

*Commission
on Women and the
Criminal Justice
System*

Interim Report on
**Women Working
in the Criminal
Justice System**

We are grateful for the support of our funders:



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introduction

INTRODUCTION

The Commission on Women and the Criminal Justice System has now completed its third and final phase of evidence gathering. In our first phase of work on female victims and witnesses we found that victims of crime face a geographical 'lottery' in the way they are treated by criminal justice, as well as non-criminal justice, agencies. Our work on female offenders highlighted how women, who are a minority of known offenders, are shoe-horned into a system which is designed for men and consequently fails to meet their needs. We have made recommendations in these two areas which we believe would lead to a better and more just way of dealing with women victims and offenders.

The Commission's third phase of work has examined the experiences of women who work in all sectors of the criminal justice system. We have been gathering evidence at a crucial time: the Government has proposed changes to the method of appointing judges and has announced that the Prison and Probation Services will be merged into a single National Offender Management Service.

The criminal justice system is a vast machinery that employs hundreds of thousands of people in the Police Service, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Probation Service, the courts, the legal profession, the judiciary and in the Prison Service. Whilst women work in all areas it is immediately apparent from the following statistics that they are not fully represented in the most senior positions:

- One woman out of 12 judges in the House of Lords
- Five women out of 43 police Chief Constables
- 18 women out of 42 Chief Officers of Probation

- 7 women out of 42 Chief Crown Prosecutors
- 31 women out of 138 Prison Governing Governors

Crime is largely a male activity thus, when dealing with offenders, women who work in the criminal justice system will primarily be dealing with men. This may explain why, for much of the last century, the criminal justice system was not seen as an appropriate place for women to work. As one prison probation officer told us *"I have often heard it said that 'Women should not be working in prisons.'"* In fact the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), a body created in 1985, has a largely female workforce, as has the Probation Service since the late 1980s.

We believe that a modern, democratic society requires a diverse workforce in all areas of life. But this is especially important in the system that dispenses justice where the lack of female participation in senior positions has meant that women's views, voices and perspectives have been absent. This is a critical issue, even in dealing with men – for instance rape complainants, both male and female, prefer to be examined by a female Forensic Medical Examiner (FME)¹ but whilst 35% of GPs are women, only 18% of FMEs are.² It is no coincidence that, as demonstrated in our previous two reports, women's needs have not been met.

It is almost 30 years since implementation of the Equal Pay Act and Sex Discrimination Act outlawed discrimination in the workplace on the grounds of sex. However we have found that there are discriminatory cultures and practices throughout the criminal justice system which serve to exclude many women from the top jobs. These include; pay differentials, under-representation in senior positions, ghettoisation in certain areas or professions, sexual

harassment, inadequate complaints systems, issues around maternity leave and pay and inflexible work arrangements for those with caring responsibilities.

METHODOLOGY

Our work got off to an excellent start on 22nd October 2003 with a hearing attended by the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commissioner for Judicial Appointments and the British Association of Women in Policing. Issues discussed ranged from methods of appointing judges, sexual harassment of women prison staff and protective clothing for female police officers. We subsequently held a policy seminar at New Scotland Yard at which we heard about a broad range of matters affecting women working in all areas of the criminal justice system.

As before, we distributed questionnaires to individual women as well as organisations. In light of the Government's consultation on judicial appointments we thought it particularly important to get the views of women judges and we therefore distributed a questionnaire specifically aimed at this group of women.

The Commission has received many written submissions in this phase of work and we are very grateful to all those who have participated either at events or in the form of written evidence. The evidence we have gathered is qualitative rather than quantitative and we have supported our findings by reference to existing research. There is notably more published research in some areas, women and policing in particular, than others.

In this report we have considered the issues that arise for women employees in each sector of the criminal justice system and this broadly follows the legal process, as our previous reports on victims and offenders have done.

POLICE SERVICE

The first women police officers were volunteers in the First World War and women were not paid until after the war when the Metropolitan Police opened its doors to female recruits. From the very beginning there was a sexual division of labour with female officers dealing with women offenders, child neglect and other family matters. Integration into the 'mainstream' police force took place following the sex discrimination legislation of the 1970s, however commentators argue that the police service remains "deeply gendered at structural, cultural, and individual levels."³

Two hundred thousand men and women are employed throughout the 43 police forces of England and Wales, the majority of whom (67%) are police officers.⁴ There are 66,000 police (civilian) staff, of whom two-thirds are women. The Metropolitan Police Service is the largest employer, accounting for one in five police officers. Throughout the 43 police forces women represent 19% of all police officers but are concentrated in the lowest ranks forming one in five police constables but less than one in ten chief police officers.⁵

In 1995, the first woman was appointed to the position of Chief Constable to head a police force and today five out of the 43 Chief Constables are women. In addition to police officers, there are now 11,000 Special Constables and in September 2002 Community Support Officers (CSOs) started work on the streets of London to focus on lower level crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. The National Policing Plan target is for 4000 CSOs nation wide by March 2004.⁶ Women form approximately one third of these staff creating a more gender-balanced workforce overall - it is hoped that the better gender balance will filter through to the officer ranks.

