It is set against that context that the Media Team staff work. It is the case that the overwhelming majority of their work requires them to deal with the national media. I would therefore say that dealing with the national media does not present any particular challenges as it is, in the main, core business for the staff.

30. **What improvements, if any, do you think could or should be made to the systems, policies and/or training in your office to ensure that press office staff conduct and maintain appropriate relationships with the media?**

While I would never say that there could not be ways in which improvements could be made in this area, I do not believe that this Force and its staff have any fundamental problems in terms of their understanding of what constitutes an appropriate relationship with the media.

31. **Are you and/or your staff members of the Association of Police Communicators? From your perspective, what are the benefits of membership of this Association? Could the Association assist or assist further in ensuring that relations between police personnel and the media are appropriate. If so, how?**

Strathclyde Police staff are not members of the Association of Police Communicators.

32. **Insofar as you are able to say, to what extent are leaks from Strathclyde Police to the media and/or private detectives a problem for Strathclyde Police?**

Any large organisation dealing with issues of significant interest to the public and the media will experience leaks of information from time to time. Regrettably, Strathclyde Police has such experiences, however, I

understand them to be rare. Accordingly, then, I cannot say that I would regard such leaks (irrespective of whether they are to the media or to private detectives) as a major problem.

33. **Insofar as you are able to say, to what extent are leaks from the press office specifically to the media and/or private detectives a problem for Strathclyde Police?**

To the best of my knowledge and belief Strathclyde Police does not have a problem of information leaking to the media or private detectives from Media Team staff.

34. **What systems and procedures do you have in place in the press office, if any to identify, respond to, and detect, the sourced of leaks? Do you consider that they are effective? What changes, if any do you consider should be made?**

If there were any suggestion that a leak of information has occurred, and if there were a suggestion that the source of such a leak could be the Media Team, this would be referred to the Force Counter Corruption Unit – which sits within Professional Standards Department.

I believe that this is entirely appropriate, and do not recommend any changes to this approach.

35. **In the last five years, how many investigations have been conducted into actual or suspected leaks from the press office and how many have led to the successful identification of the source of the leak? What was the outcome of the other investigations ?**

In my time at Strathclyde Police there have not been any 'leak enquiries' conducted that centre on Media Team staff. I am not aware of any having taken place within the past 5 years.

36. **In the last five years has disciplinary action been taken against any member of press office staff for leaking information to the media and/or private detectives? Of 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.**

No.

37. **Insofar as applicable, what do you consider are the driving forces behind, or the main causes of, leaks from (i) police press offices and (ii) the police service in general?**

While I do not believe that we have a culture or a specific problem of information leaking to the media from either within the Media Team or from the Force in general, I do accept that there is the potential for this to

happen. I would suggest that the driving force which would lead to such leaks would be corruption. This corruption could either be financial in motivation, based on an inappropriate relationship, or based on a sense of misguided loyalty to an individual or individuals who could benefit from the leak. It is a corruption of a proper relationship or role.

38. **To what extent do you believe bribery of police personnel by the media to be a current problem for Strathclyde Police (if at all)?**

Again, accepting that there is always a potential for this type of situation to arise, I see no evidence in media coverage to suggest that this is a particular problem for Strathclyde Police

39. **Do you or, to your knowledge, staff working for the press office ever, give "off the record" briefings or have "off the record" conversations with the media (both local and national)? If so, please give full details and illustrative examples. Please also explain why they take place and what you consider to be the benefits of such communications.**

Staff within the Media Team will, from time to time have 'off the record' conversations with the media or will otherwise provide 'off the record' information. I use 'off the record' as a phrase to denote a release of information which is still a paper one from the Force, but it is released in circumstances where we and the media which report it do not publicly attribute it to ourselves. 'Off the record' should never be used to disseminate inaccurate or misleading information and to try to do so without responsibility being carried by us for that.

The reason for this is to ensure that incorrect reporting of information is avoided wherever possible. For example, if staff are aware that a particular part of the media is pursuing a story about a particular incident and we know that their line of reporting is inaccurate we will ensure that we tell the journalist this on an 'off the record' basis. For example, in a recent high profile murder, the media were passed information regarding who may have been responsible for carrying out the crime. The Senior Investigating Officer assured us that the basis of the media reporting was incorrect and he authorised the staff to brief the journalist 'off the record' to that effect. This briefing ensured that the story did not make it into print.

