

Race Commission call for evidence - Crime & Justice

Date: 8-10-2020

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Policing of BAME areas

There is a lack of trust between BAME communities and the police. This has much to do with the primary purpose of policing in highly populated BAME areas. These communities see the Police come into their areas to show force and arrest with prejudice Black people without showing any consideration in the way they carry out their duties.

Policing needs to be also about showing support and visibility to these communities that they also attend and have visibility to deter crimes not to let things fester and then turn up in force causing large disturbances.

Publicity of BAME crimes

Police communications to public on website, social media need to analyse by crime type to see how they highlight crimes committed by these communities. Is the coverage proportionate and is it equal for all criminal activities such as high end crimes i.e. sexual offences, drugs etc. BAME Communities feel that when crimes are committed by their communities they get significant publicity to demonstrate to other communities that they are treating foreigners and black people hard.

Submission from Sheffield Roma Network – incident of potential racism or cultural misunderstanding

We have come across one case which we felt may be racism or cultural misunderstanding from South Yorkshire Police to a Roma individual. The Roma person had brought a vehicle which had foreign plates (From Slovakia).

Context: Foreign cars that have been in Britain for more than six months in a year must be registered with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and fitted with UK plates. If the owner is judged to be a resident, they must register their car within two weeks of importing it.

The Roma person which was the owner of the vehicle with foreign plates is resident in the UK, but the vehicle was in UK for only 2 days as that Roma person was planning to take the vehicle back after the 2 week period ended. He was aware of the terms and conditions when he brought the car to the UK. He was stopped by the police at the time when the car was in UK for only 2 days.

The police officer was very rude to the Roma person and decided to seize the vehicle without even knowing how long the car was in the country. The Roma person went to the local community hub for some advice and support how to get the vehicle back as when he went to pick up the car that same police officer said to him that in order to get the vehicle back he will need to make UK insurance and road tax which is not possible without registering the vehicle and so the vehicle has to pass MOT and as the vehicle was seized it wasn't possible to make that.

When the Roma person asked for advice, he was very emotional that this has happened to him and felt it may be a case of discrimination. SRN staff decided that he will take this case, he has contacted the police officer and explained the situation and personally went with the Roma person to collect the vehicle which then there was a payment to make in order to release the car, SRN was demanding that there should not be a payment as it's wasn't his clients fault. The car was released and the case was closed with a success.