Hate Crimes against London's Muslim Communities

An analysis of incidents recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service 2005-2012

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METROPOLITAN POLICE

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Contents

Acknowledgements

Abbreviations

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
AMP	Association of Muslim Police
CRIS	Crime Report Information System
CSU	Community Safety Unit (a unit in each of the 32 boroughs across London that contains specially trained officers who investigate domestic violence and hate crimes)
CT-SET	Communities Together Strategic Engagement Team, Metropolitan Police Service
DCFD	Diversity and Citizen Focus Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service
DMC	Directorate of Media and Communications, Metropolitan Police Service
EDL	English Defence League
EPU	Corporate Development Evaluation and Performance Unit, Metropolitan Police Service
IIO	Initial Investigating Officer
IIP	Integrated Information Platform (a Google like search engine that is able to search multiple crime and intelligence information recording systems and databases within the Metropolitan Police Service)
IO	Investigating Officer
KIN	Key Individual Networks
MAMA	Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks (MAMA is a public service for measuring and monitoring anti-Muslim attacks)
MOPAC	Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
MP	Member of Parliament
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service, London
MSF	Muslim Safety Forum
NAMP	National Association of Muslim Police
NCTT	National Community Tension Team
NF	National Front
OCU	Operational Command Unit
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
PND	Penalty Notice for Disorder
SD	Sanction Detection
SIO	Senior Investigating Officer
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TP	Territorial Policing Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service
TP CBS OCU	Territorial Policing Capability and Business Support Operational Command Unit (a unit that supports boroughs to drive continuous improvement and performance across the MPS. It contains the CSU Service Delivery Team, which has the strategic and policy lead with overall responsibility for MPS delivery on domestic violence and hate crime performance and compliance)

Terminology

There are a number of terms that are used throughout this report that require a brief comment: Islamophobia and Islamophobic or anti-Muslim hate crime.

Islamophobia

The authors are aware that there is a wide debate around the term 'Islamophobia'[1]. However, for the purposes of this report the definition outlined in the Runnymede Trust's 1997 report '*Islamophobia: A Challenge For Us All*' will be used. This definition is widely accepted, including by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) (previously known as the Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia).

According to this definition, the eight components of Islamophobia are:

1. Islam is seen as a monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to change.
2. Islam is seen as separate and 'other'. It does not have values in common with other cultures, is not affected by them and does not influence them.
3. Islam is seen as inferior to the West. It is seen as barbaric, irrational, primitive and sexist.
4. Islam is seen as violent, aggressive, threatening, supportive of terrorism and engaged in a 'clash of civilisations'.
5. Islam is seen as a political ideology and is used for political or military advantage.
6. Criticisms made of the West by Islam are rejected out of hand.
7. Hostility towards Islam is used to justify discriminatory practices towards Muslims and exclusion of Muslims from mainstream society.
8. Anti-Muslim hostility is seen as natural or normal.

Islamophobic or anti-Muslim hate crime

Throughout this report crimes and incidents targeted at Muslims have been variously referred to as Islamophobic incidents or crimes and anti-Muslim incidents or crimes. The terms are interchangeable. 'Islamophobic' hate crime is the more commonly accepted term and is used by the Metropolitan Police Service in recording and referring to such incidents. However, the authors prefer to use the term 'anti-Muslim' hate crime in recognition that these incidents are often targeted at the negative stereotype and misperception of Muslims that perpetrators hold rather than any fear or hatred of Islam per se.

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[1] See Allen, C. (2010) for an in-depth discussion of how Islamophobia is defined and understood.

Definitions

'Accused' person
A suspect who has been charged, cautioned or had other proceedings taken against them.

Community Safety Unit
A Community Safety Unit is a police unit located in each of the 32 London boroughs that contains specially trained officers who investigate hate crime and domestic violence incidents and crimes.

Crime Related Incident
This is an incident that may not constitute a criminal offence when first reported but is still recorded as a serious matter by the police. As similarly outlined in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry definition of a 'racial incident', the perception of the victim or any other person involved is the defining factor in recording it as a crime related incident on the Metropolitan Police Service databases. On further investigation of this matter, if it can be confirmed that a crime has been committed, then it may be reclassified at a later point as a criminal offence.

'Detected' incident
The Home Office has counting rules that the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) must follow before any recorded crime can be regarded as a detection.

An incident can be recorded as detected if the following four criteria have been met: (i) a notifiable offence has occurred and has been recorded as a crime, (ii) a suspect has been identified and has been made aware that they are to be recorded as being responsible for that offence and what this may mean for them, (iii) one of the sanction detection methods applies *(see definition for 'sanction detection' below)*, (iv) Evidential sufficiency will be applied at the appropriate level based on Home Office Counting Rules and Director of Public Prosecutions Guidance of Charging.

Incident 'Transferred out of CRIS'
This refers to an incident which is reported to the Metropolitan Police Service but it is either immediately apparent or is revealed through further investigation that the incident has been committed outside of its jurisdiction. It is then transferred to the appropriate police force to investigate further.

'No Crime' Incident
A crime, once recorded, should only be classified as a 'No Crime' if one of the following criteria (as specified by the Home Office Counting Rules) are satisfied:
- The crime was committed outside of the jurisdiction of the police force in which it was recorded;
- Where, following the report of an incident which has subsequently been recorded as a crime, additional verifiable information is available which determines that no notifiable crime has been committed;
- If the crime, as alleged, constitutes part of a crime already recorded;
- If the reported incident was recorded as a crime in error.

| Sanction Detection | A sanction detection has occurred if one of the following outcomes has been achieved: Charge; Summons/ Written Requisition for recordable offences; Simple Caution; Conditional Caution; Young Offender Final Warning; Young Offender Reprimand; Offences Taken into Consideration (TIC); Penalty Notice for Disorder (PND); PND for Criminal Damage valued at under £300; PND for Shoplifting valued at under £100; Cannabis Warning. |

Key Themes and Recommendations

Key Themes

1. **The 'everyday'[2] nature of Islamophobic incidents reported to the MPS:** The Islamophobic incidents reported to and recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service generally occur as victims go about their daily lives, for example, in the street, in or near shops and restaurants or waiting for or on public transport. They are more likely to involve threats and harassment than violence, although one in five incidents involved some degree of violence directed at the victim. The incidents generally involve conflict situations that become aggravated by Islamophobic or anti-Muslim words or actions or situations where perpetrators take immediate advantage of an opportunity that presents itself. Even incidents that show some degree of premeditation by the offender mostly involve letters or phone messages rather than direct contact with the victim.

   This does not mean, however, that the impact of these 'everyday' incidents on the Muslim communities of London are any less severe or wide ranging. In fact, the 'everyday' nature of such incidents makes them more difficult for communities to avoid and their cumulative nature takes a large toll not just on individuals but on the communities as a whole.

   There was evidence from the focus groups with Muslim communities that the nature of the incidents had in many cases led to them normalising this as part of their everyday experience and not recognising the incidents as something that could be reported to the police thus leading to a large amount of under-reporting of such incidents to the police.

   The majority of perpetrators are either unknown to the victim (where the victim does not see who perpetrated the incident) or are strangers. However, in cases where perpetrators are known to the victim, they include neighbours and acquaintances or friends. The largest proportion of perpetrators are male and of 'White - North European' ethnic appearance. However, as emphasised by the focus groups with Muslim communities, the 'everyday' and spontaneous nature of the incidents means that Islamophobia is perpetrated by many different types of people (including new migrants to the UK) and not just by people with clear memberships of far-right or extreme groups.

2. **'Visibility' of the victims:** As with other forms of hate crime, visibility also plays a role in perpetrators identifying their targets. The visibility of Muslim women, together with the public debate around the 'veil', appears to have legitimised the targeting of Muslim women in public places to a greater extent than is apparent for other hate crimes that are reported to the MPS (such as antisemitic crime, race hate crime

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[2] 'Everyday' = commonplace, usual or ordinary (rather than referring to daily occurrences).

and homophobic crime). This was not only evident in the Islamophobic incidents reported to the MPS, but also reiterated by the focus groups with Muslim communities. The focus group members highlighted that many incidents, particularly of verbal abuse, were evidently the result of an adverse reaction to what the victim was wearing, or some other visual symbol of Muslim identity.

3. **Language used by the perpetrators:** The language used by perpetrators in the anti-Muslim incidents shows that there is little real understanding or knowledge of any religious teachings or tenets of Islam. The perpetrator's language is instead targeted at the negative stereotype or misconception of Muslim people that they hold. Race and faith hate language are often used together. The confusion and lack of real understanding about Muslims and Islam held by society in general as well as by perpetrators of anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents was also highlighted by members of Muslim communities that were spoken to as part of this research.

4. **Muslim communities' perceptions of general views and attitudes of the wider general community:** Members of Muslim communities that were spoken to as part of this research felt that media reporting is negative and often both judgemental and ill-informed about Muslims and Islam. In addition, they felt that there is a general confusion and lack of understanding about their religion and the symbolism of the clothing and their appearance. This is then played out in the Islamophobic and anti-Muslim incidents that they experience.

Members of Muslim communities also stated that they were very keen to avoid any activity that might result in escalation of the incidents or potential reprisals. This also contributed to an under-reporting of such incidents to the police.

It is clear from the findings of the research that Islamophobic incidents experienced by the Muslim communities of London need to be understood within this wider social and cultural context, which serves to generate a climate where Muslim communities are made to feel increasingly isolated and vulnerable and where bigotry is reinforced and seen as 'socially acceptable'.

5. **Muslim communities' perceptions of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS):** At a general level, members of Muslim communities spoken to as part of this research were positive about the MPS and understood that the police have a difficult job to do and finite resources in which to do it.

However, the groups expressed a lack of confidence to approach the police, as the reporting process and institution is seen as daunting in a cultural sense, especially when English is not always their first language. Other reasons for not reporting incidents include that they do not think that the incident is serious enough to report or due to concerns that they may face reprisals if they involve the police.

More specifically, the older women's group expressed the view that the

police were limited in the actions they could take, especially as perpetrators were not always easily identified or were sometimes children. The older and younger men's groups felt that police attitudes towards young Muslims could be quite negative, which might hinder willingness to report.

However, all groups spoken to were genuinely encouraged by the fact that the MPS had commissioned this piece of research, which they felt demonstrated the importance the police were placing on understanding the issues, raising awareness and focusing on how Islamophobic incidents could be better recognised and dealt with.

6. **Investigation of Islamophobic incidents:** The MPS is the only police service in the UK that is able to identify the specific communities towards which faith hate crimes are targeted and has well established processes and practices for responding to hate crime incidents. Overall, both the primary and secondary investigations of the incidents that were analysed as part of this research were generally carried out to a good standard. It was evident that efforts were being made by both first response and secondary or specialist investigating officers to reassure victims of such crimes that their experiences were being taken seriously and to investigate the incidents thoroughly.

A few areas for improvement in terms of service delivery and supervision were identified, including the following:
- Improvements can be made around evidence gathering in relation to initial victim statements and addressing victim needs and safety issues. In particular, recording of information about victim visibility or other information on how or why the victim was targeted, as well as an investigation into the offender's motivation are vital in terms of being able to effectively respond to and prevent such incidents from occurring. There are also some gaps in the direct supervision of first response officers and their initial investigations.
- There were also specific gaps in the knowledge and training of the officers that need to be addressed. In particular, there was a general lack of knowledge amongst officers about hate crime, cultural issues affecting Muslim communities and of external local support agencies that could assist victims of anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents.
- The overriding police culture of ensuring consistency and equity in the way officers carry out their policing practice appears, in some cases, to be prohibiting officers from being aware that a knowledge of cultural or social context is necessary to understand the impact of such incidents on this particular community and to offer a far more responsive and adapted service.
- The focus on identifying racial elements within an incident and lack of attention to the variety of cultural and other characteristics that hate crime offenders target needs to be addressed. Different communities have their own specific concerns, different barriers to reporting and different vulnerabilities. This requires police officers to have an awareness of the social and cultural context within

which individual incidents occur and also for them to be aware of wider community implications of such incidents.

Recommendations

R1	The MPS reviews its Hate Crime policy and toolkits to ensure that: • motivations are investigated to identify hate crimes, • anti-Muslim hate crimes are investigated within the context of the cultural background whilst considering wider community implications, and • positive action is taken within the framework of the MPS' Total Policing Strategy.
R2	Embed anti-Muslim faith hate crime within the Territorial Police performance framework and other corporate equality governance processes to ensure that scrutiny, supervisory activity and interventions are maintained.
R3	Territorial Police seek the support of the Directorate of Media and Communications in raising police officers and staff awareness of anti-Muslim hate crimes and the wider cultural issues facing the Muslim communities.
R4	Boroughs review and refresh their communication and community engagement action plans to be inclusive of issues facing the Muslim community.
R5	Territorial Police and Communities Together Strategic Engagement Team seek the support of the Directorate of Media and Communications and borough-based communicators working with Community Safety Units to ensure the work being done by the MPS to bring perpetrators of anti-Muslim hate crimes to justice and messages encouraging the reporting of offences including via third-party and online schemes are as widely publicised as possible - internally, to stakeholders and to the wider media.
R6	a) Review and update the Community Safety Unit hate crime course (affecting CSU Specialist investigators) to ensure changes to toolkits are implemented and investigating officers have comprehensive knowledge of the Association of Chief Police Officers Hate Crime manual. b) Review all hate crime training materials/ presentations/ course inputs for all relevant courses affecting call handlers, first responders to Senior Investigating Officers (SIO) to ensure they are current and up-to-date.

1   Executive Summary

"We are very peaceful people... we teach our children... we look after our neighbours... we respect them. We teach our children to look after our neighbours, they are a brother." Tower Hamlets older male.

1.1   Aims and structure of the research

1.1.1   Aims of the research

The research aimed to provide information on the nature and context of Islamophobic incidents reported to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) in order to:

- support the Muslim Safety Forum workstream 'Islamophobia and Hate Crimes',
- raise the understanding of frontline officers of the nature of such crimes,
- identify areas where training, investigation, supervision and partnership working can be improved,
- determine whether there are any gaps in the level of service provided to victims,
- assist the MPS in the development of preventative measures,
- provide reassurance to Muslim communities in London, foster community engagement and encourage the reporting of islamophobic hate crime incidents to the police, and
- provide practical and operationally-focused recommendations for improvement.

1.1.2   Structure of the research

- *Stage 1* involved an analysis of numerical and descriptive information relating to the Islamophobic incidents reported to the MPS to determine overall trends, distribution and main characteristics of these incidents.
- *Stage 2* involved further identification of crime reports of incidents recorded by the MPS but not identified specifically as Islamophobic incidents using keyword searches of the crime report database, followed by an in-depth analysis exploring the context and situational dynamics of Islamophobic incidents reported over a specific time period.
- *Stage 3* involved the identification of focus areas for further in-depth research emerging from the findings of stages 1 and 2 together with stakeholders.
- *Stage 4* involved focus groups with members of Muslim communities in London and telephone interviews with police officers who had investigated Islamophobic incidents.

1.2   Islamophobic incidents reported to the MPS

This section covers the findings from stage 1 of the research, which involved quantitative analysis of Islamophobic incidents to determine overall trends, distribution and characteristics of these incidents.

1.2.1   Identification of Islamophobic incidents

- Since December 2008, the MPS has made it mandatory to record the faith against which a 'faith hate' incident is directed. These recording changes have had a marked positive effect on the accurate identification of Islamophobic incidents reported to the MPS. While only 21.6% of incidents analysed for October 2008 had an 'Islamophobic' identifier, 66.7% had an 'Islamophobic' identifier in March 2009 and 100% had an 'Islamophobic' identifier in September 2009.

1.2.2   Proportion of 'faith hate' incidents directed at Muslims

- Since December 2008, the largest proportion of the 3,300 faith hate incidents recorded by the MPS (48.2%) has been targeted at Muslims or the Islamic faith, followed by 35.9% targeted at Jewish people or the Jewish faith.

1.2.3   Characteristics of Islamophobic incidents

- Almost half of the 1977 incidents recorded by the MPS between March 2006 and December 2012 involved threats and/ or harassment and one in five incidents involved some degree of violence. Incidents were more likely to take place in the afternoon, particularly between 15:01 and 18:00 hours. More than three-quarters of incidents took place as victims were going about their daily lives, for example, in the street, in or near the victim's home, in or near a shop or restaurant, in a place of worship or a religious location, or waiting for or on public transport.

- Although more males than females reported incidents to the police, the proportion of female victims reporting Islamophobic incidents to the police was greater than those for antisemitic, racial or homophobic incidents reported over the same time period. Female victims were generally younger than the male victims reporting. Just over half of the victims were 'Indian/ Pakistani' in ethnic appearance, with the next largest group being 'African-Caribbean' in ethnic appearance. Over four-fifths of victims stated that their religion was 'Islam', which meant that some of the victims had been targeted because of the suspect's perception that they were Muslim rather than them actually being Muslim. Over half of the victims were from the United Kingdom.

- The majority of the suspects were male, aged 21-50 and 'White – North European' in ethnic appearance. The majority of suspects were either not known to the victim or this information was not provided in the crime report. Of those suspects that were known to the victim, the largest proportions were neighbours, or acquaintances/ friends.

1.2.4   Changes in periods of high tension

- Comparison of the three month periods before and after the events of 7 July 2005 showed that, while the number of Islamophobic incidents increased dramatically after 7 July 2005 (44 incidents in the three months before compared to 365 incidents in the three months after), the features and patterns of the incidents did not change to any great extent.

- The only notable changes were an increase in the proportion of incidents involving 'malicious communication', an increase in the proportion of incidents taking place at places of worship and an increase in the proportion of suspects who were not known to the victim.

- A MORI poll conducted in July 2005 showed that 61% of Muslim commuters surveyed suffered substantial stress in the days following the first terrorist attacks, almost double the proportion of stressed Londoners from other faiths.

1.3   Understanding the context and situational dynamics of Islamophobic incidents

This section covers the findings from stage 2 of the research, which involved qualitative analysis of the context and situational dynamics of a sample of 127 Islamophobic incidents reported over the months of October 2008, March 2009 and September 2009.

- While the impact of Islamophobic incidents can be severe and wide-ranging, there was little evidence of these incidents being perpetrated by people with affiliation to far-right or extremist groups.

- The largest group of incidents (31%) was characterised as 'aggravated'. This category referred to incidents where the perpetrator(s) and victim(s) were caught up in a conflict situation that initially did not involve anti-Muslim sentiment or Islamophobia. However, in the course of the conflict the perpetrator's bigotry emerged.

- The second most frequent type of incident (27%) was 'premeditated', in that the perpetrator(s) intentionally took some deliberate action to instigate the incident by engineering their interaction with the victim(s). There were a number of sub-categories of such incidents based on the extent to which perpetrators made themselves visible to victims. The most frequent sub-category involved 'indirect contact' through letter or phone message directed at a specific individual or organisation (14% overall).

- The third most frequent type of incident (26%) was 'opportunistic' and this involved incidents where the offender took immediate advantage of an opportunity that presented itself to vent their Islamophobia/ anti-Muslim sentiment, rather than engineering the incident in a

premeditated way. Instead of the perpetrator perceiving they have been 'wronged' as in an aggravated offence, it was the victim who was 'in the wrong place at the wrong time'. The perpetrator took full advantage of the situation and enacted their bigotry out on the victim(s).

- The majority of incidents were one-off incidents (68%), whereas the remainder (32%) were part of a series of incidents that the victim had experienced.

- Just over two-thirds of incidents (76%) were directed at a person or people rather than at an organisation or towards property.

- Almost half of the incidents (46%) were directed at a lone male, and just over one-quarter (26%) were directed at a lone female. Lone males were predominantly aged 31-50, whereas lone females were predominantly aged 18-30.

- Just over half of suspects were lone males (51%), 19% of suspects were a group of males and 13% of suspects were completely unknown.

- In 12% of incidents victims or witnesses had a degree of language difficulties (where English was not their first language).Traditional Muslim clothing or visible Muslim locations were specifically mentioned as being relevant in 25% of incidents, although this is likely to be an underestimate of the importance of visibility to the perpetrator in identifying or targeting their victims.

- The perpetrator was a complete stranger to the victim in just over half of the incidents (52%). In 22% of incidents previous interaction had taken place between the victim and the perpetrator and in 14% of incidents the victim had some knowledge of the perpetrator but no previous interaction had taken place between them.

- Incidents involving lone female victims were less likely to involve strangers (40%) than incidents involving lone male victims (56%).

- Almost three-quarters of incidents took place in public locations (74%). The remainder took place in private locations (at or near the victim's home, or in letters, emails or phone calls to the victim). The incidents generally took place as the victim was going about their day-to-day business.

- Specific Faith Hate related language was used by the perpetrator in almost half of the incidents (48.5%) and a mixture of Faith and Race Hate related language was used in 38% of incidents. This could explain why there is sometimes confusion about whether the primary factor in an incident is Race or Faith Hate related.

- In terms of the verbal and textual language used by the perpetrators, the most frequent theme involves branding or naming (for example, "You Muslim") and occurs in just over three-quarters of incidents. A

profanity is used in almost half of the incidents. References to terrorists or suicide bombers are also made in just over one-quarter of incidents.

- What is also notable from the language used by the perpetrators is that, even in cases where there is reference made to some aspect of the Muslim faith, there is little real understanding or knowledge of any religious teachings or tenets of Islam. The language is instead targeted at the negative stereotype or misconception of Muslim people that the perpetrator holds.

1.4 Muslim communities' experiences of Islamophobic incidents and of the policing of these

This section covers the findings from stage 4 of the research, which involved four focus groups held with members of Muslim communities in London to further understand their experiences of victimisation and of the police, as well as of outcomes that would help build their confidence in the police in dealing with such situations[3].

- Feeling safe tended to be associated with 'safety in numbers' insofar as there was a large Muslim population within the [local London] area, which in itself created a safe, secure environment.

  > *"I do want to go and live in another borough with my son but I am scared... scared of [what] I'm not really sure."* Tower Hamlets young female.

- Media reporting was generally viewed as very negative, often both judgmental and ill-informed about Muslims and Islam. The Hounslow older women's group commented that the media had treated Muslims differently since 9/11 (this was a general sentiment shared more widely), and that this had made life worse for the Muslim community by putting more pressure on Muslims and making them an 'easy target'.

