

**Michael Cunningham QPM**  
HM Inspector of Constabulary

20 September 2016

By email:

Mr Steve Ashman  
Chief Constable  
Northumbria Police

Dear Steve,

**HMIC Best Use of Stop and Search (BUSS) scheme revisit assessment**

Further to my letter dated 23 June 2016, I am writing to inform you of our assessment of your force's compliance with the BUSS scheme. The revisit was carried out between 24 June 2016 and 5 August 2016, and included a review of your website and force documentation and consultation with relevant staff. Thank you for the assistance provided by your staff for this revisit.

HMIC's 2015 legitimacy inspection found that your force was not complying with three features of the scheme in 2015.

I am pleased to inform you that our recent assessment found that the force is now complying with all features of the scheme.

Our detailed assessment is set out at Annex A.

Yours sincerely



**Michael Cunningham**  
**HM Inspector of Constabulary**

cc. PCC  
Force Liaison

**Annex A: 2016 Best Use of Stop and Search (BUSS) scheme revisit assessment of Northumbria Police**

BUSS scheme feature	2016 HMIC assessment
Recording and publishing the full set of outcomes including showing the connection between outcomes and objects	<b>The force is compliant with this feature</b>
	<p>The force records and publishes the full range of stop and search outcomes. It also records and publishes whether the outcomes of searches were connected to the object(s) searched for.</p> <p>The data are published on the police.uk website. There is a clear link from the force's website to the Northumbria Police Stop and Search Overview page on the police.uk website.</p>
Providing opportunities for the public to observe the use of stop and search powers	<b>The force is compliant with this feature</b>
	<p>The force has a ride-along scheme and the force's website includes a page about the scheme. Members of the public who have completed their compulsory education can apply to participate in the scheme.</p> <p>The force gathers feedback from the observer and uses this to improve procedures. The force has measures in place designed to ensure the safety of observers.</p>
Implementing a community complaints trigger	<b>The force is compliant with this feature</b>
	<p>The force has implemented a community complaints trigger. It is activated not only by each complaint received about stop and search, but also when there is a significant change in proportionality of those that are subject of stop and search, or a single event or incident that is giving significant cause for concern amongst communities, or any other issue upon consultation with the force's stop and search lead.</p> <p>On activation, the complaint/issue is explained to independent scrutiny groups. Local police inspectors also discuss the issues with relevant local community groups.</p> <p>The force's website includes information on how to complain and the copy of the stop and search form given to subjects also includes detail on how to complain. Not all people stopped and searched are given a copy of the form, and currently the force does not ensure that those who are not given a copy are informed how to complain. The force intends to instruct officers to do so as part of training to be carried out in August 2016.</p> <p>The force should consider immediately directing all officers who use stop and search powers to, at the time of the stop and search, inform subjects how to make a complaint.</p>

<p><b>Reducing stop and search encounters made under section 60, Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994</b></p>	<p><b>The force is compliant with this feature</b></p> <p>The force's procedures in relation to searches authorised under section 60 are compliant with the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme. However, while the force's stop and search procedure document clearly sets out the procedure in respect of communicating with the public before and after the use of section 60 powers, it is not mentioned in either the flow chart (for use by authorising officers when considering authorities) or the force's stop and search policy. This could lead to searches being carried out without the required communication with the public taking place before and after the use of section 60 stop and search powers.</p>
<p><b>Monitoring the use of stop and search powers, with particular regard to the impact on black, Asian and minority ethnic people and young people</b></p>	<p><b>The force is compliant with this feature</b></p> <p>The force monitors ethnicity and age at its strategic stop and search oversight group, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the outcome rates (not just the arrest rate), by ethnicity and age;</li> <li>• the rate at which the item searched for is found, by ethnicity and age; and</li> <li>• individual officer/team data – totals, outcomes and find rate, by ethnicity and age.</li> </ul> <p>Monitoring could be enhanced by including the reason for searches (e.g. drugs) by ethnicity and age.</p>