Police forces are highly structured organisations and moving through the ranks can be a long process which disadvantages women who take career breaks for caring responsibilities. Marisa Silvestri argues that "The work of policing, and by implication the lives of police officers, is structured to accommodate a male chronology of continuous and uninterrupted employment."⁷

The High Potential Development Scheme is a fast-tracking scheme credited with assisting many talented women in being promoted. Consideration should now be given to how such schemes could help black and minority ethnic policewomen who face double discrimination.⁸

The Commission heard anecdotal evidence at the policy seminar at New Scotland Yard on 3rd November 2003 that male officers tend to have a 'give it a go' attitude to applying for jobs, whereas women tend to wait until they feel they are competent for the position. This is supported by research by Jennifer Brown and Frances Heidensohn who found that, although women's aspirations for higher rank have increased, men are more likely to apply for promotion.⁹

The Commission had the benefit of hearing from Julie Spence, Assistant Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police and President of the British Association of Women in Policing (BAWP) which has campaigned for changes to the recruitment-related fitness test. Whilst 'physicality' is very important to police identity from the early stages of a police career,¹⁰ the BAWP argues that the fitness test disadvantages women as it focuses on upper body strength, which is much more of a male characteristic, and does not reflect modern day policing methods. The BAWP's campaign led to the Home Office last year announcing changes to the test which could lead to 5,000 more women joining the police service annually.¹¹ The BAWP

has also successfully campaigned to ensure that equipment and protective clothing, traditionally designed for men, are tailored for women.

As a result of the sexual division of labour that operated until the 1970s, women officers have often found themselves working in specialisms perceived to be 'women's areas', such as sexual offences and child protection, which historically have been low in status. In recent years increasing numbers of male officers have begun to specialise in these areas and participants at the policy seminar noted how this increasing male presence has led to higher status. Conversely, women officers are significantly under-represented in other areas, such as crime detection which has traditionally been seen as high status work – and mainly male. Many police forces are making serious efforts to tackle this and the Commission warmly welcomes initiatives such as the Metropolitan Police Service's training programme which specifically aims to increase female and ethnic minority representation at the rank of detective inspector. We recommend that such schemes should be rolled out nationally.

Studies in the early 1990s indicated high levels of sexual harassment in the police service.¹² This is a form of discrimination which, if not dealt with adequately, is not only often very damaging for the individual victim, but can be costly to the organisation resulting in loss of talent, low staff morale and a poor public image. It is argued that, historically, progress has been slow and that change has been driven by litigation by brave individuals, rather than positive initiatives from the top.¹³ However this culture may be changing.

The BAWP was active in developing The Gender Agenda, an initiative launched in 2001 to "tackle issues around equipment, clothing, work environment, recruitment, flexible working and balancing a successful career and home life."¹⁴ The

Gender Agenda is widely supported by Chief Constables, the Home Office, police associations and others and is now part of the National Policing Plan. We were delighted to hear of this initiative and wait to see if this positive policy step will translate into best practice across forces. Some commentators¹⁵ have argued that, despite the best efforts of many individual officers and forces, more systemic discrimination means that it will not have the impact that it deserves.

LEGAL PROFESSION AND CROWN PROSECUTION SERVICE

In England and Wales, unlike in the United States and other jurisdictions, the legal profession is divided. Barristers provide specialist advice and courtroom advocacy and solicitors provide a range of services from representing suspects in the police station to preparing cases and representing defendants in court.

1922 was a historic year for women in the legal profession as it saw the first woman to be admitted as a solicitor and the first woman to be called to the bar. Today women represent 40% of the 90,000 solicitors with practising certificates¹⁶ and 30% of the 11,000 barristers.¹⁷ Increasing numbers of women are seeking careers in the law; more women than men study law as a first degree, and women law graduates obtain better degrees than men.¹⁸

Training to become a solicitor or a barrister is an expensive process involving further courses and a period as a trainee in a law firm or barristers chambers before qualifying and the Bar Council recently rejected a scheme of pooled funding for pupillages which would have assisted black and minority ethnic pupils in particular.