- All respondents felt that there was confusion and a lack of understanding about their religion and the symbolism of the clothing and their appearance. Furthermore, it was often mentioned by respondents that there was an assumption that because someone was Muslim they knew all about the Taliban and had some kind of association with Bin Laden;

  > *"That's 'Bin Laden', that's what they call us!"*
  > Hounslow older female.

- The older women's group felt that the police were limited in the actions that they could take against the perpetrators of racist or anti-Muslim incidents.

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[3] Please note that the information from this stage of the research is intended to add depth to the findings but should not be viewed as exhaustive or fully representative of the entire Muslim population of London.

- The Tower Hamlets older men's group stated that verbal abuse can escalate into something more serious. But the majority of groups felt that there was perception [within the community] that nothing would, or could, be done about it, but that it was motivated because they were Muslim.

- For both younger and older male respondents there was a commonly held view that the police's attitudes towards young Muslims could be quite negative. In particular the extra 'stop and search' powers were felt by some to be sometimes used inappropriately and could create disharmony between the police and the young Muslim population;

  "A lot of people round here feel that they use their power to their advantage to search young kids and harass them." Tower Hamlets older male.

- The group reflected that many incidents, particularly of verbal abuse were evidently the result of an adverse reaction to what the victim was wearing, or some other visual symbol of Muslim identity.

- Focus group members were keen to explain that Islamophobia was perpetrated by many different types of people and it was not just one 'source'. There were comments made about the abuse received from some people who were themselves relatively new migrants to the UK;

  "We are in the same position. It's not our country and it's not their country but they feel that they have more rights than we have." Hounslow young male group.

- One member of the young women's group reported a situation in which she chose to wear a head scarf during Ramadan and was challenged by a work colleague who said she should not wear the scarf because she had nice hair and she should not cover it up. Comments arising from what Muslims are wearing could become more threatening.

- One woman moved into a new council house within a few nights she had people constantly knocking on the door and shouting, "you Paki". As a consequence she did not stay in the house regularly. The woman initially did not report these issues to the police because she was fearful that those who were harassing her might see the police at her house and increase the harassment in retribution. When she did contact the police their response was similar to that of the Council and she was told that she should 'ring when something happens'.

1.5 Muslim communities' barriers to reporting Islamophobic incidents to the MPS

- The focus groups expressed a lack of confidence to approach the police, because the process and institution was daunting in a cultural sense.

- For some there was an actual, functional limitation on the ability to communicate in English, especially about issues which were difficult to express either conceptually or emotionally.

- The groups felt that it was unlikely that the police would be able to identify the perpetrators or take any action and this meant that victims would not report to the police.

- The groups felt that some people would not even recognise that an 'incident' had taken place or wouldn't think that an incident was serious enough to report and it would simply be seen as wasting police time.

- It was felt that some community members would wish to avoid trouble and any potential future 'comeback' by the perpetrator and so would not contact the police.

- In particular the older person's group felt that the police actually 'took the opposite side' and had sympathy with the perpetrators of racist and Islamophobic crime and therefore this would not encourage the community to report.

1.6 Muslim communities' recommendations to the MPS

1.6.1 Police attitudes

The focus groups suggested that the police should endeavour:

- To deal with all situations as if they were 'colour blind'
- To take all crimes and including Islamophobic crime, as seriously as if it was their own mother or brother that was involved.
- They should try to judge the severity of the crime (and hence the resource they allocate) on the basis of the psychological perspective of the victim.
- To understand the root cause of these incidents, this may help to tackle the issue of Islamophobia.
- To understand how they can build trust so that people feel confident to report crimes.
- To connect with Muslim people in the street, not least the young men, being open and friendly, and not seeing this group in particular as a threat or arrogant.
- To learn about Muslim culture and customs, for example, what is considered polite by the Muslim community.

1.6.2 Communication

The following suggestions were made by groups in relation to the way in which the MPS communicates with Muslim communities:

- Communicate the kinds of things which can be reported, and which constitute Islamophobia.
- Encourage reporting of more minor incidents, perhaps by use of a phone helpline, and by publicising a council hate crime number.
- Use posters, particularly in known areas where there have been Islamophobic incidents, to warn that the police do act and prosecute these offences.
- Address the issue of building confidence in reporting to the police by people with difficulties in speaking English, or who lack confidence in doing so, by providing the facility to speak in their own language.
- Build links with the community so that they can act as a channel for information about Islamophobic incidents and can verify the importance or the impact of particular incidents, and help the MPS to prioritise its resources, by providing sufficient information about incidents and trends.
- Provide direct numbers and e-mails to contact local officers – PCSOs can also take a role in being the known names and faces in a local area.

1.6.3 Operational recommendations

The groups made the following recommendations regarding the way that the police investigate incidents:

- Even if the police don't have sufficient information to act on they should endeavour to have a local presence to build confidence and deter further incidents.
- In order to encourage people to report crimes the police may need to be discreet, as uniforms and sirens result in making people frightened of reprisals.
- Ensure a rapid response for households or locations where there is a known problem.
- Make it clear that major incidents are being seriously dealt with but also address the small incidents that could escalate or accumulate to cause bigger problems over time.
- Take every complaint seriously and ensure that victims understand that they have done the right thing by reporting.

1.6 Policing Islamophobic incidents – quality of investigation and supervision

This section covers the findings from stage 2 of the research, which involved the scrutiny of the quality of the investigation and supervision (including whether the impact on the wider community was considered by the investigating officer, the disposal of the incident and its appropriateness, and the timeliness of the investigation) of a sample of 105 Islamophobic incidents reported over the months of October 2008, March 2009 and September 2009.

1.6.1 Initial investigation

- 34% of the cases were identified by checks as being incidents involving repeat victimisation. A further 14% of incidents should have been identified by the initial investigators as involving repeat victimisation but were not.

- Good evidence gathering took place in 60% of incidents. Basic evidence gathering took place in a further 26% of incidents. Evidence gathering could have been more complete around initial statements being taken from victims, addressing of victim needs or support issues and addressing victim safety issues.

- Wider community tensions were considered by the initial investigating officer in only 29% of incidents. Wider tensions should have been considered but weren't in a further 8% of incidents.

- A suspect was identified in 45% of incidents. The suspect was arrested in 30 out of the 47 incidents where the suspect was identified.

- Just under half of the incidents had been actively supervised (48%). A further 20% received a degree of passive supervision and 32% received no supervision at all.

- The overall quality of the initial investigation was graded as 'good' in 36% of incidents, satisfactory in 52% of incidents and not to the standard expected in 11% of incidents. None were identified as having serious shortcomings.

1.6.2 Secondary investigation

- The primary investigation was reviewed by the Community Safety Unit (CSU) supervisor in 75% of incidents. The primary investigation should have been reviewed but wasn't in a further 7% of incidents.

- Victim needs and support issues were identified by the secondary investigating officer in the CSU[4] in 60% of incidents and should have been identified but weren't in a further 7% of incidents.

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[4] Specialist secondary investigating officers in borough Community Safety Units are specifically trained in dealing with hate crime and domestic violence.

- Victim or community safety issues were addressed by the secondary investigating officer in the CSU in 45% of incidents and should have been addressed in a further 8% of incidents.

- Relevant partnerships were involved in 28% of incidents and should have been but weren't in a further 6% of incidents.

- An avoidable time delay was only identified in 12% of incidents. In 7 out of these 13 incidents the time delay negatively affected the investigation.

- All reasonable lines of enquiry were pursued by the secondary investigating officer in the CSU in 75% of incidents and should have been but weren't in a further 6% of incidents.

- The overall quality of the secondary investigation was graded as 'good' in 34% of incidents, satisfactory in 43% of incidents and not to the standard expected in 18% of incidents. A further 2% of incidents were identified as having serious shortcomings or vulnerabilities in the secondary investigation.

1.7 Policing Islamophobic incidents – experiences of first response and secondary investigating officers

This section covers the findings from stage 4 of the research, which involved 20 telephone interviews conducted with police officers investigating identified Islamophobic incidents. This included interviews with 11 First Response Officers conducting the primary investigation and 9 specialist Community Safety Unit Officers conducting the secondary investigation. This aimed to gain an understanding of their experiences in dealing with Islamophobic incidents and of what they think might assist them in dealing with such incidents in future[5].

1.7.1 Work and role history

Two-thirds of First Response Officers and half of Community Safety Unit (CSU) Officers had been police officers for one to three years. Half of both had only worked on their borough for between one and three years. CSU Officers had generally been in their role for less than a year, whereas First Response Officers had generally been in their role for between one and seven years.

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[5] Please note that the information from this stage of the research is intended to add depth to the findings but should not be viewed as exhaustive or fully representative of all MPS officers.

1.7.2 Identification of incidents as Islamophobic or anti-Muslim

The majority of incidents were flagged immediately as an Islamophobic incident by the First Response Officer. The reason they gave included the language used by the suspect having a hate crime element and the recognition of the incident as a hate crime. Both First Response Officers and CSU Officers recognised that the perception of the victim or others involved in the incident was just as important in identifying the incident as a hate crime. However, in a number of incidents the officers focused on racial elements within the incident rather than on any anti-Muslim elements that were present. This apparent preference for identifying racial elements and lack of attention to the variety of cultural and other characteristics that hate crime offenders target can be problematic in terms of correctly identifying and dealing with such offences. Targeted communities can also feel that their specific concerns and vulnerabilities are not being listened to or appropriately addressed by the police when they focus on a more generic response to the situation.

1.7.3 Experiences and perceptions of investigating Islamophobic incidents

The majority of First Response and CSU Officers felt either very or fairly confident in dealing with this type of incident. None of the First Response Officers and under one-quarter of CSU Officers felt that the flagging of the incident as Islamophobic or anti-Muslim had an influence on the way it was being investigated. When asked to explain this further, CSU Officers said that the incidents were straightforward and did not warrant additional action because of the flagging. Nearly half of the CSU Officers said they would treat these incidents in the same way as others, although some realised that the hate element may have had a different effect on this community compared to the general public. Only one-quarter of CSU Officers offered a view that an enhanced response should be given for these types of crimes. It appeared that officers could be confusing the process of the investigation relating to this crime type with understanding the nature and dynamics of specific forms of hate crime. While the overriding police culture may want to ensure consistency and equity in the way officers carry out their policing practice, this mindset appears to be prohibiting some officers from having a cultural awareness and sensitivity in terms of understanding the impact of such incidents on this particular community and, in turn, offering a far more responsive and adapted service.

1.7.4 Awareness of victimisation

All First Response Officers and CSU Officers felt that this was not a 'normal' or 'everyday'[6] experience for the victim, stating that the victim was traumatised, or expressed disbelief or disappointment in the way they were treated by the perpetrator. However, officers also realised that some victims had ongoing problems and had been abused on a number of occasions both because of their religion and ethnicity. However, over half of First Response Officers and one-third of CSU Officers did not ask the victim about previous experiences. Also, the majority of officers did not ask the victim whether their families or friends had experienced similar incidents before. Establishing previous history is an important element of the investigation process, especially in relation to hate crime.

1.7.5 Police engagement with the victim

Officers felt that the majority of victims were either very or fairly cooperative and did not appear nervous or anxious about contacting the police. Officers felt that this was because of their experience and training which helped them reassure victims and put them at ease. Listening to the victim, respecting their culture, immediately acting on information given and explaining actions they would take were all seen as important. They also felt it was because victims were accommodating and wanted as much done as possible to ensure that the perpetrator was arrested. Where victims did not come across as cooperative, officers felt that this was due to language barriers, victims not wanting to go to court or the victims' fears of possible reprisals. Just under one-quarter of officers identified risks to the victim, including the potential for ongoing harassment because the perpetrator lived in the same local area or worked with the victim. One-third of First Response Officers and just over half of CSU Officers considered the implications of the incident on the wider community.

1.7.6 Awareness of external support agencies

Three-quarters of First Response Officers were not aware of any external support agencies, whereas only one-third of CSU Officers were not aware of any external support agencies on their borough that provide support to victims. Very few officers were aware of any specific support agencies or groups for victims of anti-Muslim incidents. While very few First Response Officers spoke to the victim about or referred them to support agencies, the majority of CSU Officers stated that they referred the victim to agencies such as the Victim Support Scheme or their Borough Council Hate Crime Coordinator.

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[6] 'Everyday' = commonplace, usual or ordinary (rather than referring to daily occurrences)

1.7.7 Training and information received by officers on issues specifically affecting Muslim communities

Half of the First Response Officers had received training or information on issues specifically affecting Muslim communities and the majority of these had received this during recruit training. However, most did not provide details of exactly what the training involved or whether it provided any focus on victimisation of the Muslim community. One-third of officers were aware of any borough engagement activity happening with the Muslim community and half of officers did not feel at all informed about Muslim issues on their boroughs. In addition to knowledge about support agencies and understanding of local issues and concerns, officers felt that it would be useful to have a practical understanding of the culture and of etiquette, as well as of concerns the community may have about the police.

1.7.8 Community confidence in the police

First Response Officers felt barriers about coming forward to report incidents to the police included negative media representation but also perceptions and cultural understanding the Muslim communities may have of the police. They felt that the Muslim communities may believe the MPS to be institutionally racist or be influenced by friends' and families' negative experiences of the police. Some more specific cultural and language barriers were also mentioned. The majority of officers felt that increasing community engagement opportunities across the Muslim communities would be useful, such as open forums with young people and meetings with the Muslim communities at Mosques.

1.8 Conclusions

The term 'hate crime' conjures up images of violent crimes committed by extremist or far-right perpetrators driven by very specific hate fuelled ideologies. However, the Islamophobic incidents recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service demonstrate that, while the incidents have a significant and wide-ranging impact on the Muslim communities of London, there is very little, if any, evidence of this type of extremism at work. Instead, many of these incidents occur spontaneously as victims go about their daily lives, where either conflict situations become aggravated by Islamophobic or anti-Muslim words or actions or perpetrators take immediate advantage of an opportunity that presents itself. Even incidents that show some degree of premeditation by the offender mostly involve letters or phone messages rather than direct contact with the victim. Where perpetrators are known to the victim, these include neighbours and acquaintances or friends.

This does not mean, however, that the impact of these 'everyday'[7] incidents on the Muslim communities of London are any less severe or wide ranging. In fact, the 'everyday' nature of such incidents makes them more difficult for communities to avoid and their cumulative

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[7] 'Everyday' = commonplace, usual or ordinary (rather than referring to daily occurrences).

nature takes a large toll not just on individuals but on the communities as a whole. There was evidence from the focus groups with Muslim community members that the nature of the incidents had in many cases led to them normalising this as part of their everyday experience and not recognising the incidents as something that could be reported to the police thus leading to a large amount of under-reporting of such incidents to the police.

As with other forms of hate crime, visibility also plays a role in identifying targets. The visibility of Muslim women, together with the public debate around the 'veil', appears to have legitimised the targeting of Muslim women in public places to a greater extent than is apparent for other hate crimes that are reported to the Metropolitan Police Service (such as antisemitic crime, race hate crime and homophobic crime).

Furthermore, the language used by perpetrators in the anti-Muslim incidents shows that there is little real understanding or knowledge of any religious teachings or tenets of Islam. The language is instead targeted at the negative stereotype or misconception of Muslim people that the perpetrator holds. Race and faith hate language are often used together. The confusion and lack of real understanding about Muslims and Islam held by society in general as well as by perpetrators of anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents was also highlighted by members of the Muslim community that were spoken to as part of this research.

These incidents do need to be understood within their wider social and cultural context. The negative media reporting directed at Muslims, the impact of counter-terrorism policies such as 'Prevent', the perceptions of negative police attitudes towards young Muslims being played out in stop and search situations, as well as politicians' comments relating to Muslims in relation to 'veils' and multiculturalism all serve to generate a climate where Muslim communities are made to feel increasingly isolated and vulnerable and where bigotry is reinforced and seen as 'socially acceptable'. It is of concern that women in public places, often together with their children, are being seen as legitimate targets. Also, more efforts are needed to engage with and encourage young Muslim males and older Muslim females to report anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents that they experience to the police.

The nature of the incidents and social context within which they occur makes it far more difficult for police to target and disrupt the activities of such perpetrators. It also requires police officers to have an awareness of the social and cultural context within which individual incidents occur and also for them to be aware of wider community implications of such incidents.

It was evident from the research that efforts were being made by both first response and secondary or specialist investigating officers to reassure victims of such crimes that their experiences were being taken seriously and to investigate the incidents thoroughly. However, the overriding police culture of ensuring consistency and equity in the way officers carry out their policing practice appears, in some cases, to

be prohibiting officers from being aware that a knowledge of cultural or social context is necessary to understand the impact of such incidents on this particular community and to offer a far more responsive and adapted service.

There were some gaps that were identified in terms of service delivery and supervision. Improvements can be made around evidence gathering in relation to initial victim statements and addressing victim needs and safety issues. In particular, recording of information about victim visibility or other information on how or why the victim was targeted, as well as an investigation into the offender's motivation are vital in terms of being able to effectively respond to and prevent such incidents from occurring. There were also specific gaps in the knowledge and training of the officers that need to be addressed. In particular, there was quite a wide-ranging lack of knowledge about hate crime, cultural issues affecting Muslim communities and of external local support agencies that could assist victims of anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents.

Finally, the focus on identifying racial elements within an incident and lack of attention to the variety of cultural and other characteristics that hate crime offenders target can be problematic in terms of correctly identifying and dealing with such offences. Different communities have their own specific concerns, different barriers to reporting and different vulnerabilities and these need to be listened to and appropriately addressed by the police.

2 Understanding Islamophobic incidents recorded by the police in London

2.1 Introduction

On 4 January 2012, Gary Dobson and David Norris were found guilty of the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence. After an 18 year struggle for justice, Stephen Lawrence's father Neville recognised the efforts of both the judge and the police. The commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Bernard Hogan-Howe, said: "The other people involved in the murder of Stephen Lawrence should not rest easily in their beds" as he welcomed the convictions of Norris and Dobson[8].

In the early hours of 26 December 2011, a 23 year old Indian student Anuj Bidve was shot in the head by a stranger at close range as he walked with friends near their hotel in Salford, Greater Manchester. The communities within the area reacted with understandable anxiety after the woman, who held Mr Bidve's hand as he lay dying, said the killing appeared to have been "very racial". Chief Superintendent Kevin Mulligan of Greater Manchester Police, the senior investigating officer, told the press that they were now treating the murder as a hate crime due to "growing perceptions in the community"[9]. Anuj's father, Mr Bidve, flew to the UK with his family to collect their son's body, said, "the family had been 'deeply moved' by the support people had shown them during their visit to the UK."[10]

The positive reaction from the UK public and police to both the conviction of Dobson and Norris and the horrific murder of Anuj Bidve is an indication that explicit racism within British society is no longer acceptable. On the other hand, however, many assert that:

> *"[p]rejudice against Islam – Islamophobia – is [still seen as] Britain's last remaining socially respectable form of bigotry"*[11].

A look at the themes of media reporting directed at Muslims is quite telling in this regard. Analysis by the Cardiff School of Journalism found that approximately two-thirds of all themes of news articles about Muslims involved:

> *"either terrorism (some 36 per cent of stories); religious issues such as Sharia Law, highlighting cultural differences between British Muslims and others (22 per cent); or Muslim extremism…These stories all portrayed Muslims as a source of trouble. By contrast only 5 per cent of stories were based on problems facing British Muslims."*[12]

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[8] BBC News online (4 January 2012)
[9] The Telegraph online (29 December 2011)
[10] BBC News online (6 January 2012)
[11] Oborne, P. and Jones, J. (2008:13), see also Baroness Warsi's speech as reported in The Guardian online (9 February 2011)
[12] Oborne, P. and Jones, J. (2008:19)

The Muslim communities are lobbying the government and criminal justice systems to consider further action against their continued victimisation motivated by anti-Muslim sentiment. They feel that the implications of the 'counter terrorism' programme in response to the terrorist bombings on 9/11 and 7/7 have placed them as 'suspect communities'. These communities, "[that] are perceived to be associated with the violence are characterised: as allies in the struggle against 'terrorism', as victims needing protections from a potential backlash and as communities that might be harbouring extremists and threatening individuals".[13] According to research carried out by the London Metropolitan University, these anti-terrorist policies and measures, "led to an excessive [negative] focus on these communities."[14]

Furthermore, research on behalf of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission has found that the targeting of funding to Muslim communities under Preventing Violent Extremism or 'Prevent' has not only resulted in them being treated as 'suspect communities' but has also generated resentment from other communities, having the effect of undermining community cohesion, as well as increasing their feelings of alienation and isolation and raising their levels of anxiety and vulnerability.[15]

An example of how pervasive this negative 'focus' has become is through comments made by the former Secretary of State for Justice Jack Straw (who in 1997 ordered a public inquiry into the investigation of the Stephen Lawrence). Jack Straw, at the time also the Labour MP for Blackburn, engendered nationwide controversy in October 2006 by saying that "face veils[16] were a 'visible statement of separation and of difference' and suggested they could make community relations harder. He also said he asked Muslim women to reveal their faces in his constituency surgeries because he thought the veils got in the way of effective communication…"[17].

Politicians quickly became caught up in the furore, some coming out in support of Jack Straw, including the then Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who called the veil a "mark of separation"[18]. Others condemned his comments or raised concerns about them, including the Labour Peer, Lord Nazir Ahmed, who said that politicians and journalists were jumping on a bandwagon because "it is fashionable these days to have a go at the Muslims" and that there was "a constant theme of demonisation of the Muslim community"[19]. Scotland's Communities Minister, Malcolm Chisolm, went as far as saying that "[w]e should respect the different cultures that are here and that is not against the idea of integration."[20]

It was also suggested at the time that Jack Straw's comments had led to attacks on Muslim women who had their veils ripped off and that the comments had encouraged 'supportive' discriminatory behaviour and

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[13] Hickman et al (2011:14)
[14] Hickman et al (2011:15)
[15] Choudhury, T. and Fenwich, H. (2011: x)
[16] References to the 'veil' encompass a variety of garments including the hijab (headscarf), niqab (face veil) and jilbab (full body garments).
[17] BBC News online (25 July 2010)
[18] BBC News online (17 October 2006)
[19] BBC News online (15 October 2006)
[20] BBC News online (8 October 2006)

comments, such the following one shouted by a middle-aged woman in the crowd at Jack Straw when he attended Blackburn Town Hall on 13 October 2006:

> *"Well done, Jack. If they don't like it, they should go home."*[21]

In 2010, Jack Straw publicly apologised, stating "If I had realised the scale of publicity that they [the comments] received in October 2006, I wouldn't have made them and I am sorry that it has caused problems and I offer that apology."[22] However, Muslim lobbying groups have commented that this apology did not go far enough and a clear message of support from the government was required to counteract the current climate of anti-Muslim hatred.

