



Stop Search Disproportionality 2017/18

Introduction

The public expect the police to protect them from harm, which can be undertaken by using powers granted to them by Parliament in a proportionate legal and necessary way. In a society policing is based upon the principle of consent and the police service needs the support of the public in order to be effective. The statutory powers afforded by stop and search are provided to assist police officers in the prevention and detection of crime, and to avoid unnecessary arrests in circumstances where a quick search on the street might confirm or eliminate an officer's suspicions.

Cumbria Constabulary is a member of the Home Office Best Use of Stop Search Scheme, which introduced a number of measures designed to create greater transparency, accountability and community involvement in the use of stop and search powers.

Current figures on the Police UK website would suggest that a disproportionate number of BAME individuals are being stop and searched by Cumbria Constabulary. This report is intended to provide detailed analysis into stop and searches conducted by Cumbria Constabulary.

This report has been compiled by the Cumbria Constabulary's Business Improvement Unit, who quality assurance check all stop and searches completed by Cumbria Constabulary officers, to ensure they comply with Code A of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act Codes of Practice. The analysis within this report covers stop and search figures for the period 1st April 2017 – 31st March 2018. Population figures are taken from the 2011 Census (Office of National Statistics).

Cumbria has a large transient population of visitors, mainly tourists, who number around 49.5 million per year, who visit the Lake District National Park and public events such as festivals and other parts of Cumbria. In addition to this the M6 motorway is one of two main arterial roads linking England to Scotland, and runs through the county.

In recent years Cumbria, as with every other county in the country, has seen an increase in 'County lines' drug supply. County lines relates to the supply of class A drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) from an urban hub into rural towns or county locations. This is facilitated by a group who may not necessarily be affiliated as a gang, but who have developed networks across geographical boundaries to access and exploit existing drugs markets in these areas.

Summary

The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) population of Cumbria accounts for 1.6% of residents, compared with 15.4% nationally. As Cumbria receives 49.5 million visitors a year, this will have the effect of changing the size of the BAME population in Cumbria. However, it is not possible to say how this changes the demographic of Cumbria but, if the number of BAME visits was proportionately the same as the national average, Cumbria could receive 7.6 million visitors a year who are from the BAME population.

Members of the BAME population represent 3.5% of the stop and searches carried out by Cumbria Constabulary, so this appears to be disproportionate, however given that the number are so low, forty nine in a twelve month period, this may not be the case given there are potentially 7.6 million BAME visitors a year. Within that figure there are further disparities. On the face of it a black people are twelve times more likely to be stop and searched than a white person, whilst an Asian person is three times more likely to be searched.



However, these figures are deceiving. 84% of BAME people stop and searches are the result of specific information about specific individuals and vehicles whether on the motorway or elsewhere, which relates to those specific individuals being involved in crime whether named / identified by witnesses or are individuals involved in county lines drugs supply. The remaining 16% of stop and searches are officers engaged in pro-active policing, and utilising their powers where there are grounds for a search.

Of all the BAME individuals stop and searched there are three repeat subjects; one of whom has been stopped four times and was involved in county lines drug supply. Another male was stopped twice based on separate pieces of specific information relating to him and the third person has been stopped on the motorway twice.

Finally, the disparity in figures can be partly explained by having such low numbers of BAME residents within the county. For example, black county lines suspects have been stopped searched six times and that alone would make it appear a black person is five times more likely to be stop searched. That is not the case as these were specific pieces of information about this individual at the time they were stop and searched.

Given the number of black people who are resident in Cumbria is so small, 579 individuals, to achieve a search ratio which does not appear to be disproportionate Cumbria Constabulary would only undertake one stop and search over the reporting period. Where information exists about county lines drug supply, or there are reports from the public in relation to criminal activity Cumbria Constabulary is duty bound to act upon these reports, and respond proportionately and legally, utilising powers of search where necessary. This has the consequence of there appearing to be disproportionality, to not undertake searches in these circumstances would undermine public confidence, and would not support the prevention and detection of crime.

Methodology

The following is the total number of searches carried out in the year 2017-18 broken down to the standard 16+1 self-defined ethnicity definitions. This does allow for the ethnicity to be 'Not Stated' however, using officer defined ethnicity and other sources of information the figures have been revised to ensure greater accuracy.

	Population	Demographic	No of Searches	Searches per 1000 head population	People non Resident of Cumbria	Cumbrian Residents	Cumbrian Residents searched per 1000 head
Asian (A1-9)	2913	0.58%	25	8.58	19	6	2.06
Black (B1-9)	579	0.11%	19	32.82	7	12 ¹	20.7
Other (O1-9)	1605	0.32%	0	0	0	0	0
Mixed (M1-9)	2504	0.50%	5	2.0	2	3	1.2
Sub-Total	7621	1.6%	49	6.43	28	21	3.02
White (W1-9)	492,257	98.4%	1348	2.57	131	1134	2.3
Total	499,858	100.0%	1397	2.79	159	1155	2.31

¹ One person was searched four times, one person was searched twice, and 7 people were searched once.



Asian or British Asian (A)

Of the twenty five stop and searches carried out involving this group, nineteen of the individuals were non-Cumbria residents, with fourteen stop and searches being as a result of information they were involved in drugs supply.

Of the twenty five stop and searches completed, four were self-generated work by officers – the remaining twenty one were carried out as a result of specific intelligence received either naming the individual or they were identified by a witness. A total of three arrests resulted from these twenty five stop and searches.

Of the twenty five stop and searches undertaken twelve of them occurred on the M6 all involving people who are not Cumbria residents, one related to a reported theft, two related to use of offensive weapons and nine related to controlled drugs.

Cumbria has one prison, HMP Havering, and three stop and searches were carried out in connection with people travelling to the prison. All three people were in the same vehicle, and there was information they were involved in the supply of controlled drugs.

Black or Black British (B)

Of the nineteen stop and searches undertaken on Black people, this involving fourteen individuals. One person was searched four times, (this individual was subsequently arrested and received a custodial sentence for county lines drug supply) and a second person was searched twice, as a result of information received they were involved in drugs supply.

Two searches were as the result of specific operations, one at Kendal Calling festival and relating to burglaries which were happening in Carlisle.

In all, three of these stop searches were self-generated by officers, the remaining sixteen were all as a result of information they were involved in County Lines drugs supply or with specific or information received at the time i.e. named / identified by a witness. Of these nineteen stop and search conducted four people were arrest.

Mixed (M)

Of the five stop and searches involving people from this group, two were non-Cumbrian residents, one was self-generated work by the officer and four were from information about the individual. One stop and search related to a pre-planned firearms operation. One person was arrested as a result of these five stop and searches.



Reason for Search

Reason for search can be split into drugs, PACE and Other searches and is broken down into each group as in the table below. Searches for controlled drugs account for 60% of all searches. 68% of searches of Black subjects are for drugs, 63% for Asians and 60% for White subjects.

Reason	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	White	Total
Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (section 23) - Controlled drugs	17	12	4	0	814	842
PACE Act 1984 (section 1) - Article for use in theft	2	2	0	0	186	189
PACE Act 1984 (section 1) - Offensive Weapons	2	3	1	0	133	139
PACE Act 1984 (section 1) - Stolen goods	1	2	0	0	169	169
PACE Act 1984 (section 1) – Article for use in Criminal Damage	0	0	0	0	23	23
Other	3	0	0	0	23	22
Totals	25	19	5	0	1348	1397