The Law Society has found that women starting a training contract in a law firm are paid on average 7% less than men and that the gap is

widening.¹⁹ This is a trend that continues throughout their careers; female assistant solicitors earn on average £12,500 less than men, possibly because of the size of firm where they work and type of law that they practice.²⁰ As in other sectors, women dominate in specialisms perceived to be most suited to their caring role (such as family law) but are under-represented in other areas.

Experienced women lawyers still find it difficult to break through the glass ceiling. Of solicitors with 10-19 years experience in law firms, over 80% of men are partners or sole practitioners compared with only 55% of women.²¹ There is concern that many women solicitors are leaving the profession in their thirties, just at a time when they could become partners and the Law Society has commissioned research to discover the reasons behind this loss of talent.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a similar exodus from the bar at a time in their lives when women are looking to start a family. Women barristers face particular problems around maternity leave and pay because they are self-employed. If a woman wishes to retain her tenancy in chambers during maternity leave she may be required to continue paying rent during a period when she has no income. The Bar Council is currently developing a model maternity leave policy which individual chambers will be invited to adopt as a minimum standard. We believe that rent free periods during maternity and paternity leave would be good practice that should be adopted by all chambers.

Around 1,100 barristers have been awarded the rank of Queen's Counsel (QC, also known as taking Silk) which means they can take on larger and more complex work and can charge higher fees. Only 8% of Queen's Counsel are women. Applications to become Silk are made to the Lord

Chancellor with a fee, and there then follows a consultation process (sometimes called soundings) amongst the judiciary and senior lawyers before appointments are made. This process takes place annually and appointments are made by the Queen on the advice of the Lord Chancellor. The consultation process for appointing judges is similar (see below) and the two recruitment processes are linked since the senior judiciary are usually drawn from the ranks of Silks.

The last decade has seen serious criticism of the way the senior judiciary is appointed and a review of the process was undertaken by Sir Leonard Peach. The Peach Report in 1999 led to the establishment of the Commission for Judicial Appointments (CJA) whose remit is to audit the selection procedures and act as an ombudsman for the judicial and silk appointments process but not to make appointments.

We took evidence from the CJA at a hearing on 22nd October 2003. It has found that the criteria to be made Silk are so unsystematic as to be subjective and that *"some consultees' comments appeared to be influenced by a perception of a 'Silk mould' ie that applicants needed to conform to expectations as to appearance, dress, educational or social background and other irrelevant factors."*²² In addition, the consultation process is heavily weighted towards the views of the senior judiciary - a homogenous group of white males. Applicants who are less well known are at a disadvantage. The CJA noted that whilst there has been an increase in the number of ethnic minority lawyers awarded Silk (albeit from a very low base) this is not true of female or solicitor applicants.

The Government has recently consulted on whether the system of Silk should be abolished drawing a wide range of views from across the

profession. Recent improvements to the system do not satisfy its critics and the Law Society has described the system as essentially *"a public honour to a private group, which is inappropriate in this modern age."*²³ The Association of Women Barristers (AWB) believes that the reliance on 'soundings' instead of references discriminates against women, black and minority ethnic lawyers and solicitors. On the other hand others, including the Bar Council, argue strongly that the Silk system should be retained on the grounds that it is in the public interest and provides a career path for barristers.

We believe that a modern legal system requires a profession where a quality mark is awarded through a transparent and objective process, as happens in other professions and areas of public life. Any future method of awarding quality should involve a system of assessment that indicates a high standard of work and is linked to ongoing assessment and auditing, with the possibility of removal if standards fall below the required level.

The Commission recognises that there is no single solution to the systemic inequalities facing women and minority lawyers and we therefore believe that the Law Society and Bar Council should continue their efforts to ensure their members take proper account of diversity during recruitment processes. We look forward to the Bar Council's forthcoming survey of those who have left the profession and we fully support cohort studies such as that started by the Law Society, although we are concerned that this may not be continued.

We recommend that both branches of the legal profession should carry out research, including Equal Pay Reviews as recommended by the Equal Opportunities Commission, and long term studies which would pinpoint where the

problems of retention and recruitment lie. Tackling inequality in the legal profession is hampered by patchy data (on pay differentials, gender differences in career patterns and why women are leaving the profession) and without this information it will be very difficult to address inequalities in the future.