The Muslim communities' fears are not unfounded as far-right organisations such as the British National Party are now placing an emphasis on their hatred specifically towards the Muslim community. This change has been detected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary[23] which has observed that more than half the significant demonstrations in the past 18 months have been carried out by the English Defence League (EDL)[24] which only targets Muslims. Additionally, in February 2011 at the same time as the EDL organised a 'homecoming' march in Luton, David Cameron gave his speech on Security in Munich. He was criticised for both the timing and content of his speech which stated that multiculturalism had failed and made suggestions that Muslims must embrace British values of freedom, democracy and equal rights. It was felt by the Muslim lobbying groups that David Cameron's speech, although unintentionally, played into the rhetoric of the extremists who hold anti-Muslim sentiment.

In a post 9/11 and 7/7 environment, the political and media discussions have reinforced views like those expressed by David Cameron and others that British national identity and Muslim distinctiveness or difference are mutually exclusive. Specifically:

> *"[f]rom a British perspective, the social cohesion agenda is based exclusively upon the obligation of Muslim minorities for integration and as a consequence, the problem of non-integration…rests with Muslims themselves."*[25]

Opinion polls are often quoted in the press as demonstrating that the majority of Muslims in Britain feel that they are Muslims first, instead of British first, and as providing further evidence of a lack of integration with mainstream society. However, a more detailed and thorough Gallup study suggests the opposite[26]. This study compared the attitudes of Muslim residents of London with those of the British public overall and found that strong identification with their religion was not mutually exclusive with a strong identification with their nationality, or

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[21] BBC News online (13 October 2006)
[22] Islamophobia Watch online news feed (27 April 2010)
[23] HMIC (2011)
[24] The English Defence League (EDL) is a group formed in 2009 whose stated intention of opposing the perceived spread of Islamism, Sharia Law and Islamic extremism in England. Defence league groups have been set up in Wales and Scotland and have links in Northern Ireland.
[25] Chakraborti, N. and Zempi, I. (2012)
[26] Oborne, P. and Jones, J. (2008:29)

with condemnation of terrorist attacks on civilians or a lack of desire to segregate themselves[27]. Unfortunately, most polls do not examine these issues in as much depth and therefore the view that expressing a Muslim identity and integrating into British culture are mutually exclusive prevails and is reinforced.

The wearing of the 'veil' within this context is an overt signifier of difference and 'otherness', The political debate, together with negative media portrayals linking Islam with Islamist terrorism has transformed the veil from a symbol of religious identity to a symbol of "gender inequality, hostility to a democratic society and Islamist extremism"[28]. It has also, it can be argued, legitimised targeted victimisation of veiled Muslim women, as particularly visible members of Muslim communities, by people wanting to carry out an indiscriminate attack on a symbol of Islam. This is something that this research will examine further.

2.2 Criminal Justice response to Islamophobia

Events such as the tragic terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 in New York and Pennsylvania and on March 11, 2004 in Madrid, as well as the bomb attacks that occurred during the morning rush hour in London in the United Kingdom (UK) on July 7, 2005 have presented police forces and other agencies with many pressures and challenges. In addition to the challenges of investigating and preventing such events, international events and tensions have also highlighted and reinforced the need for a greater awareness of how global and local events impact on different communities in terms of the potential for increased victimisation or 'backlash'.[29] The challenges faced by the London Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) around the policing of hate crimes have not only highlighted the need for a greater understanding of the nature of the incidents and their perpetrators, but also the need for close liaison and consultation with minority communities and vulnerable groups within London.

Within this context, this research will redress some of the issues raised above by focusing on the victimisation of Muslims, specifically in relation to Islamophobic or anti-Muslim incidents that are recorded by the MPS. Additionally, some of the research that has taken place over the last five years in the Diversity and Citizen Focus Directorate (DCFD) in the MPS will be presented here, focusing in particular on research carried out jointly by DCFD and the CSU (Community Safety Unit) Service Delivery Team[30] on Islamophobic incidents recorded by the MPS. This will highlight problems and challenges that have emerged out of this research in relation to both strategic thinking and operational practice in the policing of London.

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[27] Mogahed, D. (2007)
[28] Chakraborti, N. and Zempi, I. (2012)
[29] See the following reports and articles for more information: EUMC (2001); EUMC (2005); Hall, N. (2005: 104); Perry, B. (2003).
[30] . The CSU Service Delivery Team has the strategic and policy lead with overall responsibility for MPS delivery on domestic violence and hate crime performance and compliance. It is based in the Territorial Policing Capability and Business Support Operational Command Unit (TP CBS OCU). The TP CBS OCU supports boroughs to drive continuous improvement and performance across the MPS.

2.3   Rationale for this research project

Previous research conducted by the Diversity & Citizen Focus Directorate and the CSU Service Delivery Team highlighted that there was under-flagging of different forms of hate crimes on the Crime Report Information System (CRIS). This indicated that official 'faith hate' figures were an under-estimate of the number of such incidents coming to the attention of the police.

Under-flagging makes it difficult to identify the level and extent of Islamophobia reported to the MPS, which makes it harder for the MPS to have a full understanding of the nature of these incidents. This, in turn, makes it difficult to provide reassurance to the communities affected by this form of hate crime, as well as put more informed preventative mechanisms in place to combat it. Under-flagging of such incidents raises questions about the general level of understanding of frontline officers on issues relating to crimes that are motivated by anti-Muslim hate.

While it is believed that changes introduced to the CRIS system on 5 December 2008 have resulted in more accurate recording of faith hate incidents, it is still important to review the nature and extent of such incidents reported to the MPS to date and to highlight areas where training, investigation and partnership working can be improved.

2.4   Rationale for using police crime data to research hate crime

There is an official requirement on the police in the United Kingdom to collect data on all hate incidents reported to them, regardless of whether or not the incidents constitute a criminal offence. Furthermore, it is the perception of the victim or any other person that is key in determining whether an incident is regarded as a hate incident or not, rather than the motivation of the offender (ACPO, 2005). The MPS has adopted these criteria and therefore investigates all incidents that are perceived to be hate incidents. This is a far more inclusive criterion than is used by police in many other countries, for example in the United States where the definition of hate crime is far more restrictive and is based on crimes where police have enough evidence to prove the motivation of the offender is hate-related and themselves conclude that a hate crime has occurred.

However, it would be over-optimistic to believe that official police records would or could provide a full or accurate picture of hate crime. Official information can only provide a partial but important insight into the hate crimes that victims bring to the attention of the police and the criminal justice system as a whole. Nevertheless, we would assert that police information, amongst other sources of information such as victimisation surveys, can be used to further criminological and sociological debate and can contribute to the understanding of hate crime.

Furthermore, using a grounded, evidence-based approach to police records can offer vital information in challenging crime[31]. By looking at the already existing routinely collected police information on hate crime, and by specifically taking into account the social context within which these incidents

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[31] Stanko, E.et al (2003)

occur, it enables the criminal justice system, practitioners, policy makers and academics to question and reconsider the way in which these forms of targeted crime are conceptualised. Such information has already been used to inform MPS policy and practice in the area of hate crime and domestic violence since 1999.

It is envisaged from the start that this research would be conducted using similar principles that made the 'Hate Crimes Against London's Jews' project so effective. This was a partnership project which was conducted together with Dr Paul Iganski in conjunction with the Institute for Jewish Policy Research. The fact that it was a partnership project which earned the support of external groups within the Jewish Community (including the Community Security Trust), ensured that the published findings were widely disseminated and contributed to greater trust and confidence in the MPS from the Jewish community. The published research was also submitted as a separate piece of evidence into the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism in 2006. It enabled a thorough and detailed briefing to be given to the then Director of the Violent Crime Directorate prior to his oral evidence session. This resulted in the MPS being hailed as a beacon of good practice on a national level by Inquiry Members[32].

2.5   Outline of the research

The overall aims of the research were to:

- support the Muslim Safety Forum workstream 'Islamophobia and Hate Crimes',
- raise the understanding of frontline officers of the nature of such crimes,
- identify areas where training, investigation, supervision and partnership working can be improved,
- determine whether there are any gaps in the level of service provided to victims,
- assist the MPS in the development of preventative measures,
- provide reassurance to Muslim communities in London, foster community engagement and encourage the reporting of islamophobic hate crime incidents to the police, and
- provide practical and operationally-focused recommendations for improvement.

Please note that the research covers all incidents which perpetrators have targeted at Muslims or perceived Muslims, and will therefore also include cases of mistaken identity where victims may be from other communities, such as Sikh or Hindu communities.

The research was structured as follows:

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[32] All-Party Parliamentary Group against Antisemitism (2006)

Stage 1

- Identification of flagged Islamophobic incidents on the Crime Recording Information System (CRIS) from April 2006 (when the Islamophobic identifier or 'flag' was introduced) to December 2012.
- Conducting quantitative analysis on the incidents identified to determine the overall trends, distribution and characteristics of these incidents.

Stage 2

- Conducting in-depth qualitative analysis of the features and patterns of a sample of incidents identified in Stage 1.
- This focused on incidents identified in October 2008, March 2009 and September 2009. In order to capture further unflagged incidents during these time periods further searches were carried out on the system using specific keywords. In addition to the in-depth analysis carried out by DCFD, analysis of the same sample of incidents was carried out by CSU Service Delivery Team officers to determine the quality of service provided to the victims (both in terms of investigation and supervision).

Stage 3

- Scoping and identification of focus areas for further qualitative work, working together with stakeholders to do so.

Stage 4

- Conducting qualitative focus group and telephone interviews into focus areas identified.

  (i) *Four focus groups with Muslim community members covering young women, older women, young men and older men.* These included members of the community who had not reported incidents to the police and did not feel confident doing so. Themes covered in the groups included: experiences of anti-social and criminal behaviour directed against them; at what point these experiences were considered to be crimes rather than 'everyday' (or commonplace) behaviour of the wider community; what they thought the motivation of the perpetrators were; whether assistance was sought from either within or outside of the Muslim community; how such incidents affected their daily behaviour and safety management; any feelings of isolation or vulnerability; feelings in relation to the wider community; their experiences and expectations of the police; attitudes and treatment received from the police if incidents were reported; what would increase their confidence in the police; how the police could improve their service.

  (ii) *20 telephone interviews carried out by CSU Service Delivery Team officers with first response officers and with Community Safety Officers (secondary investigators) of identified Islamophobic incidents.* Themes covered in the interviews included: the level of their understanding of issues affecting the Muslim community; barriers to reporting that may exist for the Muslim community; their experiences of investigating Islamophobic incidents; how they felt the confidence of the Muslim community to report Islamophobic incidents could be increased; what partnership working with the Muslim community they were aware of; what they thought would improve the level of service they could provide to

Muslim victims; what would enable them to respond to issues identified by the Muslim community more effectively.

2.6   Partnership/ collaboration with key groups within the Muslim Community and other relevant parties/ groups

The current research project has been carried out and managed by Vicky Kielinger and Susan Paterson in the Diversity and Citizen Focus Directorate. The project has also benefited from an external academic, Dr. Paul Iganski, who is a respected and established author in the hate crime arena, from the Department of Applied Social Science in the University of Lancaster. He collaborated on the design and analysis of individual incidents in stages 1 and 2 of the research. This input has ensured that the research has an added independence outside of the MPS.

Additionally, the researchers have consulted closely with the Muslim Safety Forum, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC, formerly the Metropolitan Police Authority), the National Association of Muslim Police (NAMP) and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) National Community Tension Team (NCTT) as key stakeholders to ensure that the research was developed, carried out and reported on in partnership with them. Overall, the aim was to ensure that the research received the support and 'buy-in' from relevant and informed representatives of the Muslim community and of other key stakeholders.

Within the Metropolitan Police Service, the researchers regularly liaised with the Community Safety Unit (CSU) Service Delivery Team (TP CBS OCU) on progress, particularly in relation to any operational findings and recommendations that have been developed from the research. This communication was vital in ensuring that any operational findings were placed in context of the expertise and delivery activity undertaken by the CSU Service Delivery Team. This also ensured that the recommendations that emerged from the research were effective in changing outcomes, as well as being realistic and achievable.

Other relevant departments within the MPS have been consulted with as internal stakeholders, including the Corporate Development Evaluation and Performance Unit, Communities Together Strategic Engagement Team and the MPS Association of Muslim Police.

3 Trends and Patterns in Islamophobic incidents

3.1 The Muslim population in London

According to 2011 Census figures released to date, there are 2.7 million Muslims in England and Wales, of which just under 40% live in London and make up 12.4% of the population of London[33]. The Muslim population in London is one of the largest of any European city and is highly diverse in terms of nationality, ethnicity and language. The boroughs in London with the highest proportion of Muslim residents are Tower Hamlets (34.5%), followed by Newham (32.0%). Other boroughs with a Muslim population of more than 15% include Redbridge, Waltham Forest, Brent, Westminster, Enfield and Ealing.

According to figures published by the Mayor of London based on the 2001 Census figures[34], over half of Muslims in London (58%) were of south Asian origin (Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani and 'Other Asian'), almost 20% were White, just over 13% were Black and just under 5% were in the 'Mixed' and again in the 'Chinese or other group' categories. Muslims had the youngest age profile of all religious groups in London (as well as the UK overall). Almost one-third was below 15 years of age and 17% was aged 16-24. Just over half (51%) of the Muslim population in London was male.

3.2 Background to the recording of anti-Muslim and Islamophobic incidents by the Metropolitan Police Service

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) is one of the few police forces in the United Kingdom that has a specific identifier for Islamophobic incidents that are reported to it. The 'flag' or identifier for Islamophobic incidents recorded on the Crime Report Information System (CRIS) – a system which electronically stores information on criminal incidents and offences recorded by the police – was introduced on 15 March 2006. An Islamophobic incident is defined by the MPS as:

> *"Any incident that is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated or aggravated by fear and/ or hatred of Islam, Muslim people or Islamic culture."*

However, there have been a number of precursors to this specific identifier that are worth noting, as they have influenced the way in which the current Islamophobia identifier is understood and used by police officers. The first separate identifier under which anti-Muslim incidents could be recorded was the racial incident flag, which was introduced onto the Crime Report Information System (CRIS) on 1 April 1996. This initially defined racial incidents as:

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[33] Figures extracted from table KS209EW entitled '2011 Census: Religion, local authorities in England and Wales' from the Office for National Statistics website. See http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-286262 for further details
[34] GLA (2006)

> *"[A]ny incident in which it appears to the reporting or investigating officer that the complaint involves an element of racial motivation or any incident which includes an allegation of racial motivation by any person."*

Following the publication of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (Macpherson, 1999), the definition of what constituted a racial incident changed from solely the assessment of the police officer to include the victim or 'any other person'[35]. This change was recommended by the Inquiry to ensure that the victims' perceptions of the motivation of offender were included. The definition changed to:

> *"[A]ny incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person."*

After the terrorist incident in New York on 11 September 2001, the MPS introduced a 'US' flag or identifier to monitor incidents that were (or were perceived to be) related or associated with the terrorist incident. Over the five week period following September 11, 272 incidents were specifically flagged as US related and 602 had a combination of US and other racial flags. The combined US and racial flags were used with victims who were predominantly Indian/ Pakistani and Arabic/ Egyptian in ethnic appearance and were primarily incidents targeted at Muslims. Conversely, situations where the US flags was applied without a racial flag were predominantly for instances of threats including bomb threats directed at American organisations and their representatives (mostly 'White European' in ethnic appearance). Overall, there was a 6.4% increase in racial incidents during September and October 2001 compared to the same time period in 2000. This increase was proportionate across all previously reported crime types, apart from a disproportionate rise in malicious communications (threatening letters and telephone calls) and bomb hoaxes (mostly anthrax related).

By 17 December 2001, the MPS introduced a specific faith hate flag to the CRIS system with the purpose of identifying those incidents committed against people and property on the basis of their connection, or perceived connection, with any faith or religion. Additional identifiers on the 'faith hate' incidents denoted the perceived faith or religion to which the report referred and could also refer to more than one faith for any particular incident. After the initial aftermath of the September 11th attack, the recording of faith hate incidents decreased again. It was difficult at the time to determine how much of this decrease was due to an actual decrease in the number of such incidents being reported as opposed to the extent to which reporting officers reverted back to the use of the racial incident identifier rather than continuing to use the more specific faith hate categorisation.

An illustration of the complexities and potential difficulties involved in recording such incidents can be seen in an examination of anti-Semitic incidents that was carried out at the time. Out of the 25 anti-Semitic incidents recorded on CRIS in January 2003, only four were also flagged as 'faith hate' incidents. Conversely, looking at the six faith hate incidents directed at

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[35] Sir William Macpherson of Cluny (1999) - chapter 45 paragraphs 16-17

Judaism that were recorded in January 2003 only four were also coded as being anti-Semitic in nature.

Reporting officers also did not always identify the specific faith the incident related to using the secondary identifier within 'faith hate' incidents. This meant that identification of incidents involving specific faiths was difficult and required in-depth analysis. The analysis that was carried out showed that almost half of the incidents recorded as faith hate incidents were directed at Islam or Muslims and the remainder were directed against Judaism, Buddhism and one was directed against Christianity.

After the four bomb attacks on the London Underground and a bus on 7 July 2005 and the four attempted attacks on 21 July 2005, the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia recorded in 2005 "a temporary and disturbing increase in faith related hate crimes" (EUMC 2005). As a result of concerns raised by the Muslim, Sikh and Hindu communities, relating to the difficulty of identifying incidents targeted at Muslims or perceived Muslims highlighted above, a specific 'Islamophobic' incident identifier for these incidents was introduced on the CRIS system on 15 March 2006. Therefore, a number of 'flags' or identifiers could be used by officers to identify anti-Muslim hate crime incidents – racial, faith hate and/ or Islamophobic. The 'flag' could be used either individually or in combinations, potentially leading to confusion amongst officers as to which flags should be used for which incidents, as well as to differential practices across London, especially if there was a racial element to the incident as well.

As a response to further concerns from a number of minority communities, research was conducted by TP and DCFD, who were able to highlight that there was a significant amount of under-flagging of different forms of hate crimes on the CRIS system, including Islamophobic incidents. A detailed scrutiny of performance gaps and compliance issues undertaken in relation to hate crime recording on CRIS identified that there was under-flagging of hate crimes and, in particular, of Islamophobic incidents. In addition, problems were identified with the accuracy of hate crime related 'flags' or identifiers being used on CRIS and the lack of identification of targeted communities in relation to hate crime.

This can be illustrated by the findings from a keyword search for anti-Muslim incidents undertaken for the month of October 2008. This identified 37 anti-Muslim incidents that were reported to the MPS. Only 8 out of the 37 anti-Muslim incidents had an Islamophobic flag or identifier (21.7%), a further 9 (24.3%) were flagged as a faith hate incident but not identified as anti-Muslim and almost half (45.9%) were only recorded as racial incidents. A further 3 incidents did not have any flags or identifiers at all.

As a result of these identified recording problems, the MPS made changes to improve the recording processes of hate crimes on the CRIS system and this was introduced on 5 December 2008. Officers completing CRIS incident reports now receive prompt questions that require boxes to be ticked or a selection to be made from a drop down list before the report can be completed. This removes the requirement on officers to remember a list of identifying flags, as these are now automatically placed on the incident report as the prompt questions are completed by the officer. If the report relates to

faith hate crime, the religion targeted is identified from a look-up list and the victim's nationality and religion also has to be recorded. The latest changes to the CRIS system have undoubtedly had a positive impact on the accuracy of recording of hate crime incidents. While an overview of faith hate incidents and Islamophobic incidents can be gained prior to December 2008, it should be recognised that these are incomplete pictures of anti-Muslim incidents coming to the attention of the MPS.

In order to gain a more complete overview of anti-Muslim incidents painstaking in-depth analysis needs to be carried out of individual incident reports on the CRIS system. This will be covered in later chapters of this report. The remainder of this chapter provides an initial overview of identified anti-faith motivated incidents to set the scene for the more in-depth analysis to follow.

The remainder of this chapter provides an initial overview of following groups of incidents to set the scene for the more in-depth analysis to follow:
   (i)   faith hate incidents recorded by the MPS between January 2002 and December 2012;
   (ii)   faith hate incidents recorded between April and October 2005;
   (iii) Islamophobic incidents identified (through detailed analysis involving the viewing of each incident report) between April and October 2005; and
   (iv) Islamophobic incidents recorded between April 2006 and December 2012.

3.3   Overview of faith hate incidents recorded by the MPS between January 2002 and December 2012[36]

Since the introduction of the 'faith hate' identifier on CRIS on 17 December 2001, the number of faith hate incidents recorded by the MPS have fluctuated from month to month.

Excluding the time period from July to August 2005 (where much higher levels of faith hate incidents were recorded following the London bombings), the average number of faith hate incidents recorded by the MPS from January 2002 to November 2008 was 35 a month. Since December 2008, mainly due to a change in recording practices, the average monthly number of faith hate incidents recorded has almost doubled to 67 (see figure 3.1 below).

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[36] Unless otherwise specified data in this section of the report was extracted from CRIS over three time periods: Mar 2006 - Feb 2011 data extracted on 20/06/2011; Mar 2011 - Sep 2011 data extracted on 18/12/2012; and Oct 2011 - Dec 2011 data extracted 07/01/2013.