To illustrate this point, the following text is an anonymised lift from Spotlight, our media logging system:

*IF ASKED: Strathclyde Police can confirm that a 26 year-old woman has been arrested and charged in connection with an allegation of downloading inappropriate images.*

*FURTHER IF ASKED IF SHE WORKS AT THE XXXX SCHOOL. WE CAN CONFIRM THAT SHE IS AN EMPLOYEE OF THE MALLARD SCHOOL. HOWEVER STRICTLY OFF THE RECORD THE IMAGES ARE NOT OF*

*CHILDREN AT THE SCHOOL.*

*IF ASKED: IF ASKED ABOUT THE DEATH OF A 28 YEAR OLD WOMAN AND A 5 MONTH OLD BABY IN PROSPECTHILL THE FOLLOWING IF ASKED STATEMENT CAN BE GIVEN.*

*Around 0750 hours on Saturday 1 January 2011, police were called to a report that a 5 month old baby and a 28 year old woman had died in Prospecthill Crescent. Post mortem examinations will be carried out in due course. OFF THE RECORD GUIDANCE - There does not appear to be anything suspicious and it appears to have been a tragic incident.*

Our motivation for providing 'off the record' guidance is to ensure that stories are accurate and do not make it into circulation in such a way as to cause undue fear and alarm to the public. We log our 'off the record' briefings.

40. **Do you or, to your knowledge, staff working for the press office, ever confirm information for the media (ie. Information which the media have obtained from other sources) on an "off the record" basis? If so, please give details and explain why this is done.**

We may give off the record advice about names of individuals who may have been arrested or involved in an incident when it is put to us by a journalist and it clear that this information is being widely circulated in the public domain. This is done on occasions when confirming this information strictly off the record would avoid undue concern/distress to individuals who may be implicated falsely.

For example, journalists will regularly contact us and say that a murder victim is being named locally as xxxx. If this was put to us, we would either confirm or deny this information. This would then be logged on our Spotlight System.

I believe that this is entirely appropriate

41. **Insofar as applicable, what records are kept of the information shared on an "off the record" basis? Are records kept of all "off the record" briefings and the information provided at them?**

We log information that is given on an 'off the record' basis by staff in the Media Team on our Spotlight system.

42. **What do you understand "off the record" to mean in this context? Do you believe that members of the media always interpret it this way? Is there scope for the media misunderstanding the intentions of the police officer/police staff member when he/she provides information on an "off the record" basis?**

I believe that 'off the record' means in this instance that it is information is

given to the media that is not to be directly attributed to either a named Police individual or to a Police spokesperson. In other words, this is information that is to be provided as background that is not for direct, attributed quoting.

I believe that there is a shared understanding between the Police Media Team and the media in regards to this type of information. We do not have any kind of ongoing problems or issue in regards to misinterpreting this type of information. In my time at Strathclyde Police we have never had to deal with a situation where information which was provided on an 'off the record' basis has been used in an inappropriate fashion. If we did experience inappropriate use of 'Off the record' material then the media outlet in question would not receive such material again.

43. **What is your view of the practice of police officers and police staff having "off the record" communications with the media?**

My view is that the practice of providing 'off the record' information to the media, if properly motivated and properly recorded, is entirely appropriate. As outlined in my statement, I believe that incorrect information should, wherever possible, not be permitted to enter into the public domain. If background, 'off the record' information can ensure that this is the case, then it is a practice that I support.

44. **In your experience, insofar as applicable, where information is provided on an "off the record" basis, do the media tend to honour the wishes of the person providing the information? Please give illustrative examples.**

As demonstrated by the examples provided earlier in this statement, the type of 'off the record' information that we provide to the media is, in the main, factual information that is important to the media. I do not believe that the media set out to purposely report things incorrectly and, as a result, appreciate the fact that, where we can, we are able to correct information that they have that is incorrect.

Again, referring to the examples listed above, no information appeared in print or on broadcast that referred to police spokespeople or named police individuals. I believe that the media do indeed respect the person involved in giving them 'off the record' basis.

