

**NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED****BY E-MAIL:**

request-206548-e01c811d@whatdotheyknow.com

19 August 2014

Dear Mr Roulston

**HMICS Freedom of Information Internal Review**

In my Email 19 May 2014 I acknowledged your request for a review, and informed you that it appeared that you had made a fresh Freedom of Information request distinct from the initial request that you were seeking a review of. Consequently I informed you that this second distinct request would be treated as a fresh request, and subsequently this was responded to you by Joanne Drapper on 10 June 2014.

As your correspondence of 12 May 2014 was being dealt with as a new request, I further asked that you inform me of your wishes of whether you still wished me to carry out an internal review.

I now understand from the Scottish Information Commissioners office that you have indicated to them that you did want a review carried out and consequently I have now completed my review of the response to your request under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) headed "Mandatory PNAC/SCC qualification for senior police officers".

Your original request on 10 April 2014 was :

*In 2008 you published the 2007/8 HMICS report which contained comments in Chapter 3 about the mandatory selection requirements for senior police officers in Scotland.*

*"In an effort to standardise this approach and to ensure that the best leaders hold chief officer positions, Scottish Ministers have determined that the Strategic Command Course (SCC) is now a mandatory qualification for all chief officer appointments. This direction came into effect on 1 January 2008 and allows for common, consistent, transparent standards and processes for appointment to chief officer posts.*

*Qualification for a place on the SCC is dependent upon successful performance at the Senior Police National Assessment Centre (S-PNAC) process. Historically, aspiring chief officers in Scotland have not been required to take part in this rigorous, UK-wide selection process.*

*It is anticipated that new SCC graduates will fill existing and future posts across Scotland. Meantime, I note the extensive practice of non- SCC qualified officers holding temporary chief officer positions on an extended basis within a number of forces. I have expressed concerns about the cumulative impact of long-term temporary appointments on the operational effectiveness of Scottish policing,*



*particularly in relation to handling critical incidents. At the end of 2007-08 almost a third of chief officer posts in Scotland are occupied by individuals who, whatever their merits, have not undergone formal, consistent training in strategic command. While we understand that such appointments are being made in the hope and expectation that temporary post-holders will be successful at S-PNAC in the autumn of 2008, we will continue to monitor the situation”.*

*The report then goes on to say that we (HMICS) will continue to monitor the situation (with no specific details on how that monitoring will be achieved)*

*Could I please have details of any such monitoring that has been reported by HMICS to Scottish Government by HMICS in the intervening 5 year period to include formal/interim reports, briefing notes, emails, presentations, analysis of personnel records confirming both successful and unsuccessful attendance at said courses, financial projections of the costs of temporary promotions during that period together with associated projections of increased pension liabilities accruing from said temporary promotions, minutes from meetings where the matter was discussed etc.*

On 12 May 2014 Joanne Drapper from HMICS responded to your request, the following being the relevant excerpt from her correspondence, which included a link to the full HMICS Annual Report 2008-9 :

“Our aim is to provide information whenever possible. However, in this instance, some of the information you have requested is not held by HMICS. According to our records and our Annual Report for 2008-09, page 14 comments on the subject:

*The Scottish Career Development Service (SCDS)<sup>21</sup> was introduced in 2008. Its purpose is to enhance leadership capacity and resilience in order to ensure that there are sufficient officers and staff to meet the growing leadership challenges at the top of the police service. As related in last year’s report, the Strategic Command Course (SCC) is now a mandatory qualification for all chief officer appointments in Scotland. Qualification for a place on the SCC is dependent upon a successful performance at the Senior Police National Assessment Centre (S-PNAC). The comprehensive support and guidance provided by SCDS to senior Scottish staff selected to attend the S-PNAC contributed to the record success of nine Scottish police officers and one senior support staff from 20 initial candidates in 2008.*

<http://hmics.org/sites/default/files/publications/HMICS%20Annual%20Report%202008-09.pdf>”

When reviewing your initial request above, I note you included :

*“.....While we understand that such appointments are being made in the hope and expectation that temporary post-holders will be successful at S-PNAC in the autumn of 2008, we will continue to **monitor the situation**”.*

*The report then goes on to say that we (HMICS) will continue to **monitor the situation** (with no specific details on how that monitoring will be achieved)*

*Could I please have details of any such monitoring that has been reported by HMICS to Scottish Government by HMICS.*