Figure 3.1: Faith Hate Incidents (January 2002 - December 2012)

Change in recording practices
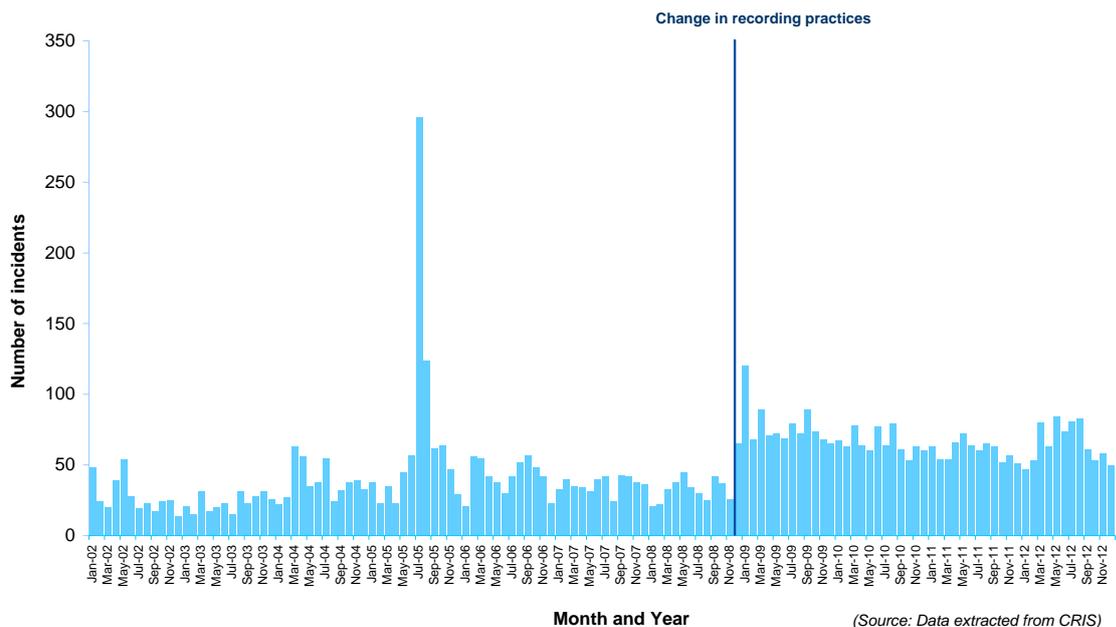
(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)

Since December 2008, the identification of the faith against which the faith hate incidents were targeted has been mandatory. Therefore, it is possible to look at the proportion of faith hate incidents targeted at each faith group. The largest number of faith hate incidents recorded by the MPS (48.2%) were targeted at Muslims or the Islamic faith, followed by 35.9% targeted at Jewish people or the Jewish faith. Figure 3.2 (below) shows this in more detail.

Figure 3.2: Faith at which Faith Hate Incidents were targeted (December 2008 - December 2012)

Faith/Religion/Belief Description	Frequency	Percentage
ISLAM	1,592	48.2%
JEWISH	1,186	35.9%
CHRISTIAN	182	5.5%
SIKH	112	3.4%
HINDU	86	2.6%
ROMAN CATHOLIC	45	1.4%
JEHOVAH'S WITNESS	8	0.2%
BUDDHIST	7	0.2%
SCIENTOLOGIST	7	0.2%
PROTESTANT	6	0.2%
SPIRITUALIST	5	0.2%
ATHEIST	2	0.1%
BAPTIST	2	0.1%
PENTECOSTAL	2	0.1%
RASTAFARIAN	2	0.1%
KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT	1	0.0%
PAGAN	1	0.0%
ZOROASTRIAN	1	0.0%
UNKNOWN	49	1.5%
NOT STATED	4	0.1%
Total	**3,300**	**100.0%**

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS on 09/01/2013)

3.4 Focus on faith hate incidents recorded by the MPS between 7 April and 7 October 2005

There were four bomb attacks on London Underground and bus during the 'rush hour' on 7th July, followed by four attempted attacks on 21st July 2005. Concerns were raised by minority communities in the immediate aftermath, the Muslim community in particular, that some individuals would use the events as an excuse for racist/ faith-related attacks. In the immediate period after the attacks there was a "temporary and disturbing increase in faith related hate crimes…" (EUMC 2005). Analysis was carried out by the authors of this report, together with Dr Paul Iganski from Lancaster University, to investigate the exact nature of that increase in incidents.

An initial analysis of the different forms of hate crime recorded by the MPS over this time period showed an increase in recorded racial incidents and faith hate incidents in the immediate aftermath of the bombings on 7 July (see figure 3.3 below).

Figure 3.3: Types of hate crime incident (11th April to 2nd Oct 2005)
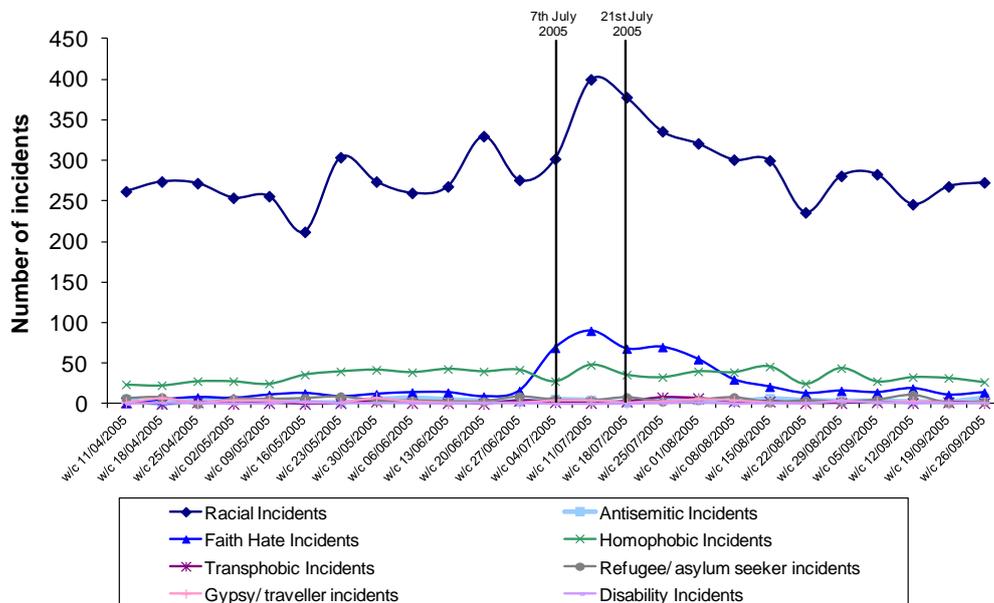
(Source: Data extracted from CRIS 27/10/2005)

Focusing on the faith hate incidents recorded over this time period, a clear increase can be seen in the number of incidents involving threats or harassment, as well as smaller increases in criminal damage and violence-related incidents (see figure 3.4 below).

Figure 3.4: Faith incidents - Allegation grouping (11th April to 2nd Oct 2005)

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS 27/10/2005)
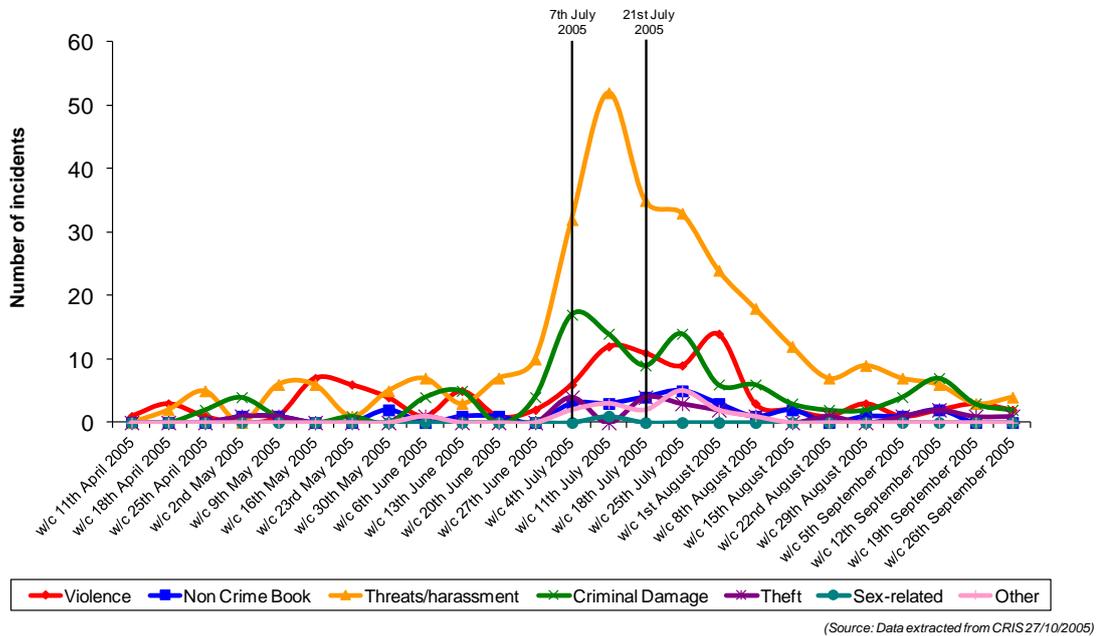
A clear increase can also be seen in the number of victims of 'Indian/ Pakistani' ethnic appearance (see figure 3.5 below).

Figure 3.5: Faith incidents - ethnic appearance of victim (11th April to 2nd Oct 2005)

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS 27/10/2005)
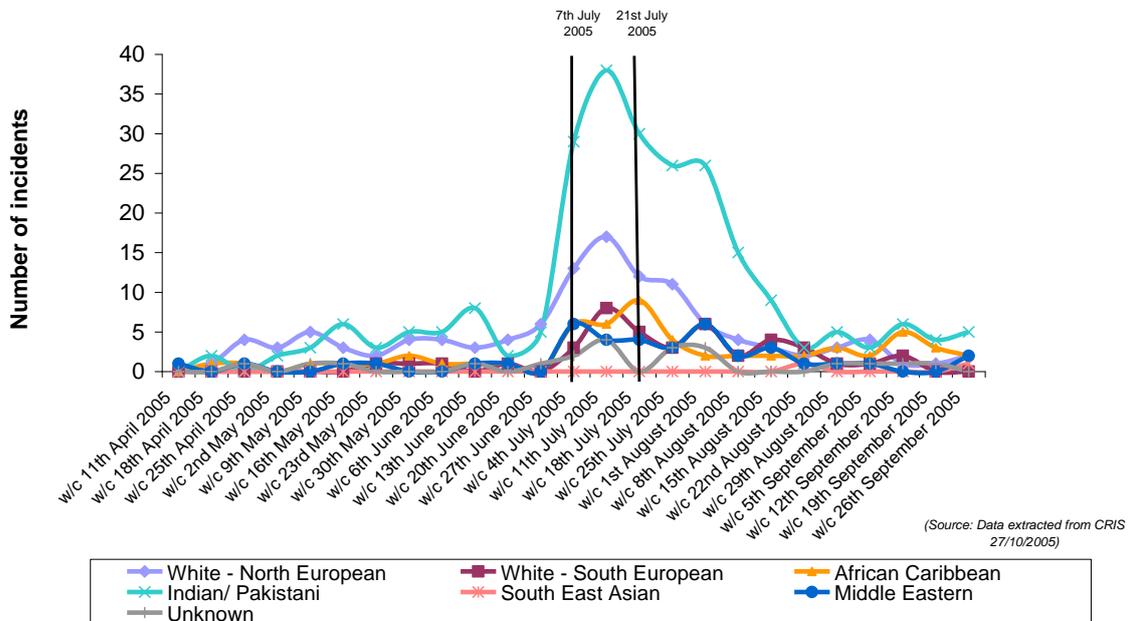
Out of the 636 faith hate incidents that were recorded by the MPS between 7 April and 7 October 2007 that were analysed by the authors together with Dr Paul Iganski, 409 were judged to be definite incidents of Islamophobia (see

figure 3.6 below). Figure 3.6 below shows the categories into which the other incidents fell.

Figure 3.6: Analysis of faith hate incidents to determine which were Islamophobic (7th April to 7th Oct 2005)

Category	Frequency
1. Certain that it is Islamophobia, targeted at Muslim(s) or perceived Muslim(s)	409
2. Backlash after an extreme incident that would appear to be a case of mistaken identity, but no evidence provided to determine reason for being targeted. For example, firebombing of Sikh temple on the night of 7/7 where no anti-Muslim messages were left at the scene	8
3. Definitely a faith hate incident, but does not fall into the category of 1 or 2. This includes both inter-religious and intra-religious incidents	9
4a. Clearly a racial incident but not enough information to indicate that there is a religious dimension. For example, comments like "Are you from Iraq? F*** off Iraquis"	79
4b. Incidents targeted at Jewish or Sikh individuals/ organisations. Under legislation these are seen as incidents targeted at a race of people, rather than at a faith.	54
5. Doesn't appear to be a faith or race hate incident at all	59
6. Unclear	8
7. Crime reports related to actual bombers/ bombings	10
Total	**636**

3.5   Patterns of Islamophobic incidents from 7 April to 7 October 2005

44 incidents of Islamophobia took place in the three months before 7 July 2005, 365 incidents of Islamophobia took place in the three months after 7 July. Some characteristics of the incidents did not change after 7 July, for example the method of contacting the police. Approximately two-fifths of victims or informants dialled 999, one-fifth attended the front counter and just under one-fifth dialled their local police station. There was a change, however, in the proportion of incidents notified to officers in the street, which after 7 July increased from 2.3% to 10.7%.

The times of the day during which the incidents were committed also showed no significant change after 7 July, with the largest proportion still taking place between six o'clock in the afternoon and midnight. The type of incident recorded also showed no dramatic changes, apart from a decrease in the proportion of violent incidents and incidents involving 'threats and harassment' and an increase in the proportion of incidents involving 'malicious communications'. (see figure 3.7 below).

Figure 3.7: A comparison of type of Islamophobic incident before and after 7ᵗʰ July 2005

Before 7ᵗʰ July 2005

Violence 29.5%
Non Crime Book 4.5%
Threats/harassment 43.2%
Malicious Communications 2.3%
Criminal Damage 15.9%
Theft 4.5%

Legend:
- Violence
- Non Crime Book
- Threats/harassment
- Malicious Communications
- Criminal Damage
- Theft
- Other
- Not recorded

After 7ᵗʰ July 2005

Violence 13.7%
Non Crime Book 9.0%
Threats/harassment 36.7%
Malicious Communications 12.6%
Criminal Damage 18.9%
Theft 3.6%
Other 2.5%
Not recorded 3.0%

Legend:
- Violence
- Non Crime Book
- Threats/harassment
- Malicious Communications
- Criminal Damage
- Theft
- Other
- Not recorded

The location of incidents did not show any dramatic changes, although there was an increase in the proportion of incidents that took place at places of worship following 7 July (see figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8: Location of Islamophobic incidents before and after 7th July 2005

Before 7th July: At/ near victim's home 22.7%, At victim's place of work 11.4%, At private property 6.8%, Letter/e-mail 2.3%, In public location 40.9%, At place of worship 4.5%, Other 6.8%, Unclear 4.5%

After 7th July: At/ near victim's home 19.2%, At victim's place of work 11.2%, At school 1.1%, Phone 4.9%, Letter/e-mail 3.0%, At private property 0.5%, In public location 39.2%, At place of worship 11.8%, Public property 1.4%, Other 7.7%

Legend:
- At/ near victim's home
- At victim's place of work
- At school
- At private property
- Phone
- Letter/e-mail
- In public location
- At place of worship
- Public property
- Other
- Unclear

44

While the numbers of victims increased dramatically after 7th July (see figure 3.9 below), the proportions of victims in each ethnic appearance grouping did not change. The proportion of 'Indian/ Pakistani' victims, for example, remained around 47%. Approximately two-thirds of the victims were male. The largest proportion of victims were aged between 21 and 40. More than three-quarters of the victims received no injury or were threatened rather than injured.

Figure 3.9: Number of victims of Islamophobic incidents from different ethnic groups
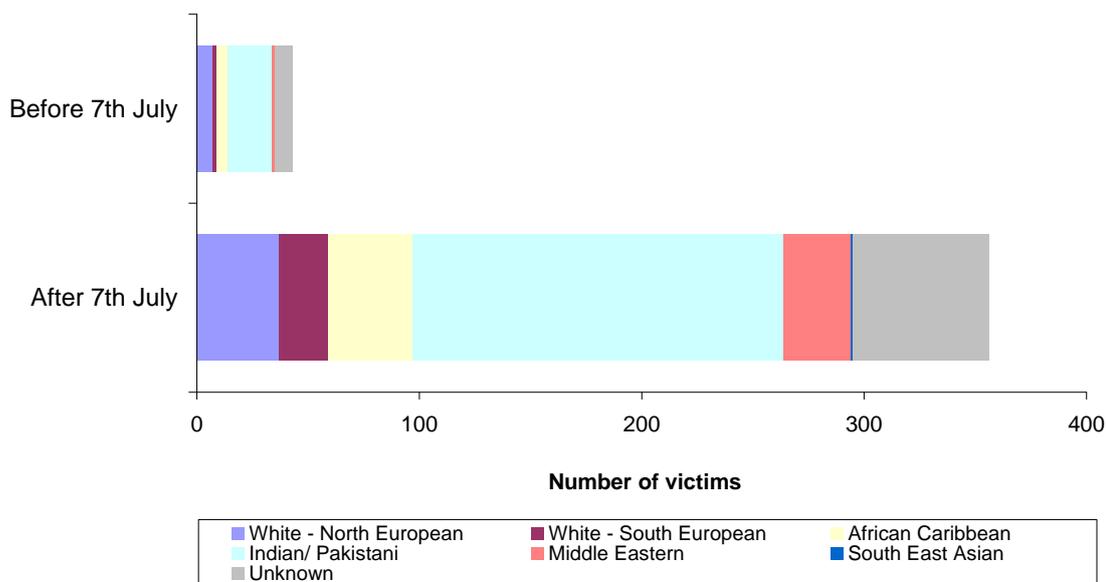
In almost two-thirds of the incidents the incident was directed towards an individual rather than a place of worship or building. More than two-thirds of the incidents involved offenders who were complete strangers to the victim and approximately one-third of incidents were repeat or ongoing. In more than half of cases the suspect was not identified so the police were unable to take any action.

Similarly in relation to suspects, there were many areas that showed no change after 7 July 2005. Approximately, four-fifths of suspects were male; one-quarter of suspects were aged 21-30. Over one-half of the suspects were 'White European' and one-quarter were 'African-Caribbean' and suspects were charged, cautioned or otherwise proceeded against in approximately one in five of cases. All of those suspects that were charged, cautioned or otherwise proceeded against were known to the victim in some way.

However, prior to 7 July, 60% of suspects were recorded as not being known to the victims; this increased to 80% after 7 July. After 7 July, three-fifths of those suspects that were known to the victims were neighbours. The language used by the suspects also showed no real difference before and after 7 July. The next two figures (figures 3.10 and 3.11), however, provide a pictorial representation of actual comments made and clearly show the change in magnitude of incidents.

***Figure 3.10: Language used during Islamophobic incidents
(before 7th July)***

"Paki…why are you Muslims here?"

"Bin Laden"

*"You f***ing Iraqis, our boys are going to kill you"*

"Islam scum"

"Muslim scum"

"Go home, Muslim"

"9/11 Islam, no thanx"

"stupid Asian who has come into this country to bomb it up"

"Kill Muslims"

*"You f***ing Muslim s**t"*

"Last year they threw a grenade into a road of tourists. I reckon we should have a 'Kill a Muslim' day."

"dirty Muslim, go back home"

"we hate all you Pakis, we hate all you Muslims"

***Figure 3.11: Language used during Islamophobic incidents
(after 7th July)***

"Suicide bomber"

"Where's your rucksack?"

"You've got a bomb in this bag. I'll make sure you are not in this country and you can't kill any more people"

"Go back to your own country. You lot are all the same. You lot have caused this"

"All Muslims deserve to die"

*"F***ing Muslim!"*   *"Bomber"*

"You people are bombers, you are evil, why are you covering up"

"dirty Paki terrorist"

*"I hate bl***y Muslims, terrorist! If a Muslim comes into my house I will cut their throat"*

"Muslims are murderers. Islam is evil. How many more have to die?"

"Take off your scarf, go back home. I hate Muslim people"

"Go back to your own country"

"We'll kill your children and put a bomb through your letter box because you are Muslim"

"Where are you hiding your bombs?"

"Maybe now it's time to start listening to the BNP…It's now war on Muslims throughout Britain"

"Muslim scum! Out now!"

"Bomb all Mosques. Kill their children"

*"You types are responsible for the bombing, f**ing b*****d!"*

"Hey, monkey woman! Have you got a bomb in your pocket?"

"You Paki! You Muslim! You terrorist!"

*"F***ing Muslim terrorist! Get out of my country and take that mask off, or I'll take it off you!"*

A number of telephone polls were carried out in the immediate aftermath of the bombings to determine the views of the Muslim community and of the general public about a number of issues. Some of the findings obtained were as follows:

- 32% of Muslims felt that non-Muslims had been hostile towards them since the bombings (YouGov poll for Telegraph, 25/7/05)

- 61% of Muslim commuters surveyed suffered substantial stress in the days following the first terrorist attacks, almost double the proportion of stressed Londoners from other faiths (British Medical Journal article, results based on MORI poll conducted 18-20 July 2005)

- 65% of the general public thought the Muslim community did not do enough to prevent terrorist attacks (BPIX poll for the Daily Mail, 24/7/05) and 46% felt that Islam poses a threat to Western liberal democracy (YouGov poll for Telegraph, 27/7/05)

- 86% of Muslims felt they belong to Britain (MORI poll for Sun, 23/7/05) and 74% were surprised the suicide bombers were British (ICM poll for Guardian, 26/7/05)

Leaders of the Hindu and Sikh communities expressed concerns about the increased vulnerability of their community. Ramesh Kallidai, Secretary General of the Hindu forum of Britain stated on 6th September: "as Asians, we all look the same [to the public] and are equally vulnerable to any backlash". The Met police response to this increase was to set up a unit called 'Communities Together' which was to provide a help and advice line to offer support and reassurance particularly to those communities who felt vulnerable following the terrorist attacks. Faith communities also set up their own helplines, for example, the Muslim Council of Britain launched an Incident Monitoring Service for Muslims.

3.6 Features and patterns of Islamophobic incidents recorded by the MPS between April 2006 and December 2012[37]

Since the introduction of the separate Islamophobia identifier onto the CRIS system on 15 March 2006, it has been possible to extract and analyse information on Islamophobic incidents. A total of 1977 Islamophobic incidents were recorded on the system between 1 April 2006 and 31 December 2012.

Figure 3.12 below shows the rise and fall of monthly Islamophobic incident figures over this time period.