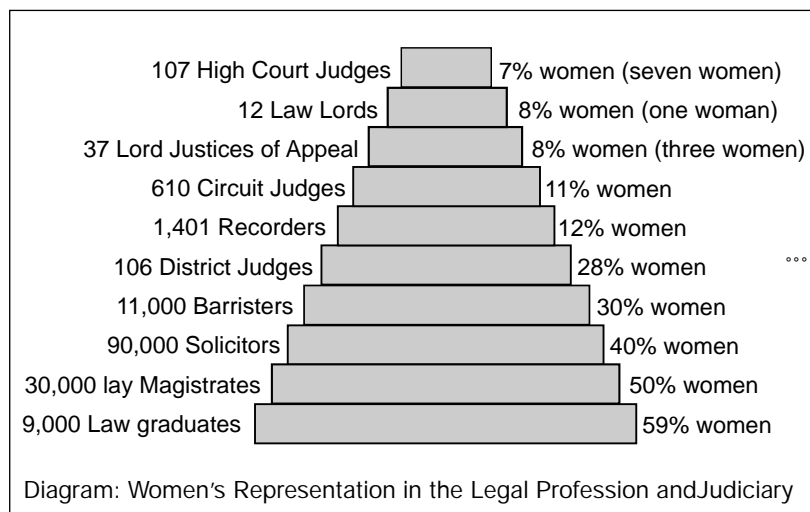
The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) was created in 1985 to prosecute people who are charged by the police with a criminal offence. It is involved at every stage of a case from investigation through to sentence and so is a crucial part of the criminal justice system. The CPS employs over 7,000 staff, of whom 2,500 are lawyers. Its head is the Director of Public Prosecutions and each of the 42 CPS areas are headed by a Chief Crown Prosecutor, seven of whom are women. Two-thirds of CPS staff are women, although mainly concentrated in the lower grades. A quarter of staff at Senior Civil Service level, which includes both top lawyers and top administrators, are female.

In an attempt to redress the gender imbalance in the higher grades, the Law Officers have introduced the CPS Law Scholarship Scheme. This is a comprehensive education and training scheme that offers financial assistance for administrative and other non-legal employees who wish to qualify in law. It offers a career path from administrator to Crown Prosecutor and aims to "broaden the profession more generally encouraging women and minority ethnic students to become qualified."²⁴ In due course it could help widen the pool from which the judiciary are drawn as CPS staff are now allowed to apply for some judicial posts.

The scheme is six months old and recent figures show that around 75% of the law scholars are women and at least 20% are from black and minority ethnic groups.²⁵ The Commission applauds this achievement and believes that such schemes offer an excellent opportunity for the criminal justice system to utilise the talent of all its employees.

JUDICIARY

The judiciary performs a key function in any legal system. In England and Wales 96% of criminal cases are dealt with in the magistrates' courts by lay magistrates, who are unpaid and sit in twos and threes, and professionally qualified District Judges (formerly known as stipendiary magistrates) who sit alone. Recorders (part-time judges) and Circuit Judges hear cases in the Crown Court, and the High Court hears more serious criminal cases. The appellate courts are the Court of Appeal and the House of Lords (soon to be the Supreme Court), the highest court in the land.



It is immediately apparent that women lack representation throughout most of the judiciary and that this is particularly the case in the senior judiciary. As the Government's consultation on judicial appointments states, "The judiciary is overwhelmingly white, male, and from a narrow

social and educational background."²⁶ Women were first admitted to the legal profession in the early part of the last century, yet it is only this year that the first woman was appointed to the highest judicial body, the House of Lords.

It is noteworthy that women represent 40% of District and Deputy District Judges in the civil courts who deal with family law and other matters compared with 25% of District and Deputy District Judges in the magistrates' courts. This reflects the historical over-representation of women in some areas of law and under-representation in others.

The selection process is very different across different parts of the judiciary and although traditionally there has been no career path which leads from District Judges in the magistrates' court to the Crown Court, we note that more District Judges are sitting as Recorders and being appointed Circuit Judges. Senior judges in the House of Lords (Law Lords) and Court of Appeal (Lords Justices of Appeal) are appointed by the Queen on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, who in turn is advised by the Lord Chancellor. High Court Judges are appointed by the Queen on the recommendation of the Lord Chancellor. In all cases the Lord Chancellor consults senior members of the profession about candidates.

The recruitment process for magistrates and tribunal chairs, who are a more diverse group, is more transparent and open and we are aware of a number of positive action schemes in the lower courts which are helping to increase diversity. These include a programme to encourage more women and black and minority ethnic justices' clerks and a magistrates shadowing scheme, jointly developed by Operation Black Vote and the Department for Constitutional Affairs.