*Could I please have details of any **such monitoring** that has been reported by HMICS to Scottish Government by HMICS.....”*

On reviewing the HMICS Annual Report 2007-8 the only mention of the term “**monitor the situation**” is at the end of the section from pages 12 and 13 which you quoted from above. Further, from reading the preceding paragraphs I would submit that the “situation” referred to is, in summary, the position circa 2007-8 surrounding :

*“.....the extensive practice of **non- SCC qualified** officers holding **temporary chief officer positions** on an **extended basis**....”*

and

*“.....concerns about the cumulative impact of **long-term temporary appointments** on the operational effectiveness of Scottish policing.....”*

and

*“.....**At the end of 2007-08 almost a third of chief officer posts in Scotland** are occupied by individuals who, whatever their merits, have not undergone formal, consistent training in strategic command.....”*

It is in this context that the next sentence :

*“.....While we understand that such appointments are being made in the hope and **expectation** that temporary post-holders will be successful at S-PNAC in the autumn of 2008, we will continue to **monitor the situation**”.*

was made – i.e. monitor the extended use of temporary non-qualified officers in the expectation they will pass S-PNAC (the SCC assessment centre).

Consequently, the information provided to you through the provision of the HMICS Annual Report 2008-9 provides both an update and comment on these area's. In addition, a further quote which may assist on page 14 from the information provided to you (and following on from the short excerpt that your attention was drawn to) being :

*During 2008-09 there was an unprecedented turnover of chief officers posts in Scotland. A total of 12 such posts, including three chief constable positions, were advertised. This situation re-emphasises the need for talent management and nurturing of future chief officers. The opportunities and experience to be gained from policing in Scotland are increasingly attracting candidates from south of the border and Northern Ireland. I welcome the diversity of experience that such candidates are bringing to the police service in Scotland.*

*In terms of the numbers of potential leaders and their preparation for future challenges, the Service is therefore in a very healthy position. It is also fully supported by the Scottish Government:*

***“ The key to the police service's ability to respond is not just its size, but its capacity. The right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time.”***

*Kenny MacAskill, Cabinet Secretary for Justice*



This information from the HMICS Annual Report 2008-9 provided to you indicates that the situation had been *monitored* and was now being *reported* on - i.e. 10 candidates were successful at S-PNAC, 12 Chief Officer posts were advertised, and that :

*“In terms of the numbers of potential leaders and their preparation for future challenges, the Service is therefore in a very healthy position.”*

I note that the response provided to you on 12 May 2014 included the following :

“.....some of the information you have requested is not held by HMICS. According to our records and our Annual Report for 2008-09, page 14 comments on the subject:....”

This indicates that some information requested is either not held by HMICS, or alternatively comment is provided on the subject (i.e. the monitoring and reporting on the position circa 2007-8) in the HMICS Annual Report 2008-9. When carrying out this review I have been unable to locate any other information held within HMICS detailing any further monitoring of the situation circa 2007-8 as described in the HMICS Annual Report 2007-8 than was indicated in the response made to you on 12 May 2014.

Taking all of the above into account I have therefore concluded that the specific request made 10 April 2014 and responded to on 12 May 2014 was appropriately dealt with and responded to.

As previously indicated in my correspondence of the 19 May 2014, the additional information you provided on 12 May 2014 :

*“What **quality control process** is/was in place during the past six years to **confirm** that candidates had the **correct credentials before being appointed** to senior police officer positions.”*

and the further information provided on the 21 May 2014 is distinct from your original “**any such monitoring**” query regarding the text from the HMICS Annual Report 2007-8, the subject matter of which related to the specific circumstances circa 2007-8 where there was an extensive practise involving *extended use of temporary non-qualified officers*.

I do however note that this distinct request of the 12 May 2014, and the further information provided by yourself on the 21 May 2014, was in fact responded to separately by Joanne Drapper on 10 June 2014.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of this review you have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner about our decision within 6 months of receiving this letter.

You can contact the Commissioner at:



The Scottish Information Commissioner  
Kinburn Castle  
Doubledykes Road  
St Andrews  
Fife  
KY16 9DS  
E-mail: [enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info)  
Telephone: 01334 464610

Should you then wish to appeal against the Commissioner's decision, there is a right of appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

Kind Regards

Kevin

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