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[37] Further details of the data sources used and the methodology used in analysing the data in this section can be found in the Appendix for this chapter.

Figure 3.12: MPS Recorded Islamophobic Incidents (Apr 2006 - Dec 2012)

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)
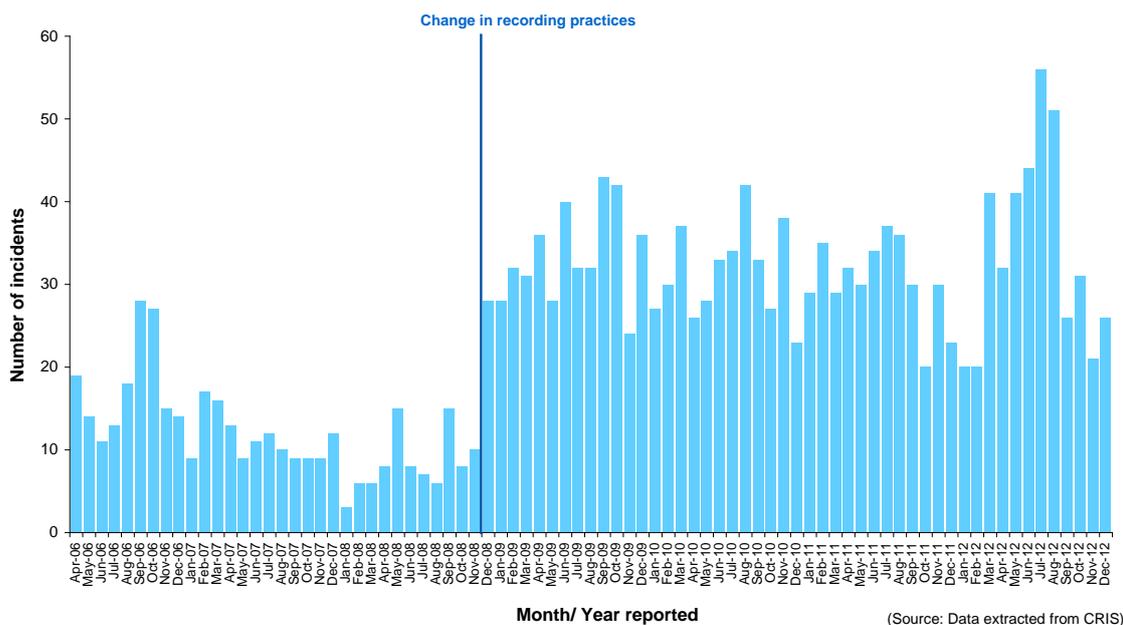
Since the changes made to the CRIS system in December 2008, which made the recording of the faith against which a 'faith hate' incident was directed at mandatory, it can be seen that the number of incidents recorded specifically as Islamophobic have increased from an average of 12 per month to an average of 32 per month. This does not mean that the incidence of Islamophobic incidents has increased suddenly but instead is likely to mean that Islamophobic incidents that were previously flagged as generic 'faith hate' or racist incidents are now being specifically flagged as 'Islamophobic' incidents. Islamophobic incidents are therefore being more easily identified.

The boroughs with the highest numbers of Islamophobic incidents during this time period were Westminster (183), Tower Hamlets (111), Camden (105), Brent (94), Islington (94) and Waltham Forest (81). Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest also have a larger proportion of Muslim residents in their boroughs (34.5% and 21.9% respectively), according to the 2011 Census. Figures 3.13 and 3.14 overleaf show the distribution of Islamophobic incidents across London and the distribution of the Muslim population across London respectively. Tables with exact figures can be seen in the Appendix for this chapter (figures A3.1 and A3.2).

Figure 3.13: Recorded Islamophobic incidents (Mar 2006 – Dec 2012)

KEY

Number of incidents

- 11 - 29
- 30 - 59
- 60 - 79
- 80 +
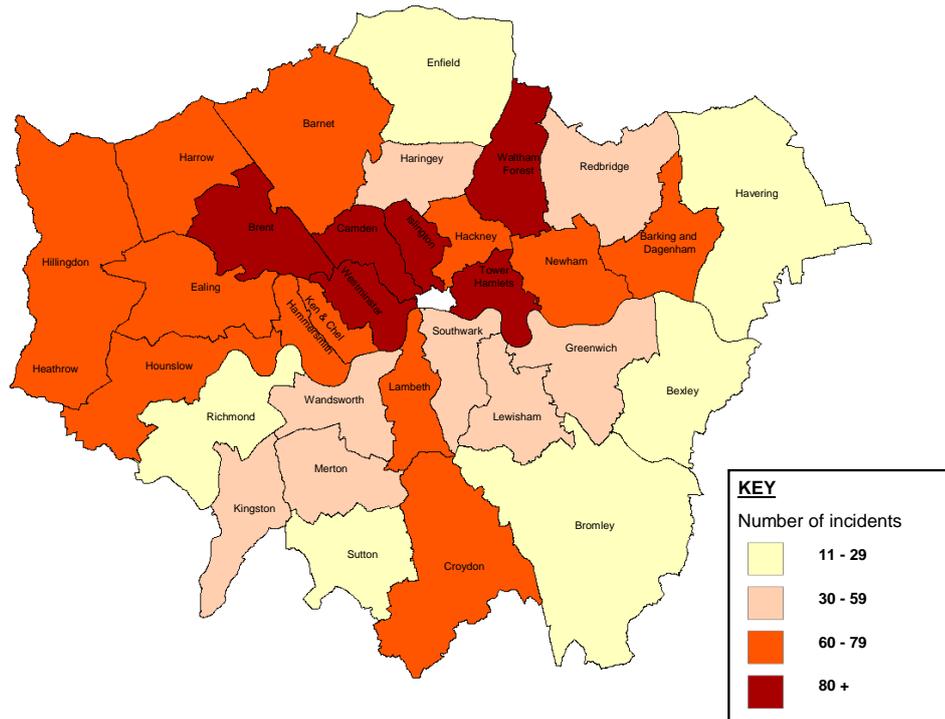
Figure 3.14: Muslim Population in London (Census 2011)

KEY

Percentage of Population

- 0 - 4.9 %
- 5 - 9.9 %
- 10 - 19.9%
- 20%+
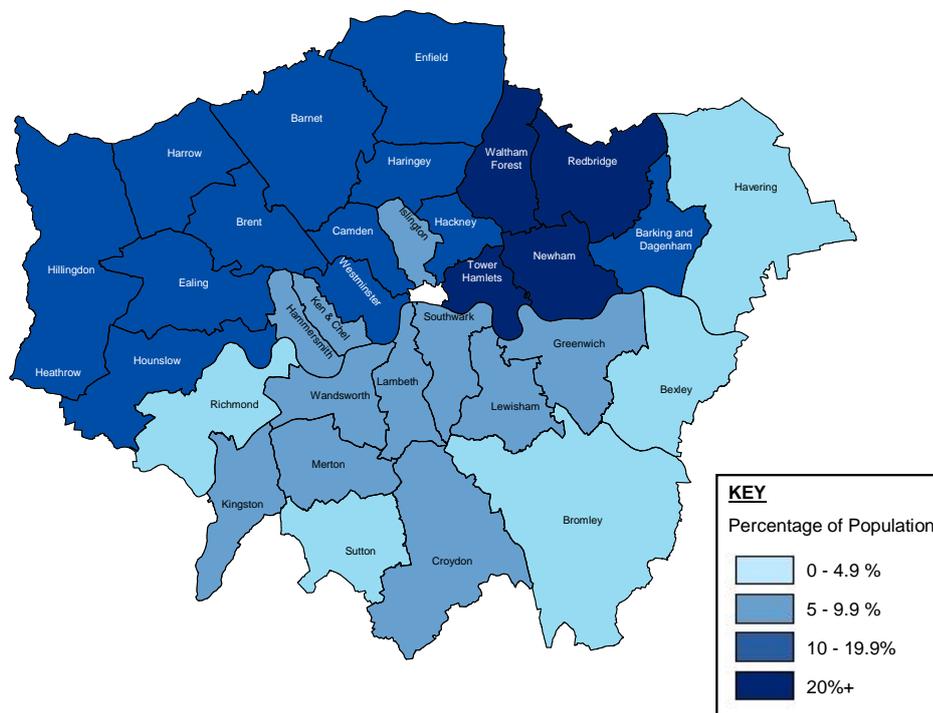
The type of incident reported over the period of April 2006 to December 2012 most frequently involved threats and/ or harassment (48.4%), followed by some degree of violence (19.9%) and non-crime book Islamophobic incidents (17.2%)[38]. Figure 3.15 below provides further details.

Figure 3.15: Type of Islamophobic incident reported (April 2006 - December 2012)

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)
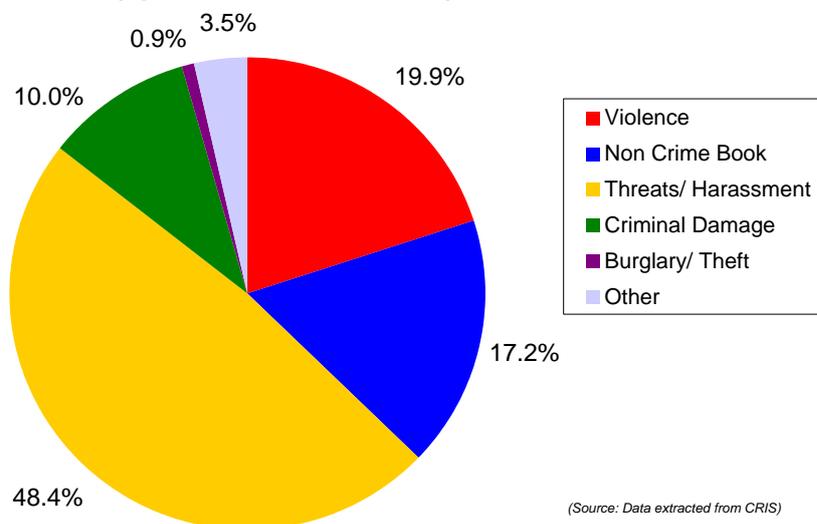
The incidents reported were more likely to take place in the afternoon, with the largest proportion of incidents taking place between 15:01 and 18:00 hours (see figure 3.16 for further details).

Figure 3.16: Time Islamophobic incident was committed on/from (April 2006 - December 2012)

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)
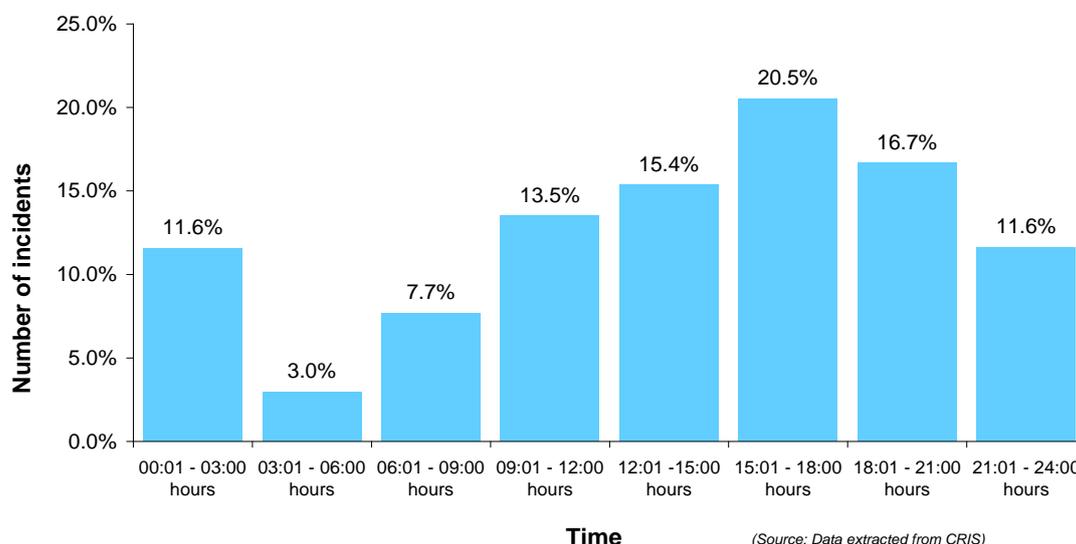
The largest proportion of Islamophobic incidents (61.7%) was reported to the police by telephone (either 999 or other police telephone number), followed by 17.1% that were reported at a police front counter, 7.3% that were identified by the police, 6.0% that were reported to police in the street, 4.9% that were

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[38] A 'non-crime book' incident refers to an incident that may not constitute a criminal offence when first reported but is still recorded as a serious matter by the police. The term 'non-crime book' has now been replaced with the term 'crime-related incident' and this is defined in more detail at the front of this report in the definitions section.

reported via the internet or email and 0.4% that were reported via a third party.

More than three-quarters of Islamophobic incidents reported either took place in the street (29.5%), in/ near the victim's home (24.9%), in/ near a shop or restaurant (10.5%), in a place of worship or religious location (6.4%) or waiting for or on public transport (6.3%). In other words, the incidents occurred as the victims were going about their daily lives (see figure 3.17 below).

Figure 3.17: Location of Islamophobic incident (April 2006 to December 2012)

1.7% 1.1% 5.1%
2.0%
2.3%
2.3%
2.4%
2.5%
3.2%
6.3%
6.4%
10.5%
29.5%
24.9%

- In street
- In/ near home
- In/ near shop/ restaurant
- Place of worship/ religious location
- Public transport (at stop, on transport)
- In/ near work
- Other travel-related location
- In place of education
- Other public place
- In park/ open space
- Malicious communications (internet/tel)
- Other place of residence
- Pub/ licensed club
- Victim unsure/ not known/ not applicable
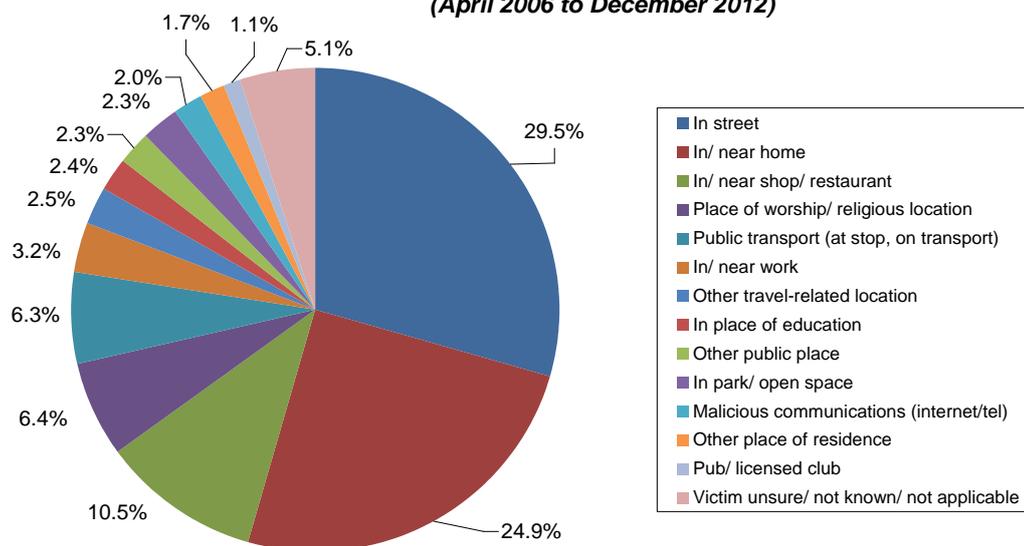
(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)

A total of 131 incidents (7.4%) were reported by companies or public bodies. Of the remaining incidents, over half of the victims reporting were male (57.2%, compared to 42.8% of females).

This proportion of female victims is higher than the proportions of female victims for antisemitic, racial or homophobic incidents reported to the police over the same time period (25.9%, 38.2% and 21.2% respectively)[39].

Over half (56.5%) of the companies or public bodies reporting an Islamophobic incident had reported previous crimes or incidents to the MPS over the previous 12 month period. About one in five (19.1%) of the individual victims reporting an Islamophobic incident had reported previous crimes or incidents to the MPS over the previous 12 month period.

A small number of victims (2.6%) stated that they had some form of disability.

Looking at the age of the male and female victims reporting to the police, the females reporting were generally younger than the male victims reporting, with the largest proportion of female victims (36.5%) aged 21-30 and the largest proportion of male victims (32.7%) aged 31-40 (see figure 3.18 below).

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[39] Data extracted from CRIS on 09/01/2013.

**Figure 3.18: Gender and age of victims of Islamophobic incidents reported
(April 2006 - December 2012)**

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)
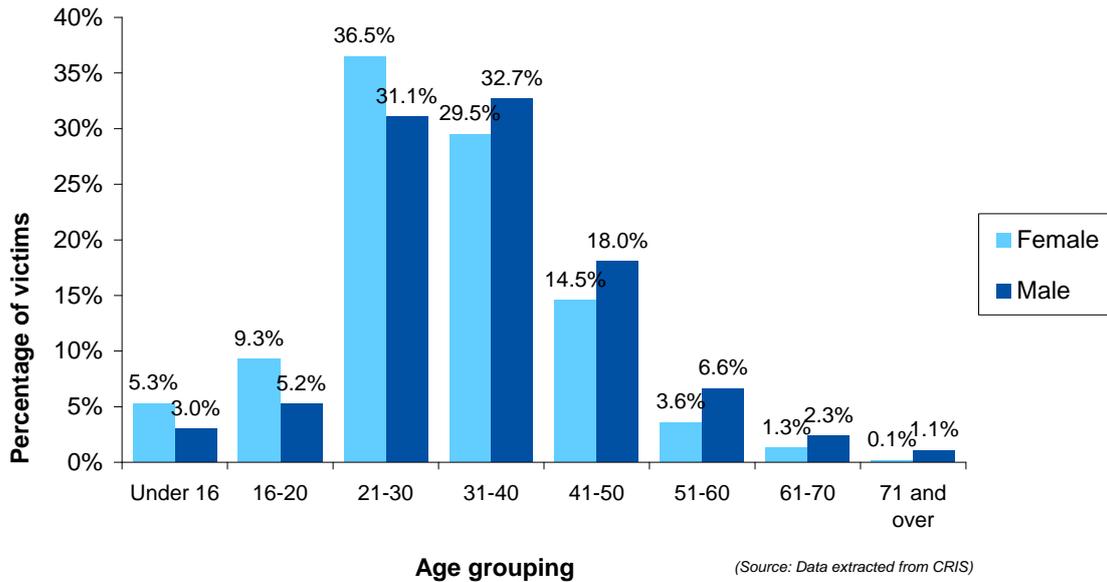
Approximately half of the victims reporting Islamophobic incidents to the police were 'Indian/ Pakistani' in ethnic appearance (53.0%) and the next largest group were 'African Caribbean' in ethnic appearance (15.4%) (see figure 3.19 below).

**Figure 3.19: Ethnic appearance of victim reporting Islamophobic incidents
(April 2006 to December 2012)**

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)
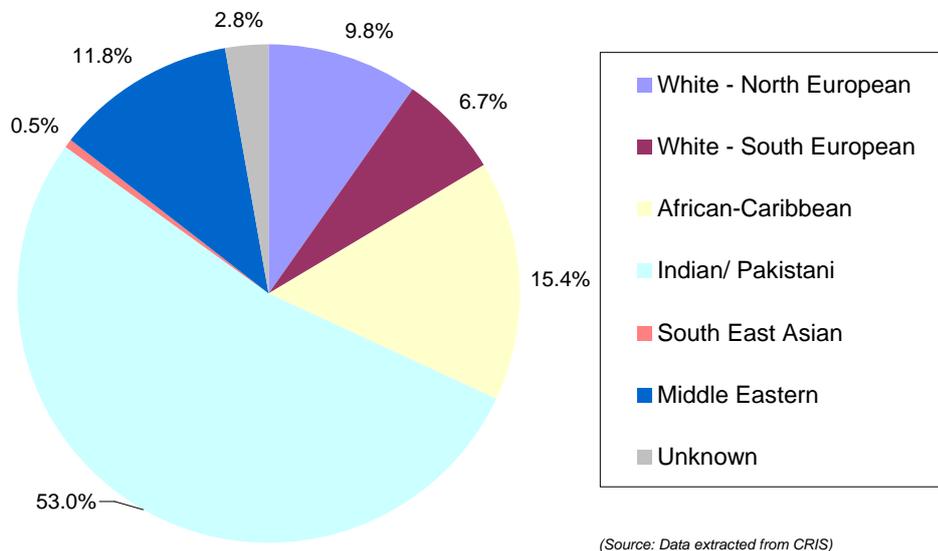
Prior to December 2008, it was not mandatory to record the faith of victims of Islamophobic incidents and in the majority of reports this was not recorded (78.8%). From December 2008 onwards the recording of the victim's faith became mandatory. Since then, the majority of victims of Islamophobic incidents stated that their faith was 'Islam' (82.6%). A total of 8.5% gave a religion other than 'Islam' and the victim's faith was unknown in a further 8.9% of incidents (see figure 3.20 below).

**Figure 3.20: Religion of victims of Islamophobic incidents
(Dec 2008 - Dec 2012)**

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)
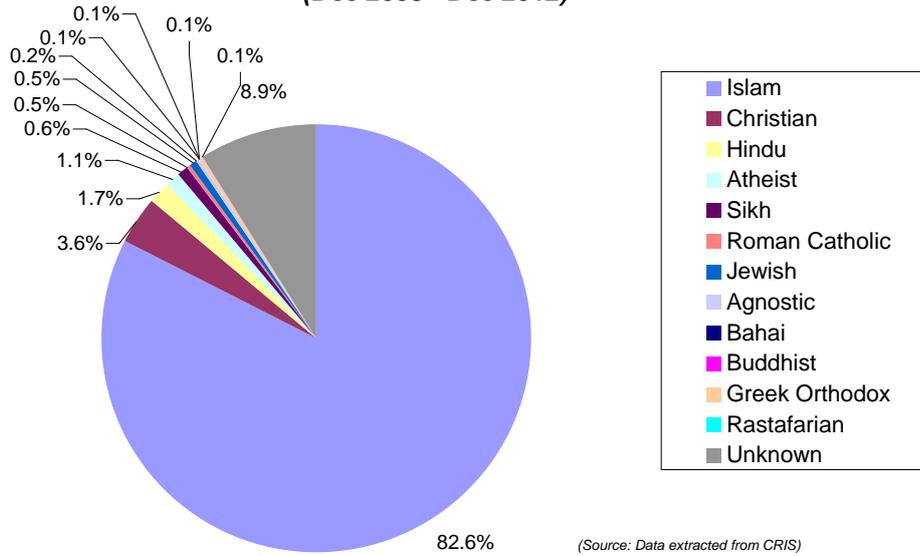
Over half of the victims of Islamophobic incidents reported to the police stated that they were from the United Kingdom (55.4%). A further 20.9% were of an unknown nationality. The next largest proportions of victims were from Africa (8.3%), South Asia (6.6%) and the Middle East (4.6%) (see figure 3.21 below).