The Commission for Judicial Appointments has found a number of serious flaws with the current process for appointing judges, in particular the meaning of 'merit' and the consultation process. It has seen evidence of senior consultees referring to the dress sense or marital status of women candidates.²⁷ The CJA says in its recent Annual Report "We have built up a picture of a wider systemic bias in the way that the judiciary and the legal profession operate that affects the position of women, ethnic minority candidates and solicitors in relation to Silk and judicial appointments."

The Discrimination Law Association (DLA) argues that the current appointments process for senior judges may be unlawful under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Race Relations Act 1976. There are few women and no black and minority ethnic judges in the higher courts which is the pool from which the very highest echelons are drawn. Recruiting on the basis that experience in the High Court is essential when that is confined to this narrow social pool excludes otherwise qualified candidates and may be indirectly discriminatory.

The need to be 'known' in order to be recommended by senior judges also disadvantages women and black and minority ethnic candidates who tend to be outside traditional networks. Further, research shows that it discourages them from applying in the first place.²⁸ It is also argued that there is a danger in one person alone making appointments, ie the Lord Chancellor, as there is increased risk of personal prejudice or bias and 'cloning'. The Commission for Judicial Appointments states in its Annual Report 2003 "We reject the notion that the 'trickle up' of women and ethnic minority practitioners from the lower ranks of the profession will redress the lack of diversity in the judiciary."

The Constitutional Affairs Select Committee took evidence about judicial appointments at the end of last year. Much of the evidence stressed the need for the new system to address the under-representation of women and ethnic minority lawyers. There is widespread recognition of the need for a judiciary that reflects the community it serves in order to ensure public confidence in the work of the courts and the evidence we have gathered supports this. Whilst we do not suggest that women's judicial decision-making is of a higher calibre than men's, we believe that a judiciary drawn from a wider background will improve its overall quality by bringing a broader range of views and experiences to the bench and to the culture which underpins it.

The Government has recently announced that the new independent Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) will have the primary responsibility for appointments and the Secretary of State will have the final decision, although she or he will have strictly limited powers to challenge the JAC's recommendation. The principle of appointment solely on merit is fundamental.

One of the prime purposes of establishing the Commission is to address the poor gender and ethnic mix of the current judiciary. It is therefore vital that the new body prioritises diversity issues at the start of its work. We believe that in constructing the recruitment process the Commission should be required to take diversity into account to ensure that the pool of candidates is drawn more broadly than at present. It is interesting to note the example of the South African constitution which says *"The need for the judiciary to reflect broadly the racial and gender composition of South Africa must be considered when judicial officers are appointed."*²⁹

PROBATION AND PRISON SERVICE

During the course of our research on women working in the criminal justice system the Home Secretary has announced that, following the Carter Review on Correctional Services, the Probation and Prison Services will be merged into a new National Offender Management Service. This is likely to have significant implications for those employed within these organisations.

Probation was, until recently, a service run locally. In 2001 the National Probation Service (NPS) was established as part of the Home Office with 42 local probation areas. It has a relatively flat structure with 8,000 probation officers and 10,000 other staff.³⁰ Since the 1980s, the Probation Service has been a female-dominated profession. Women represent 75% of non-officer employees and 61% of main grade probation officers.³¹ The gender balance at senior levels in the Probation Service is significantly better than other criminal justice agencies; 50% of senior grade probation officers and 18 of the 42 Chief Officers of Probation are women.³²

The Prison Service employs around 47,000 people including medical staff, psychologists, prison chaplains and civil servants. Around half of all Prison Service employees are prison officers who have daily contact with prisoners and are crucial to the working life of the prison. Women represent 32% of prison officers, although concentrated in the lower grades and in 1999 35% of new recruits were female.³³

Alison Liebling notes³⁴ that the typical prison officer is a white male, aged 30-40 with around 10 years experience. Women officers are less likely to be married with dependent children, and they have higher levels of education. They are paid less than men, on average, which may reflect the fact that they are concentrated in more junior positions and do not have the same length of service as their

male counterparts.³⁵ Whilst female officers and governors³⁶ are more often found in female prisons, in recent years there has been a policy of placing female staff in men's prisons and vice versa in an attempt to normalise the prison environment. Whilst there are many positive benefits to such an approach, cases of sexual harassment tend to occur where women are isolated and it is only when there are sufficient numbers that there will be some protection from this.