45. **In your experience, when police officers/staff ask the media to delay publishing particular information because of the risk of prejudice to a criminal investigation or future criminal trial, to what extent and in what circumstances do the media comply with the request? Please give illustrative examples.**

As stated previously, due to the competitive nature of the media in Scotland, there is always a thirst for more information and for exclusive stories. I understand, therefore, that, at times, it can be difficult for the media

to sit on information that they know is going to generate either sales or viewers/listeners. However, there have been occasions whereby we have asked the media not to run with particular information and they have complied with this.

By way of example, during the time when viable explosive devices were being sent to high profile people in Scotland linked to Celtic Football Club, I asked, at the behest of the Senior Investigating Officer for the media not to print the story for 48 hours in order for us to pursue some investigative avenues. This was an incredibly high profile story, but the media complied with our wishes and did not report it. I think that is evidence of a healthy working relationship between the Force and the media.

We have also seen, from time to time, examples whereby threat to life warnings have been issued to people and the media have become aware of it. We have asked the media not to report it and, providing we can justify the reason behind our request, the media generally accept this

- 46. In your experience, when police officer/staff ask the media not to publish particular information at all because of the risk of harm to the public interest, to what extent and in what circumstances do the media comply with the request ? Please give illustrative examples.**

The only situation that I have been involved in during my time at Strathclyde Police which would perhaps be indicative of this type of situation would be when information about an alleged bombing campaign was supplied to the media by a group purporting to be a terrorists intent on using force to break up the United Kingdom. The information that had been passed to the media was assessed and was not deemed to be credible. We, therefore, asked the media not to report it on the basis that it would give undue publicity to the group and would cause alarm to the public when it was clear that no such attack was going to take place.

The media complied with this request.

- 47. Have there been occasions where, to your knowledge, the media have obtained information (from whatever source) and voluntarily not published the information because of the harm it might do the public interest or the interests of justice; Please give examples of the circumstances in which this has occurred.**

I refer to my answers to Questions 45 and 46.

- 48. What limitations, if any, do you consider there should be on police officers and police staff leaving the police service to work for the media and vice versa ?**

I should state that we do not have such a culture within Strathclyde Police. We do have people in our Media Team who were, at one point, journalists – however, we do not regularly see people leaving us to take up a role in the

media and vice versa. We do not have a high turnover of staff.

My own personal position is that it would not be correct to try to place restrictions on people's ability to seek employment. If people behave appropriately and in accordance with their job description and the law, then I do not see the need to have a restriction like this in place for such a small group of people. I would also question the legality of such a move.

49. **In relation to dealing with the media in general, do you consider that there is a basis for applying different standards and rules to police staff from those that apply to police officers (the latter having the power of the office of constable). If so, (i) do you consider that different standards and rules should apply and (ii) please specify what you consider the difference to be.**

I do not believe that there should be different rules for Police staff and Police officers. The public regard everyone who works for the Police as being part of the same 'family' and, therefore, I believe that the same high standards that are appropriately expected of officers should be expected of staff.

50. **What is your view on the recommendations contained in the HMIC's recent report "*Without Fear or Favour*" insofar as they concern relations between the media and the police? (If you have not seen it, the report is available online).**

Throughout my statement, I have endeavoured to make clear that I do not believe that we have a particular problem with our relationship with the media, nor do I believe that we have a culture whereby inappropriate relationships, or the acceptance of hospitality, are allowed or encouraged.

That being said, it would appear to me that the HMIC recommendations appear to wish to bring a level of consistency and structure across the service. This is something that seems entirely positive

51. **What is your view of the recommendations.**

The report mentioned in this question deals with an investigation into the relationship between the Metropolitan Police Service and the Media. I do not have any comment to make beyond what I have said in my response to Question 50.

52. **Do you consider that there are different or further steps which could and/or should be taken to ensure that relationships between police personnel and the media remain appropriate?**

I have nothing useful to add to the Answer to this Question from my Chief Constable, Stephen House.



DOCUMENT REQUEST

I have no additional documents to supply to those already provided to the Inquiry along with Mr House's Statement.

Dated : 28/2/2012

Signed :

Rob Shorthouse  
Director of Corporate Communications  
Strathclyde Police