Figure 3.21: Nationality of victims of Islamophobic incidents

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)

53
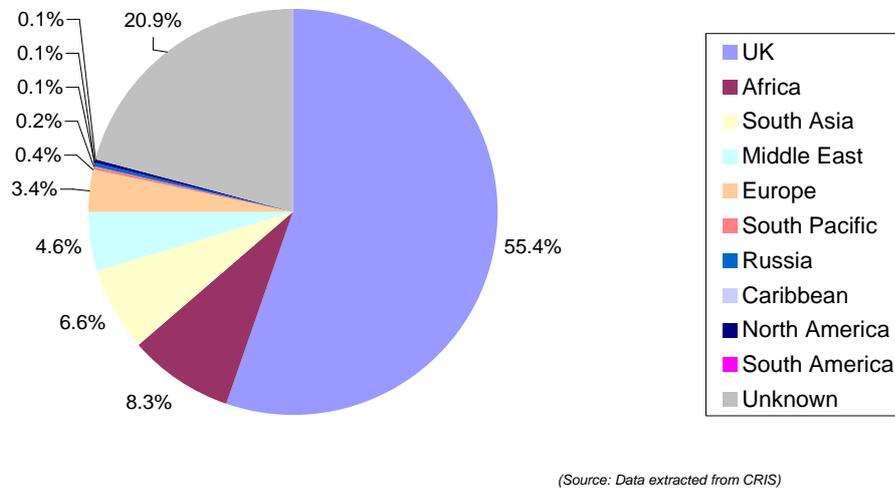
The majority of suspects involved in Islamophobic incidents between April 2006 and December 2012 were male (70.4%, compared to 21.2% of female suspects and 8.4% of suspects of unknown gender). Over half of suspects were aged 21 to 50 (58.2%) (see figure 3.22 below).

Figure 3.22: Age of suspect in Islamophobic incidents (April 2006 - December 2012)

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)
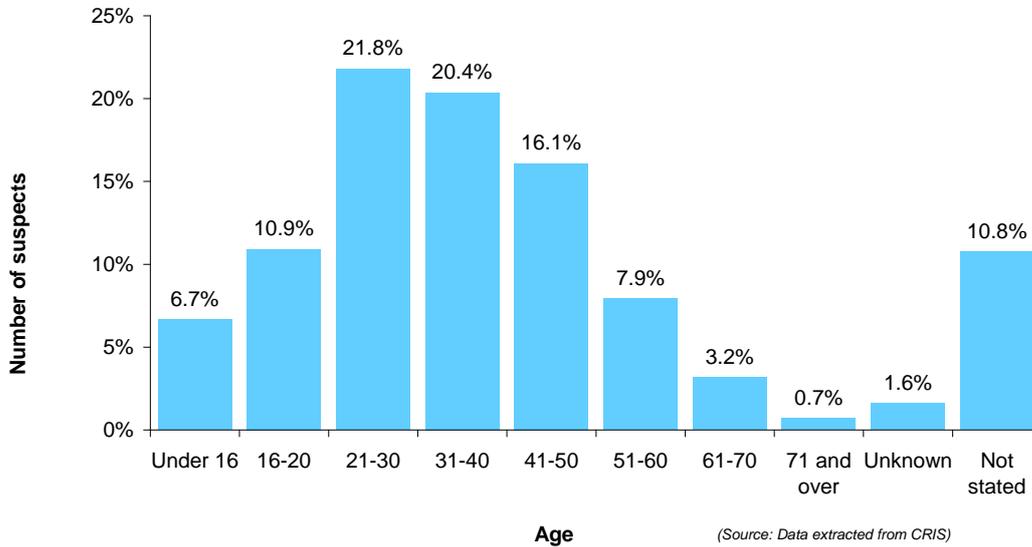
Just over half of the suspects were 'White – North European' in ethnic appearance (54.2%). The next largest proportion were 'African Caribbean' in ethnic appearance (17.6%) (see figure 3.23 below).

Figure 3.23: Ethnic appearance of suspect in Islamophobic incidents (April 2006 to December 2012)
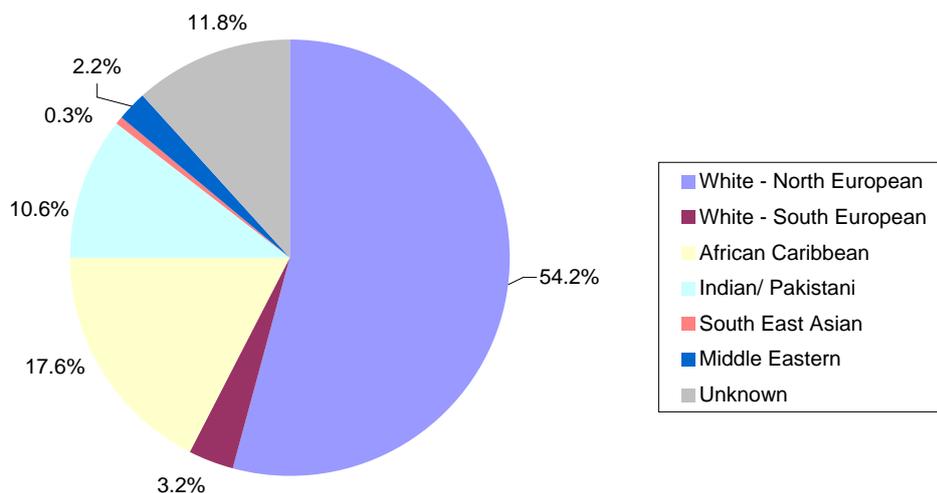
(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)

The majority of suspects were either not known to the victim or this information was not provided (77.0%). Of those suspects that were known to the victim, the largest proportions were neighbours (10.4%), acquaintances or friends (4.1%) or relatives including in-laws (1.6%) (see figure 3.24 below).

Figure 3.24: How the suspect was known to the victim in Islamophobic incidents (April 2006 to December 2012)

Note: The category 'Other' is made up of the following categories: ex-employee, current partner, teacher, school worker, student or pupil, social worker, patient of victim, known in some other way.

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)
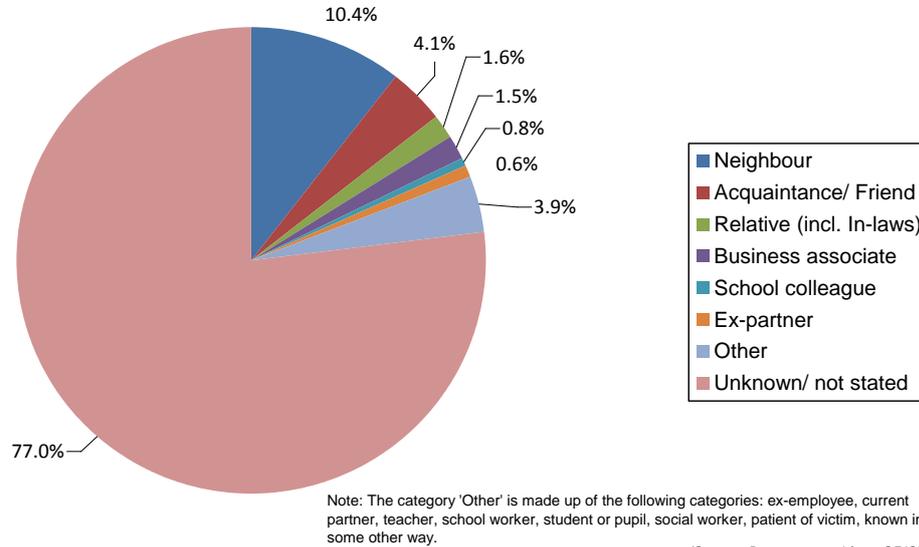
Of those persons recorded as 'accused'[40] in Islamophobic incidents during April 2006 to December 2012, the majority were male (81.7%, compared to 18.3% of females). Almost half of the persons accused were aged 21-40 (49.9%) (see figure 3.25 below).

Figure 3.25: Age of person accused in Islamophobic incidents (April 2006 - December 2012)

(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)
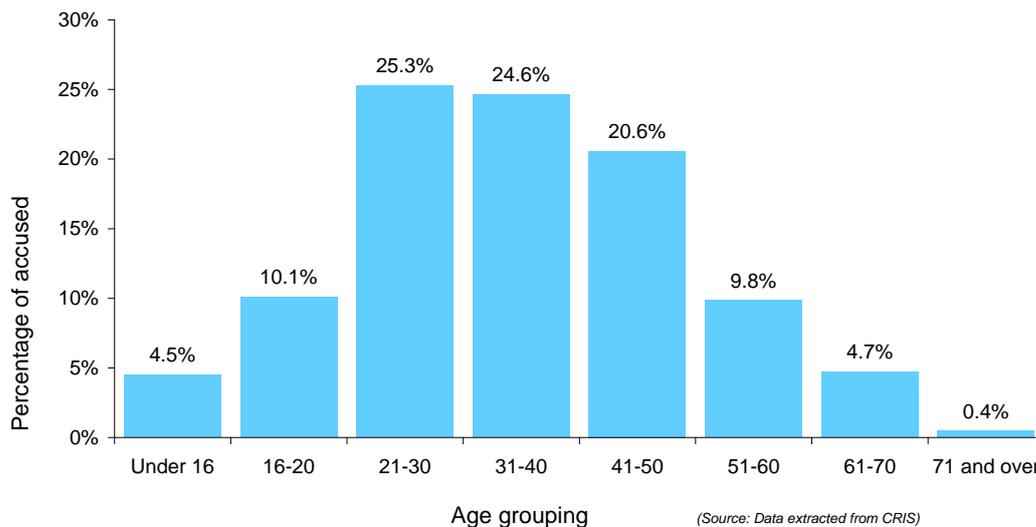
The majority of the persons accused were 'White – North European' in ethnic appearance (60.6%), the next largest proportions were 'Indian/ Pakistani' and

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[40] An 'accused' is a suspect who has been charged, cautioned or had other proceedings taken against them.

'African-Caribbean' in ethnic appearance (15.9% and 15.2% respectively) (see figure 3.26 below).

Figure 3.26: Ethnic appearance of person accused in Islamophobic incidents (April 2006 to December 2012)
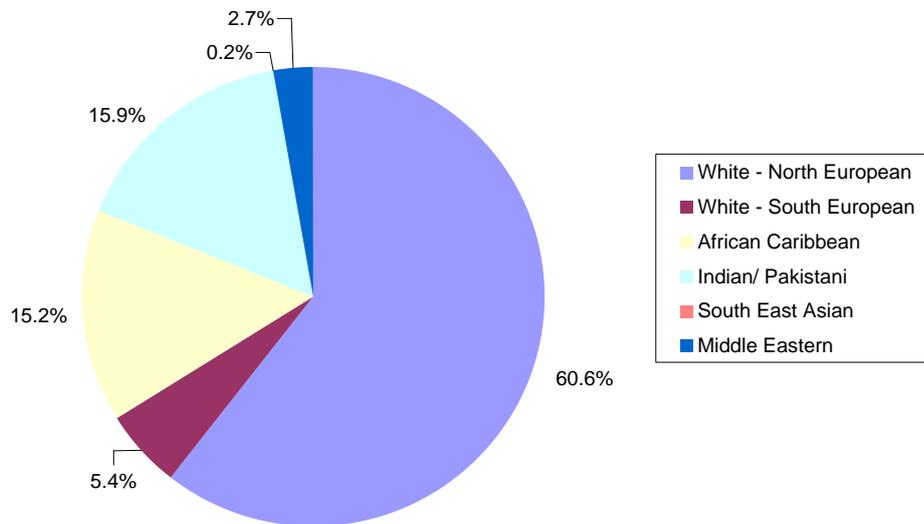
(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)

The largest proportions of persons accused whose birth place was known were born in the United Kingdom (29.3%) or London itself (15.4%) (see figure 3.27 below).

Figure 3.27: Birth place of persons accused in Islamophobic incidents (April 2006 to December 2012)
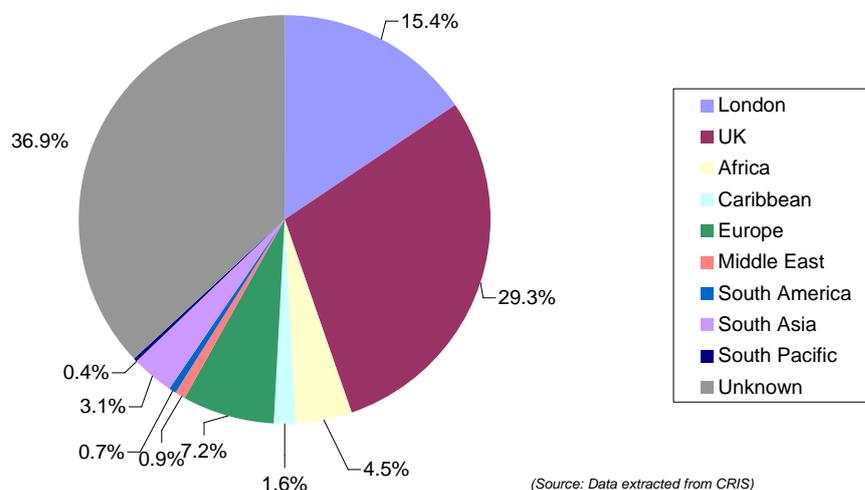
(Source: Data extracted from CRIS)

The majority (70.0%) of persons accused were charged, a further 18.6% were cautioned and 3.4% either received a summons, a fixed penalty notice or a youth reprimand or warning.

4 Understanding the situational dynamics of Islamophobic incidents

4.1 Aim

This chapter reports on an in-depth analysis of textual information in the MPS crime reports for a sample of recorded Islamophobic incidents. The overall aim of the analysis was to identify the features and patterns of the incidents.

A further analysis of the same sample of incidents was carried out to determine the quality of the service provided to the victims (both in terms of investigation and supervision). This is outlined in chapter 6.

4.2 Objectives

- To raise understanding of the nature of crimes motivated by anti-Muslim hate.
- To provide general information for preventative measures.
- To determine whether there are any gaps in the service provided.
- To identify areas where investigation, supervision and partnership working can be improved.

4.3 Method

An analysis of the context and situational dynamics of the incidents was carried out by DCFD. Using a grounded theory approach, this process was developed in partnership with Dr Paul Iganski from the University of Lancaster. The crime reports that were identified as Islamophobic incidents[41] were analysed by systematically and separately reading the reports and assessing each element of the incident using a coding framework (for further details, see the appendix for this chapter). This framework enabled the type of incident to be determined and contained a range of other sensitising questions to allow different patterns and features to be determined. This allowed the records to be characterised for both context and comparability. Furthermore this process allowed the identification of extremism.

A total of 143 Islamophobic incidents were identified on the Crime Reporting information System (CRIS) for the months of October 2008, March 2009 and September 2009. These specific months were selected for the following reasons:

- **October 2008:** This provided a comparison time period before recording processes on CRIS were changed in December 2008 to make the identification of Islamophobic incidents (and other hate crime incidents) more accurate.
- **March 2009:** This is a time period which allowed sufficient time for the new recording processes introduced in December 2008 to be

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[41] The ACPO and MPS definition of an Islamophobic incident is the following: "Any incident that is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated or aggravated by fear and or hatred of Islam, Muslim people or Islamic culture."

embedded. It also provided an example of a low or normal tension month.
- **September 2009:** This was identified by stakeholders as a time period which provided an example of a high tension month due to EDL and other far-right activity that took place during this month.

There were two stages applied to identify crime records that were motivated by Islamophobia. In the first instance, all incidents that were identified and recorded on the CRIS system as 'Islamophobic incidents' were extracted. Secondly, these were supplemented by a specific keyword search of the Integrated Intelligence Platform (IIP), which enables searches of the full details within the CRIS reports. This second stage identified incidents which were potential Islamophobic incidents but had not been 'flagged' [recorded] as such on the CRIS system. The full list of keywords used in this search can be seen in the appendix for this chapter.

A separate scrutiny of the quality of the investigation and supervision, as well as other factors (including whether the impact on the wider community was considered by the investigating officer, the disposal of the incident and its appropriateness, and the timeliness of the investigation), was carried out by police officers in the Community Safety Unit (CSU) Delivery Team (based in TP CBS OCU).

As this methodology is based on the analysis of qualitative data, the findings are based on interpretations of the information and therefore the findings should be read in this context. One person's interpretation of the data may differ from another's. However, the methodology has tried to account for this by ensuring that there is agreement about the meaning of the information and resulting categorisation by more than one person. In this way it is possible to 'audit trail' the analysis so this could be replicated and the findings be verified.

4.4   Sample - Findings

A total of 143 incidents were examined. However, 9 incidents were determined by the researchers not to contain any information that would enable them to be identified as Islamophobic, faith or racial hate incidents. These have been excluded from the analysis presented in this section.

Of the remaining 134 incidents:
- 99 were regarded as clear Islamophobic incidents,
- 11 as faith incidents that were inter or intra-religious,
- 10 were clear racial incidents but insufficient information was recorded in the crime report to be able to determine whether they were definitely Islamophobic incidents, and
- a further 14 were categorised as 'unclear'[42].

Overall, 80 of the incidents (60%) were flagged (or identified) as Islamophobic incidents, a further 48 incidents (36%) had another flag which would have also been considered within the range of incidents reviewed by specialist hate

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[42] 'Unclear' means that not enough information was provided in the CRIS report to determine whether it was an Islamophobic, racial or faith hate incident or not.

crime units called the Community Safety Unit (such as 'faith hate', 'racial', etc.) and 6 incidents (4%) were not flagged at all.

Looking at the flagging that took place during the three different time periods examined, it is clear that the changes made to the recording processes used on CRIS in December 2008 have indeed had a positive effect on the accurate identification of Islamophobic incidents. While only 21.6% of incidents that were analysed for October 2008 had an 'Islamophobic' identifier, 66.7% had an 'Islamophobic' identifier in March 2009 and 100% had an 'Islamophobic' identifier in September 2009. The figures below show this in more detail.

Figure 4.1: Flagging in October 2008
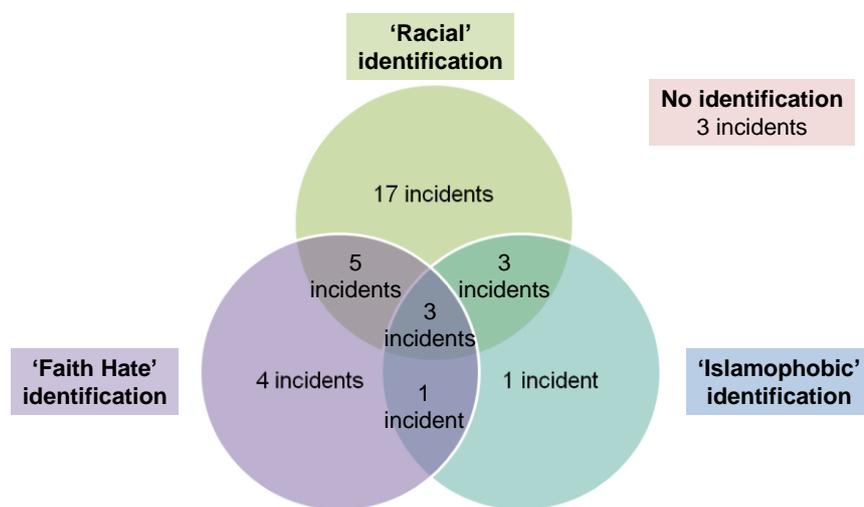
Figure 4.2: Flagging in March 2009

'Racial'
identification

No identification
0 incidents

11 incidents

15
incidents

'Faith Hate'
identification

7
incidents

'Islamophobic'
identification
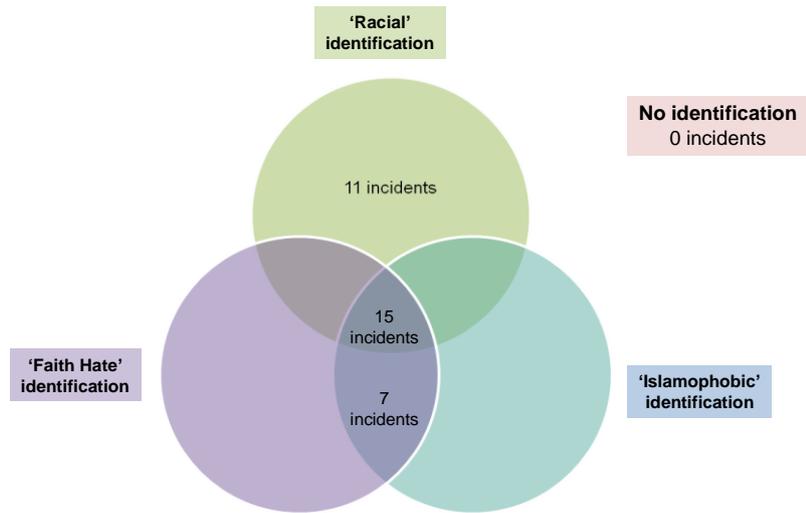
Figure 4.3: Flagging in September 2009

'Racial'
identification

No identification
0 incidents

18
incidents

'Faith Hate'
identification

11
incidents

'Islamophobic'
identification
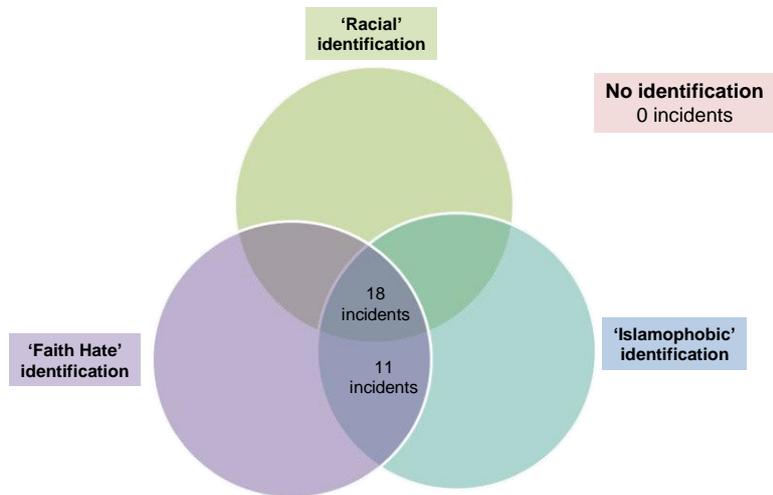
4.5   Typology of incidents motivated by Islamophobic and anti-Muslim hate

Early 'hate crime' research seemed to suggest that 'hate crimes' were perpetrated by members of extremist or far-right organisations or by individuals with radical views. However, further research highlighted that this was not the case and that, instead, a variety of factors such as economic or psychological influenced perpetrators of such crimes. Levin and McDevitt (1993: 5), for example, observed that:

> *"[M]ost hate crimes do not involve organised hate groups, whose members are dedicated to the goal of achieving racial purity. Perpetrators are usually not card-carrying members of any racist [extremist] organisations… Hate crimes are more often committed under ordinary circumstances by otherwise unremarkable types".*

They also highlighted that

> *"[i]t is of even greater concern that the bigotry espoused by white supremacists has moved into the mainstream of… society, even if in more subtle terms"* (1993:114)

This was something that our research wanted to examine. If these incidents were more likely to be committed by extremists or radicals, then there should be evidence of 'pre-meditated' activity by such offenders. It is not possible to directly evaluate the offenders' motivations from crime reports, which focus more on the details of the incident and victims' perceptions of the incidents. However, it is possible to look at whether the offenders show some degree of pre-planning in engineering their interaction with the victim and use particular language or symbolism whilst committing the incident.