The National Association of Probation Officers (NAPPO) argues that both services are facing an unparalleled crisis in recruitment and funding.³⁷ The Commission has received evidence which may explain some of the reasons for this. One probation officer told us *"Women and men do not have the same opportunities....for example child-care responsibility breaks affect women more than men. Women have the same opportunities when first joining but then the male dominance of the criminal justice system kicks in."* It is argued that 'effective working practices', as measured by performance indicators and quantifiable outcomes, establishes an environment where those who achieve in the workplace are 'unencumbered' by what are perceived to be low status domestic responsibilities.³⁸

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) gave evidence to us at a hearing on 22nd October 2003 about women's under-representation at all levels in the Prison Service and the disproportionately large number of complaints of sexual harassment they receive from female prison staff. The EOC has found that the culture of harassment can be reinforced by a failure to address complaints adequately and to provide support mechanisms for complainants.

The case of Salmon in 2001 highlights this issue. Ms Salmon was one of only three women out of 120 officers working in a men's prison and was

subjected to ongoing sexual comments which resulted eventually in her being medically retired with depression. The Employment Tribunal that dealt with Ms Salmon's case found that the Prison Service had allowed a humiliating working environment for women officers. For example, male officers openly read pornography and engaged constantly in sexual banter.

Similar issues have been raised with the Commission. A prison probation officer told us *"I have experienced sexist jokes, comments and behaviour both from colleagues and prisoners. It undermines your confidence, affects your well-being, physical health and self-esteem."*

We urge the Prison Service to ensure that its Equality Action Plans fully address the problems that women prison officers face. The EOC has highlighted the need for Prison Governors to take a strong lead in tackling sexual harassment. We feel it is equally important that representative organisations, such as the Prison Officers Association, proactively challenge discriminatory practices and support individual women who complain of discriminatory treatment.

The Probation Inspectorate has recently published a follow-up report to its thematic inspection on race equality in 2000 which helped to encourage race diversity within the Probation Service. We believe that a thematic inspection on sex equality would similarly help to pinpoint discriminatory practices and cultures that female employees experience and identify ways of preventing the loss of able staff from the service.

This report has highlighted the differences between the female-dominated Probation Service and male-dominated Prison Service. It is of note that many of the submissions received by the Commission about the problem of sexual harassment in prisons have come from prison

conclusions and recommendations

probation officers – ie outsiders whose own organisation has a very different culture. We are concerned about the internal impact, as well as the implications for service provision, of merging two such different cultures under the new National Offender Management Service. This restructuring will not be successful unless a great deal of attention is paid to equality, particularly sex equality.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have found that organisational cultures exist in certain parts of the criminal justice system which systematically disadvantage women, particularly as staff, but also, as we have detailed in our earlier interim reports, as service users. We noted in our report on women and offending how the announcement of a Commission for Equality and Human Rights has highlighted the need for consistent equality legislation. There is now a positive duty on statutory bodies to promote race quality, but not sex equality. The evidence the Commission has gathered on women working in the criminal justice system indicates that there is a pressing need for a positive duty on all public bodies, including those within the criminal justice system, to promote sex equality.

We therefore make the following recommendations:

- The Sex Discrimination Act should be amended to ensure that all public bodies, including those in the criminal justice system, promote equality of opportunity between the sexes.
- Positive action schemes, such as the Metropolitan Police Service's training programme which specifically aims to increase female and ethnic minority representation at the rank of detective inspector, should be rolled out nationally across all police forces.

- The Law Society and Bar Council should continue their efforts to ensure their members take diversity into account during recruitment processes.
- Both bodies should, in addition, carry out further research including Equal Pay Reviews, as recommended by the EOC, and cohort studies which would pinpoint where problems of retention and recruitment lie.
- Rent free periods during maternity and paternity leave should be adopted as good practice by all chambers.
- Any future system of indicating quality in the legal profession should involve a system of assessment that indicates a high standard of work and is linked to ongoing assessment and auditing, with the possibility of removal if standards fall below the required level.
- In constructing the recruitment process the new Judicial Appointments Commission should be required to take diversity into account to ensure that the pool of candidates is drawn more broadly than at present.
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation should carry out a thematic inspection on sex equality to help pinpoint discriminatory practices and cultures that female employees experience and identify ways of preventing the loss of able staff from the service.
- The Prison Service should fully address sexual harassment in its Equality Action Plan. The Prison Officers Association should proactively challenge discriminatory practices and support individual women who complain of discriminatory treatment.

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