In fact, just over half of incidents (57%) did not show any degree of planning prior to the incident taking place and were therefore categorised as 'spontaneous'. Just over one-third of incidents (37%) showed some degree of planning by the suspect prior to the incident taking place. Furthermore, looking specifically at those incidents where the perpetrator took some pre-meditated action to instigate the incident by engineering their interaction with the victim, only 27% of incidents showed any evidence of this. This is much smaller than the proportion of premeditated incidents found in the analysis of anti-Semitic incidents in 2005, where the proportion was 39%[43]. However, there were higher proportions of Islamophobic incidents categorised as 'aggravated' and 'opportunistic' compared to anti-Semitic incidents (31% compared to 14% and 26% compared to 17% respectively).

The full categorisation for the Islamophobic incidents can be seen in figure 4.4 below. Full definitions of each of the categories can be found in the appendix for this chapter.

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[43] Iganski, P. et al (2005: 41) - referred to in this publication as 'mission' incidents

Figure 4.4: Typology of Islamophobic incidents

Unclear: 5.2%
Interpersonal: 6.0%
Interpreted: 9.7%
Aggravated: 29.1%
Opportunistic: 24.6%
Pre-meditated - Indirect contact: 13.4%
Pre-meditated - Direct contact: 6.7%
Pre-meditated - Inadvertent: 0.7%
Pre-meditated - Indiscriminate: 3.7%
Pre-meditated - both direct and indirect contact: 0.7%

Base = 134
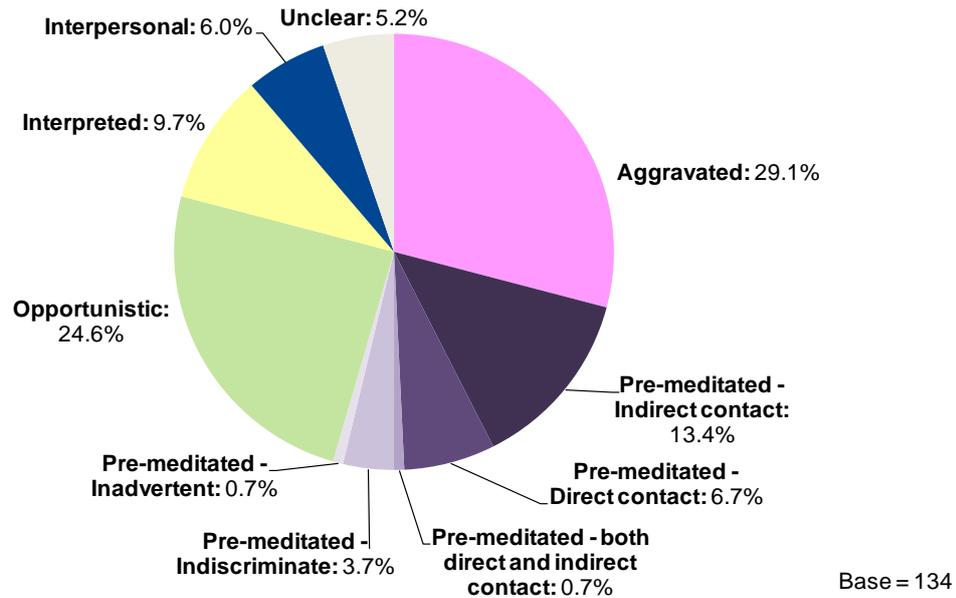
4.5.1 Aggravated incidents

As mentioned above the largest group of incident have been characterised as 'aggravated'. This is where the offender and victim may or may not know each other but are caught up in what may have started as a perfectly innocent interaction. However, during the course of the interaction the offender perceives that they have been wronged in some way. As a result the offender reacts through the expression of anti-Muslim hate. For example, a Muslim woman was waiting in a queue for children's face painting in a shopping mall. While her children were playing nearby she was verbally abused by a woman who was behind her in the queue. The woman who was abusive had felt that the victim had forfeited her place as her children weren't waiting with her. As a result of her frustration the abusive women shouted phrases such as, "Go home" and "What are you going to do about it, blow yourself up?". The abusive woman quickly left the shopping mall as soon as the Muslim woman threatened to call the police.

Another example of this is where a Muslim man and women were making a u-turn in their car after picking up their child from school. A male driver in another car nearby became angry, bumped into their car with his, then got out holding a tyre iron and shouted the following abuse: "What the f**k are you doing in this country anyway, you Muslim f**kers". The victims of the incident drove off but felt worried that the suspect may have followed them.

Both of the perpetrators had not planned to have such heated interactions however their clear prejudice towards Muslim people has emerged from their own frustrations. The perpetrators either used the conflict situation they were in as a way of venting their anger or used bigoted abuse as a way of satiating or managing their own anger. Previous research has shown that perpetrators of hate crime commonly turn the victim into the 'other'[44] and this is what we see through their comments about 'go back to your country'.

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[44] See Perry (2003: 184)

4.5.2 Premeditated incidents

Just over a quarter of incidents were characterised as 'premeditated', in that the offender intentionally took some deliberate action to instigate the incident by engineering their interaction with the victim.

Although the terminology 'premeditated' has been used in this research to refer to incidents where there was some kind of deliberate action taken by the offender, the research also draws on the typology of hate crime developed by Northern University Scholars Jack Levin and Jack McDevitt from an analysis of hate crime recorded by the Boston Police Department. Levin and McDevitt (1993: 89) use the term 'mission' hate crime offenders and they explain that these are the rarest type of offenders: "they seek to rid the world of evil by disposing of the members of a despised group". It should be noted, however, that Levin and McDevitt had access to detailed offender profiles and records for their research, whereas this current research was restricted to crime and incident reports only. Consequently, while it is not always possible to show from the information available that offenders were as extreme as to wish to remove their victims from society, it is possible to show whether there is a degree of premeditation or whether deliberate action has been taken to instigate the incident.

A number of sub-categories of premeditated incidents were developed, which are differentiated from each other by the extent to which offenders made themselves visible to the victims:

> *Direct contact* – this is where there is face to face interaction between victim and suspect;
>
> *Indirect contact* – this is through letter or phone message directed at a specific individual or organisation;
>
> *Indiscriminate* – this is where anti-Muslim literature or graffiti is found in a public location;
>
> *Inadvertent* – this is where an expression of Islamophobia/ anti-Muslim sentiment was overheard by someone for whom the message was not intended, with that person taking offence.

Of the premeditated incidents, the largest subcategory was incidents where there was indirect contact between the victims and offenders. One example of this is an incident where the victim's partner returned home to find their car covered with writing and stickers. CCTV footage showed two males writing over victim's car with marker pen. They left for a short while but returned with a carrier bag of stickers which they stuck all over the car. From the CCTV footage, it was determined that the perpetrators had stayed for approximately 20 minutes sticking more than 50 stickers on the car. Some stickers had racially and religiously offensive words, whereas some appeared to be gang tags and general offensive words. The brother-in-law of the victim (who lives at same address) had been subjected to similar incidents previously.

It is evident from this example that the perpetrators clearly intended to carry out this type of abuse, held bigoted beliefs and used the gang tags to show that their views were endorsed by others, a perverted sense of 'strength in numbers' intended to further intimidate the victims. Additionally, despite the

CCTV footage the perpetrators remain anonymous, compounding the distress felt by the victims.

Another equally worrying example is where a threatening letter was delivered by hand to a post box in a Mosque. The letter stated the following; "You evil sh**ty b*stards a***-holes! F**ck off back to Wogland now…You all need burning alive!! You're all terrorists and thugs!!… Taliban t*ssers you all are! We want our benefit money back in full." The Mosque staff were particularly worried about reference to burning people alive, as there had previously been an attempt to firebomb the mosque. Although no one was actually physically injured in either of these cases, it can be argued that the emotional distress caused to the victims was just as damaging.

Conversely 'face to face' contact can be illustrated through this example of a direct premeditated action. A Muslim woman wearing a headscarf was walking along a street with her two young children in their pushchair. Four men, who were in a nearby car, shouted the following abuse at her, "F**king Pakis", "Muslim terrorists" and threw eggs at her. They then got out of their car appearing ready to chase her but drove off when following cars hooted their horns as their car had stopped in the middle of the road. Not only is it of concern that the men felt able to hurl abuse and attack a woman in the street in the presence of her children (something that will have placed her in a more vulnerable position than if she had been on her own), but the fact that they later returned to throw more eggs and shout further abuse shows a worrying persistence and determination.

In the above incident, the perpetrators purposefully instigated direct abusive action towards the victim by getting out of their car. Through their language it was clear that they held anti-Muslim sentiments which they were more than keen to turn into action. They had prepared themselves by having eggs with them and used them as a weapon by deliberately throwing the eggs at her.

4.5.3 Opportunistic incidents

The third most frequent type of incident is 'opportunistic' and refers to a situation where the offender takes immediate advantage of an opportunity that presents itself to vent their Islamophobia/ anti-Muslim sentiment, rather than engineering the incident in a premeditated way. Instead of the perpetrator perceiving they have been 'wronged' as in an aggravated offence, it is the victim who is 'in the wrong place at the wrong time'. The perpetrator takes full advantage of the situation and enacts their bigotry out on the victim(s).

Just over a quarter of all the incidents analysed were opportunistic. An example of this is an incident where a man got off a bus and was walking home when a group of young people saw him, started following him and shouted abuse such as, "You Paki", "You f**king Paki" and "Muslim sh*t". One perpetrator kicked the man from behind in the back and the group of young people ran off when a witness telephoned the police. The perpetrators would not have known that their victim would have been getting off the bus at that particular time in that particular place but made use of the opportunity to target him when it presented itself. On this occasion, the police were able to find two of the perpetrators in the area with the help of the victim who identified them. Although they denied assaulting the victim, the police arrested them and took

them to the police station. Often, however, the opportunistic element of incidents like these make it difficult for police to identify the perpetrators.

What was particularly notable in this incident was that the victim was not Muslim but was instead Sikh, wore a turban and had a beard. Sadly this Sikh man had experienced a whole range of incidents of racial abuse and attacks and criminal damage over a period of 6 years prior to this particular incident. As a result of this repeated abuse the gentleman and his family involved in this incident asked to be re-housed.

It is clear from the above example that the perpetrators aren't always accurate when venting their anger and it is the perception of the perpetrator that victims belong to or have membership of the groups they despise. American academics Levin & McDevitt (1993: 19) observed that in some instances of graffiti the perpetrators had used incorrect or inappropriate symbols to depict their hatred. They raise the questions:

"Was this a mistake? Were the perpetrators simply attempting to be offensive? Or was their hatred so extreme and out of control that any target was better than none?"

4.5.4 Interpreted incidents

One in ten incidents were categorised by this research as 'interpreted' incidents. The central aspect of this type of incident is that, in keeping with the hate crime definition, the victim 'perceives' or interprets that anti Muslim sentiment is involved in the incident but there is no other information provided in the crime report that would enable any determination to be made about what might be driving the incident. For example, in one incident, a woman complained to the police to say that a downstairs neighbour had been banging on her ceiling and sending abusive letters about the noise she was making. The women stated to the police that she felt discriminated against as a Muslim. However, there was no language in the letters to suggest that this was the motivation behind the neighbour's complaints.

Another incident that was categorised as 'interpreted' is where a Muslim women reported that the window of her car had been smashed overnight. She told the police that she felt that she was targeted because of her religion as she wears traditional Muslim clothing and as no other cars nearby had been damaged. The women also explained that she had been previously abused in the street. However, there is no evidence that the abuse was linked to the damage to her car and no other evidence, apart from her perception, that the motive behind the damage to her car was due to Islamophobia or anti-Muslim feeling.

4.5.5 Interpersonal incidents

The smallest proportion of incidents were categorised as 'interpersonal'. As the name suggests, this involves cases where the victim and perpetrator have previously had a personal relationship or friendship with each other. However, similar to aggravated offences, conflict emerges as a result of some other event and the offender's bigotry materialises.

An example of this is an incident where a landlord received a telephone message from a former tenant that he had been having trouble with and had evicted but was still seeking outstanding rent from. This former tenant called him a "Muslim pig" and threatened to "cut him like a Muslim pig". As with the aggravated incidents there appears to be an element of revenge against a perceived slight in these incidents which manifests through hatred.

4.6 Features and patterns of incidents

4.6.1 Victimisation profile

- The majority of incidents were one-off incidents (68%), whereas the remainder (32%) were part of a series of incidents that the victim had experienced.

- Just over two-thirds of incidents (76%) were directed at a person or people. A further 9% were directed at a building or an organisation. The remainder were either directed at a combination of a person and either public or private property, or specifically at public or private property.

- Almost half of the incidents (46%) were directed at a lone male, and just over one-quarter (26%) were directed at a lone female. 13 incidents were directed at a group of both males and females (usually groups of family members). The remainder, a further 12 incidents, were directed at Mosques, Muslim organisations or Muslim schools.

- Of the 61 incidents where lone males were targeted, the largest proportion of them were directed at males aged 31-50 (53%) and the next largest proportion at males aged 18-30 (31%).

- The male victims were predominantly either categorised as being 'Indian/ Pakistani' (53%), 'African-Caribbean' (16%) and 'Arabic/ Egyptian' (15%) in ethnic appearance.

- Of the incidents where lone females were targeted, the largest proportions of them were directed at females aged 18-30 (54%) or at females aged 31-50 (37%).

- The female victims were predominantly either categorised as being 'Indian/ Pakistani' (49%) or African-Caribbean (31%) in ethnic appearance. The females of African-Caribbean appearance had a more even spread across the 18-30 and 31-50 age categories, whereas females of Indian/ Pakistani appearance were predominantly from the 18-30 age category.

- In 12% of incidents victims or witnesses had a degree of language difficulties (where English was not their first language).

- Traditional Muslim clothing or visible Muslim locations were specifically mentioned as being relevant in 25% of incidents, although this is likely

to be an underestimate of the importance of visibility to the perpetrator in identifying or targeting their victims.

4.6.2 Perpetrator profile

- Just over half of the suspects were lone males (51%), followed by a further 19% of suspects where a group of males were involved and 16% of suspects who were lone females. 13% of suspects were completely unknown.

- In over half of the incidents (52%) the perpetrator was a stranger to the victim. In a further 22% of incidents previous interaction had taken place between the victim and the perpetrator and in 14% of incidents there was some knowledge of the perpetrator but no previous interaction had taken place. A further 11% of incidents involved an unknown perpetrator or perpetrators.

- Incidents involving lone females were less likely to involve strangers (40% of such incidents) than incidents involving lone males (56% of such incidents).

- Alcohol or drug use by the suspect was recorded in 24% of incidents.

4.6.3 Location

Almost three-quarters of incidents took place in public locations (74%) and the remainder took place in private locations (at or near the victim's home, or in letters, emails or phone calls to the victim). The incidents generally took place as the victim was going about their day-to-day business.

4.6.4 Type of incident

Almost one-quarter of incidents (23%) involved physical violence either directed at the victim or at public or private property. The other incidents involved verbal abuse (although this often took place in the incidents involving physical violence as well), threatening behaviour or language and/ or threats to kill.

4.6.5 Language or symbolism used by the perpetrator

Faith-related language was used in almost half of the incidents (48.5%), and a mixture of faith and race-related language was used in a further 38.4% of incidents. This could explain why there is sometimes confusion about whether the primary factor within an incident is race- or faith-related.

Looking at the themes of the verbal and textual language used by the perpetrators, adapted from the themes used by Dr. Nicole Asquith in her analysis of hate crime case files from January 2003 to December 2007[45], the most frequent theme emerging involves 'interpolation' or naming (for example, "You Muslim". This takes place in just over three-quarters of incidents. A

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[45] Asquith, N. (2009)

profanity is used in almost half of the incidents and threats of violence or death are used in just over one-quarter of incidents. References to terrorists or suicide bombers are also made in just over one-quarter of incidents. Other themes include expatriation (for example: "Go back to your country"), sexualisation and pathologisation. A full breakdown of the themes emerging can be seen in figure 4.5 below, together with an explanation of each theme with examples of the language used.

What is also notable from the language used by the perpetrators is that, even in cases where there is reference made to some aspect of the Muslim faith, there is little real understanding or knowledge of any religious teachings or tenets of Islam. The language is instead targeted at the negative stereotype of misconception of Muslim people that the perpetrator holds. This finding is similar to findings of other researchers focusing on anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents[46].

Figure 4.5: Themes of verbal and textual language used by perpetrators of Islamophobic incidents

Theme	Percentage of incidents	Explanatory notes
Interpolation/ naming	75.8%	Naming the other; calling the other into being. For example: "You're a Muslim", "Muslim", "You Muslim"
Profanity	47.5%	Cursing and swearing. For example: "F***ing Muslims", Muslim b***h", "Muslim c**t, f*** you"
Threats of violence or death	25.3%	For example: "We are going to shoot all of you", "I'm going to petrol bomb your house"
Terrorism and suicide bomber references	25.3%	For example: "Bin Laden", "You're a suicide bomber", "You're a terrorist"
Expatriation	23.2%	Exile from space, neighbourhood, nation. For example: "If you don't like it, leave the country", "F*** off back to Afghanistan"
Sexualisation	21.2%	Sexual organs, sexual acts. For example: "Muslim c***s", "F***ing Muslims"
Pathologisation	14.1%	Dirt and disease. For example: "You dirty Muslim", "Muslim s**t"
Mention of Muslim faith (visible signs and religious elements)	13.1%	For example: "Why don't you f*** off back to Mecca", "You Halal chicken eater", "F*** Ramadan"
Demonisation	11.1%	Devils, demons and mongrels (turning people into animals). For example: "All Muslims worship the devil", "You will burn in hell"
Intra-Muslim words	1.0%	For example: "You're a Baathist"
Other	9.1%	Examples include: References to BNP, "You weak Arab", "You Somalians are s***t because you don't have a degree".

Please note that the percentages provided in the table above will not add up to 100% as multiple themes can be used an incident by the perpetrator.

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[46] See Iganski, P. (2009), amongst others.

4.6.6 Outcome

- A total of 32 incidents were detected (24%) and 92 were undetected (69%). The remainder were either recorded as a 'Crime Related Incident', were 'Transferred out of CRIS' or were 'No Crimed'[47].

- A total of 75% of detected incidents involved perpetrators who were strangers, whereas only 48% of undetected incidents involved perpetrators who were strangers.

- 17% of incidents involving lone females or a group of females were detected, whereas 34% of incidents involving lone males or a group of males were detected.

4.7 Summary of findings relevant to focus groups with Muslim community members

Insufficient information was often provided about why the victim was perceived to be Muslim by the perpetrator. Traditional Muslim clothing or visible Muslim locations were only specifically mentioned as being relevant in a quarter of incidents. It is likely that this is an under-estimation of the importance of the visibility of the target for perpetrators. Visibility was addressed further as an issue in the focus group work with members of the Muslim community.

The majority of female victims reporting Islamophobic incidents to the police were aged 18-30 and the majority of male victims reporting Islamophobic incidents to the police were aged 31-50. It is important to determine how this compares to unreported experiences of the Muslim community as a whole. Information provided by stakeholders has identified generational differences in reporting, as well as a greater reluctance of older women to report incidents to the police. This is something that the focus group work with members of the Muslim community addressed further.

Information provided by stakeholders also suggests that people who do not speak English as their first language are less likely to report incidents to the police. Language difficulties were only specifically mentioned in 12% of incidents. This was addressed further in the focus group work with members of the Muslim community to determine whether this is a significant barrier for the Muslim community or not.

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[47] Definitions are provided of a 'Detected' incident, a 'Crime Related Incident', a 'No Crimed' Incident and incidents 'Transferred out of CRIS' at the front of this report in the definitions section.

5 Muslim communities' experiences of Islamophobic incidents and of the policing of these

Prepared by Karen Kellard & Chris Owen (BMG Research) and edited by Susan Paterson (MPS)

In March 2011, BMG Research was commissioned by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to conduct focus group research with Muslim community members to provide information to the MPS for their on-going work to understand the nature and context of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim incidents experienced by the Muslim community.

5.1 Aim and objectives

The overall research aim was to provide context and depth to current information on the nature of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim incidents experienced by the Muslim community and how such incidents are responded to. The research objectives thus related to gathering a more detailed understanding of:

- Experiences of anti-social and criminal behaviour directed at Muslims.
- To what extent these are considered 'everyday'[48] behaviours or crimes.
- Perceptions on the motivations of such behaviour.
- The impact of such behaviour on individuals and their families.
- What assistance, if any, is sought in dealing with such incidents?
- Experiences and expectations of the police.
- What could be done in increasing confidence in the police to facilitate reporting of such incidents, and how they could be dealt with.

As well as the above objectives it was also important to be able to understand differences within the Muslim community. Therefore it was ensured that the focused groups contained a selection of young and old Muslim women and men. It was not possible to look at other features such as geographical difference.

5.2 The focus groups

All respondents were recruited face-to-face in the locality by a BMG recruiter, using a recruitment questionnaire and information leaflet. Respondents were then invited to one of four mini-focus groups which were facilitated by BMG researchers:

- **Young Muslim females:** The focus group with five young Muslim females was held in a community venue in Tower Hamlets in April 2011. Participants were aged from between 18 and 30.

- **Young Muslim males:** The focus group with three young Muslim males was held in a community venue in Hounslow in early May 2011.

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[48] 'Everyday' = commonplace, usual or ordinary (rather than referring to daily occurrences).

Respondents were aged between 18 and 30. Two further individuals who did not attend a previous group arranged in Acton were re-contacted and participated in telephone depth interviews (this involved two young males from Southall, both aged 19).

- **Older Muslim females:** The focus group with five older Muslim females was held in a community venue in Hounslow in early May 2011. All five lived with their children, one was a lone parent whilst all others lived with their husband (and in some cases other family members). All were aged 50 and over. The views of two further women who attended a group in Acton (which had to be abandoned because of poor attendance and language issues) were also taken into account.

- **Older Muslim males:** The focus group with five older Muslim males was held in a community venue in Tower Hamlets in April 2011. All were aged 50 and over. One further male from Barking, who did not attend the group, was later interviewed by telephone.

Further details of the methods used and structure of the discussions can be found in the appendix for this chapter.

5.3   General views and attitudes towards Muslims

This section reports on respondents' experiences and perceptions of general attitudes towards Muslims, both within their immediate community and in wider society. Respondents' perceptions of the factors that have influenced such perceptions and views are also considered in this section.

5.3.1 Attitudes in the community

In general, respondents spoke very positively about their local community and about attitudes locally towards Muslim people – this was evident in both Tower Hamlets and Hounslow. Both areas were recognised as multi-cultural, and areas in which respondents generally felt safe. Feeling safe tended to be associated with 'safety in numbers' insofar as there was a large Muslim population within the area, which in itself created a safe, secure environment.

> *"It's a really nice diverse borough to live in... it is mainly Asian and Muslim dominated as well which helps so I feel very comfortable wearing my headscarf and wearing Muslim outfits in town."*
> Younger female group

The general multi-cultural mix of the areas meant that people felt more confident expressing their religion or beliefs through how they looked or dressed or the activities they took part in, perhaps more so than they did in other less familiar parts of London. In one example, a young woman described how she sometimes felt uncomfortable wearing her headscarf in another parts of London so she tended to remove it. Another – also a young woman – was fearful of living elsewhere (she had been offered a new flat out of the borough);

"I do want to go and live in another borough with my son but I am scared... scared of [what] I'm not really sure."
Younger female group

Nevertheless, even within their close neighbourhood respondents recognised that there were sometimes 'issues' or attitudes towards them which were negative. These tended to be focused around people's appearance – as one older male noted:

"They look at my dress and look [at me] like a stranger."
Older male group

Respondents felt far more uneasy about attitudes towards Muslims in the wider environment. For some (notably older people and the younger women) this included within the wider London area, but much reference was also made to how Muslims and Islam was portrayed in the media more generally. Responses to more negative attitudes tended to be ignored by respondents:

"I try to ignore, I try to stay peaceful."
Older male group

5.4   Factors shaping views and attitudes

All respondents were able to identify events or issues that have affected people's views and attitudes towards Muslims – and in the main most noted that attitudes had changed, for the worse, in recent years.

"It's sad to say but I think it has gone quite negative. I think there was a time when it was quite positive and people would just let themselves be, but that was, like, 10 years ago."
Young female group.

5.4.1 The media

Media reporting was generally viewed as very negative, often both judgmental and ill-informed about Muslims and Islam. The power of media, including electronic means and social networking platforms, was noted as pervasive. There was a view that the media had been instrumental in creating negativity through its reporting, which was seen as biased, portraying an inaccurate picture of Muslim people and their faith. This kind of reporting, it was felt, built up a general feeling of negativity and suspicion towards Muslims.

5.4.2 Recent events

Within the group of older women it was particularly felt that the most significant factors that had shaped people's attitudes towards Muslims and Islam were the events of 9/11 and in particular the London bombings of 7/7. Within this group in it was felt that prior to these events, attitudes towards Muslims was relatively peaceful. This view was echoed in other groups – in the older men's groups it was noted that whilst historically there had been some difficulties (reference was made to the English Defence League) things had been generally positive until the recent terrorism incidents. Younger men and women also noted more subtle changes in attitudes, for example, in being looked at 'differently' or with a degree of negativity.

Notably, some of the younger respondents had felt scared and vulnerable after recent terrorism incidents in London. One of the young men in Hounslow reported how after 7/7 he was too scared to take the bus so walked the several miles home from school with his younger brother.

5.4.3 Ignorance and misconceptions

A commonly raised frustration was a perceived widespread ignorance about Muslims and Islam. All respondents felt that there was confusion and a lack of understanding about their religion and the symbolism of the clothing and their appearance. Furthermore, it was often mentioned by respondents that there was an assumption that because someone was Muslim they knew all about the Taliban and had some kind of association with Bin Laden,

> *"That's 'Bin Laden', that's what they call us!"*
> Older female group.

On more than one occasion it was mentioned by respondents in the groups that until the recent terrorist incidents they, nor their families, had ever heard of the Taliban or Bin Laden. Nevertheless, they felt that because of the links made between this group and Muslims more generally that they were all viewed as one group, with no real understanding of the Muslim faith or culture and a general suspicion of any association with Islam.

> *"We are very peaceful people...we teach our children...we look after our neighbours...we respect them. We teach our children to look after our neighbours, they are a brother."* Older male group

Another example of general misunderstanding by the public was raised by the female respondents, who noted a commonly held view by the public that the wearing of a headscarf was something that was 'imposed' on Muslim women rather than something that they chose to do.

> *"People need to be educated that if someone wants to wear something that symbolises their religion it is actually out of choice and not because they have been forced into it."* Young female group

5.4.4 Parental and peer influences

Related to concerns raised among respondents about the public's general ignorance and misconceptions about the Muslim faith were concerns that often the perpetrators of racist, anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents were heavily influenced by the attitudes of others – notably their parents and their peers. Some of the examples given by respondents of anti-Muslim incidents were carried out by children and it was felt that their behaviour and attitudes towards Muslims or the Asian population more generally was not driven by a particular informed knowledge or opinion but was fuelled by ill-informed parental or peer views.

5.5   Police engagement with Muslim communities

In this section, respondents' views and experiences of engaging with the police were explored. Respondents were asked about how well they thought the Metropolitan Police Service worked with Muslim communities in the area and how sensitive they felt the police were with regard to anti-Muslim or Islamophobic behaviour.

At a general level, respondents were fairly positive towards the police and understood that they had a difficult job to do and had finite resources in which to do it. Many of the respondents had little direct experience of engaging with the police but felt that in their communities they generally worked well with the Muslim population.

> *"I've never got involved with the police but I think they are friendly. I think so because I have never heard anything [negative] about that."*
> Younger female group

However, there were some notable differences in views. The older women's group felt that the police were limited in the actions that they could take against the perpetrators of racist or anti-Muslim incidents, particularly because the perpetrators were not always easily identified, or were often children. One older female respondent said that [often] it was difficult to identify who the perpetrators were other than they were children so she felt that there was little that could be done. Another recurring theme among the female respondents was not wanting to make an issue or 'fuss' when police resources are already under pressure and constrained.

For both younger and older male respondents there was a commonly held view that the police's attitudes towards young Muslims could be quite negative. In particular the extra 'stop and search' powers were felt by some to be sometimes used inappropriately and could create disharmony between the police and the young Muslim population.

> *"A lot of people round here feel that they use their power to their advantage to search young kids and harass them."*
> Older male group

However, respondents were genuinely encouraged by the fact that the Metropolitan Police Service had commissioned this research which they felt

demonstrated the importance the police were placing on understanding the issues, raising awareness and focusing on how Islamophobic incidents could be better recognised and dealt with.

5.6   Experiences of anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents

5.6.1 Definitions

As part of the group discussions delegates in the group were presented with three definitions (see below) to consider and to encourage discussion.

> A Hate Incident is defined by the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Met Police as 'Any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.'

> An Anti-Muslim or Islamophobic Hate Incident is defined as 'Any incident that is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated or aggravated by fear and or hatred of Islam, Muslim people or Islamic culture.'

> An Anti-Muslim or Islamophobic Hate Crime is defined as 'Any incident which constitutes a criminal offence that is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated or aggravated by fear and or hatred of Islam, Muslim people or Islamic culture.'

All respondents felt comfortable and generally positive about these definitions, and seemed impressed that the Metropolitan Police had captured and defined these incidents so clearly and effectively. However, there was a comment in one group that most people within Muslim communities would not know of these definitions, and wider dissemination and communication would be useful so that 'people would know there is help out there for them'.

Two further points were raised. Firstly, that however good the definitions, it is the visible application of these definitions which is important and secondly that many people may not realise that an incident had occurred that would concern the police unless they were aware of this definition. With wider dissemination, there is value in victims and potential victims understanding what types of incidents may be covered by this definition – including what appears to be common occurrences, such as being called a terrorist and other similar verbal insults, and pulling woman's veils off.

5.6.2 Triggers for incidents

Group members discussed a whole range of incidents, including their own personal experiences, the experiences of other people they knew and incidents which they had heard about, some of which may have been apocryphal. Since the people in the groups were recruited on the basis that they had either personal experience, or direct knowledge of others with personal experience of an Islamophobic incident, most were able to talk in considerable detail about such incidents, and the issues surrounding them.

5.6.2.1 Media

There was a useful discussion in all four groups about what tended to provoke Islamophobia and Islamophobic incidents. At the widest level, there was comment in at least two groups about the role of the media in creating a mood of hostility and prejudice towards Muslims – and in general respondents did not feel that reporting of Muslims in the media is fair. In particular, the conflation in the media of 'terrorism' with Islam was thought to be problematic.

> *"When someone says terrorism, it mainly means Islam…"* Young women's group

The same group pointed out that extremism could exist in other religions, but [in present day] that terrorism tended to be linked solely with Islam. There was general agreement across the groups that events such as 9/11 and 7/7 made their concerns about media reporting more acute. Additionally in the immediate aftermath of the death of Osama bin Laden this had bought 9/11 and Al Qaeda back into the daily headlines again. The Hounslow older women's group commented that the media had treated Muslims differently since 9/11 (this was a general sentiment shared more widely), and that this had made life worse for the Muslim community by putting more pressure on Muslims and making them an 'easy target'.

There was discussion in a number of groups about how this prejudice and ignorance spread to affect other groups including a recollection of a Sikh man in the US who was killed in the aftermath of 9/11 because his beard and turban were mistaken for Muslim symbols. A wider discussion developed about the extent to which prejudice of this type results in a failure to see people as individuals;

> *"Not everyone is Bin Laden, not everyone is Gaddafi, whatever – we are all different."*
> Older women's group
>
> *"[They are] never showing anything good things as Muslim…crime and this is coming to the television."*
> Older men's group

5.6.2.2 Physical appearance, clothes and beards

Both men and women, of all ages, commented to some degree on the extent to which Islamophobia seems to be provoked by dress or other visible signs of Muslim identity, such as a beard. For women this typically centres on the wearing of a veil or headscarf, and for men the wearing of traditional or religious clothes, and having a beard.

> *"I do travel outside of London and because I wear a full scarf and a burqa, that long dress Muslim ladies wear, I don't feel comfortable the way people look at me. The way they look at my scarf. If I see an Asian person I feel happier when I see someone else wearing a scarf."*
> Young female group

Many incidents, particularly of verbal abuse, discussed below, are evidently the result of an adverse reaction to what the victim was wearing, or some other visual symbol of Muslim identity. One of the members of the Tower Hamlets older men's group indicated a sense that the police themselves also tended to make judgements based on clothing and beards, even if this was only a sense of being stared at and feeling uncomfortable as a result.

> *"I've heard of (a) few people where the police have actually – because of the long beard and the clothes that they wear…when somebody gives you a look that can also be interpreting as well, so they find them staring at them basically – they felt uncomfortable…you don't have to say something…"*
> Older men's group

5.6.2.3 Other issues

Group members were keen to explain that Islamophobia was perpetrated by many different types of people and it was not just one 'source'. There were comments made about the abuse received from some people who were themselves relatively new migrants to the UK.

> *"We are in the same position. It's not our country and it's not their country but they feel that they have more rights than we have."*
> Young male group

The same group discussed how the police have powers to address incidents but they have no control over what people think or say outside of an abusive incident. Therefore the group realised that the police cannot police ignorance or prejudice. Additionally, the older women's group also commented that many young people are perpetrators of Islamophobic incidents, and they feel it is because they have heard things from their parents, are also subject to peer pressure and a perception of being bored which leads some to antisocial behaviour. The group also felt that at least some Islamophobia emerged from feelings of jealously.

5.6.3 Verbal attacks and threats

The majority of incidents reported by group members were in some form or another, those involving verbal abuse, threats and other forms of intimidation. Although, in some cases, had the victim not taken steps to run away or otherwise get themselves out of the immediate situation, the groups felt that it is likely that the situation may have escalated.

Respondents commented that sometimes the incidents were by people known to them and those people appeared largely to display ignorance, rather than malice. The groups felt that ignorance may also play a part in maintaining a wider context which supports Islamophobia. The group explained that verbal abuse is such a common experience that it is frequently ignored by the victim. The older men's group in Tower Hamlets reported that 'go back to your own country' is a very 'popular' insult and that they have now heard it so many times it is simply ignored by them. One member of the young women's group

reported a situation in which she chose to wear a head scarf during Ramadan and was challenged by a work colleague who said she should not wear the scarf because she had nice hair and she should not cover it up. Comments arising from what Muslims are wearing can become more threatening.

The young men's group reported verbal abuse but of a more threatening type. One group member reported walking back from a mosque in Luton with some of his family when they were subject to verbal abuse from men in a passing car. It is common that such incidents, as in this case, are not reported because it was assumed that it was a one off incident based on ignorance which was best ignored. Moreover the group member felt that because of a lack of evidence to identify the perpetrators there would have been no point in reporting the incident. There were many similar such anecdotes, of verbal abuse either from other people in the street or from passing cars.

Another of the young men reported an incident he experienced in London. He was walking along a road, in western clothes, when a car drove past, stopped, and a mixed group (black and white ethnicity) were verbally abusive. He was called a Muslim and a terrorist, and the groups were asking why he was 'coming down their road'. Again this wasn't reported because the perception was that nothing would, or could, be done about it, but that it was motivated because he was a Muslim.

The older men's group stated that verbal abuse can escalate into something more serious. A young Somali man in the young men's group explained that a group member [of a gang] was walking in one part of the estate where he used to live (he was 14 years old at the time). A group of young people congregated there regularly and on this occasion the Somali man was in traditional dress and was subjected to verbal abuse, then chased across the estate. He took refuge in the house of a friend and called the police because he genuinely feared for his physical safety. It took between 45 minutes and an hour for the police to arrive. When the police wrote his name down they asked if it was a Muslim name, and then when this was confirmed, advised that they weren't surprised at the incident. The victim heard no more from the police about this incident, but found out later from others that police had the reputation for 'taking their time' to attend similar incidents on the same estate. These sorts of incidents – aggressive verbal abuse with the implicit risk of physical assault – seemed from the groups to be a particular threat to younger men. The older men did not feel under the same threat from this and the abuse directed towards women was also different in character.

It was also a common theme across a number of groups that there was varying degrees of concern about leaving their own neighbourhoods. Either to travel to other parts of London where there were not substantial Muslim populations or to other parts of the country where they feel very much more conscious of standing out. This appears to impact on the willingness of some group members to travel entirely freely in some parts of London, and in some parts of the country outside the capital.

One incident reported by a young women's in Tower Hamlets which was perceived to be motivated by Islamophobia involved a Police Community Safety Officer (PCSO). A friend of one of the respondents in this group decided to wait at a rail station until 10am to catch an off peak and hence

cheaper train because she was not in a hurry. She was then approached and questioned by a PCSO because she 'looked suspicious'. This angered both the women who were questioned and they felt this was a form of Islamophobic harassment because they felt this would not have happened if her friend had not been Muslim;

> *"It really angers me so much when they talk about how all Muslims are out to kill other people…"*
> Tower Hamlets young women's group

Events such as these are seen by respondents as symbolic and indicative of a wider attitudinal problem expressed both in society and in the way that the police act towards Muslim people. One of the delegates in the older men's group was a voluntary youth worker said;

> *"A lot of people round here feel that [police officers] use their power to their advantage to search young kids and harass them".*
> Older men's group

Similarly in the older men's group, group members reported feeling intimidated at airports. They reported that they had had friends pulled over and searched which they thought was related to the way they looked rather than anything else. In the young men's group in Hounslow, one respondent reported the incident of someone he knew who was badly beaten, about which he said 'the police did nothing'. He contrasted this with another experience where a woman had been mugged and her £300 phone had been stolen, a crime to which the police devoted considerable resources, detaining a number of people who fitted the description of the attacker. He was particularly resentful because he was himself briefly detained because he also fitted the description.

5.7   Physical attacks

A large number of the physical attacks reported took the form of vandalism, often in a repeated pattern of harassment, or of incidents such egg or fruit throwing. It is also apparent from the discussions that many Muslim people live within a world shaped by many questionable accounts of Islamophobic attacks, either picked up from press reports or via word of mouth, which also tends to make them fearful of venturing out of their own neighbourhood and into areas where there are not substantial Muslim populations. The older women's group in particular ran through a series of such accounts they had heard of, such as of people telling Muslims to take off their scarf, of 'random kicking attacks', of a Muslim man attacked randomly as he was going to the mosque to pray and of someone taking a pig's head into a mosque. These third party accounts compound the impact of their own experience and result in additional distress. Again in the older women's group one member described the impact of such repeated incidents resulting in anger, frustration, being fearful and scared and of losing sleep or sleeping during the day.

One of the younger female respondents recounted her experience of harassment, explaining when she moved into a new council house within a few nights she had people knocking on the door and shouting 'you Paki'. As a

consequence she has not stayed in the house regularly. The incident has been reported to the Council but they said they could not do anything about the incidents 'until something happens' but, understandably, the woman did not want to sit and wait for 'something to happen'.

The women initially said she did not report these issues to the police because she was fearful that those who were harassing her might see the police at her house and increase the harassment in retribution. When she did contact the police their response was similar to that of the Council and she was told that she should 'ring when something happens'.

Some of the harassment that the groups had commonly experienced was perpetrated by relatively young children of about 10 or 11 years old such as throwing eggs and fruit. One of the members of the older women's group indicated that the parents of such children were 'OK' and that she had been able to phone the parents of some children who had been involved in some of these 'throwing' incidents. The older women's group, in particular reported a whole series of similar incidents:

- One woman reported having had eggs thrown at her from a car. They didn't hit her but she didn't see the car they were thrown from as it was travelling too fast. She didn't report the incident to anyone. She is now scared and shaken and 'doesn't go to [the supermarket] alone'.
- Another woman reported that she regularly has eggs and stones thrown into her back garden and occasionally broken windows. She knows this is being done by young teenagers. She reported the incidents to the police but they said they could not do anything.
- One woman had an apple thrown at her windscreen while she was driving but was able to pull over and 'have a go' at the 10-11 year old boys who had carried this out. As a result one boy swore at her, another could not stop laughing but the third apologised and cleaned the car.
- A further egg throwing incident, which the woman knows was carried out by 7-8 year olds but she didn't see who it was sufficient to identify them and didn't report the incident.
- Another type of incident was where a 'scratch' reading NF was carved into one of the group's son's new car which was parked outside his house – the motivation was attributed to jealousy.
- The same woman also recounted, "I reported to someone…that I had eggs and flour thrown at my house. I was alone at the time because I was divorced and my young children who lived with me were young, and I reported the egging because it was [continuous]. I got a little camera put outside my house and I had it on tape and got the lady arrested." Hounslow older women's group. The trigger for this incident involved the woman's son and began with verbal abuse [between neighbours]. The women said that [since she did this], "No more trouble, they leave me alone."

Perhaps the most troubling incident of this type emerged in the young women's group, where one of the group reported that neighbours of theirs had suffered a series of incidents, including the ubiquitous egging, threats and pig blood being poured on their front door. None of this was reported because

they were worried about what else might happen and in particular about the safety of their children. This underlines the comments made consistently across the groups, that many incidents, even serious repeated events constituting campaigns of harassment, are not reported. Sometimes this can be because the victims think or are told by the police they can't (because they don't have the evidence) or won't do anything. But also this can be because people are scared of retribution, even for being seen to have the police calling at their house.

Perhaps fortunately, only one incident of serious violent crime was reported in the four groups, and this was involving a third party known to one of the group members in the young men's group in Hounslow. In this case a young Muslim male was stabbed in the back by non-Muslim boys. The victim didn't want to report the incident, since in particular his mother was afraid that the perpetrators would find out who had reported them. The group member reporting this incident did not know what had happened subsequently, once the incident was reported to the police.

5.8   Reporting incidents

5.8.1 General views on reporting incidents

Respondents were asked to consider issues around the reporting of Islamophobic incidents, which were tested against a series of scenarios and these highlighted a further range of issues about what would be reported and why.

There is a widespread perception that Islamophobic incidents are under-reported, and some surprise expressed by respondents that the Metropolitan Police takes an active interest in the issue. This was well summed up in a lengthy comment from one respondent from the young men's group;

> *"I know with confidence that there's more crimes, probably more than what is being reported, double than what is being reported, because the situation is not really being dealt with…the Muslim community doesn't really believe the Metropolitan Police…as someone there who will help them out, as they have never really done it. This is the first time that I am hearing that the Metropolitan Police are doing anything to help."*
> Hounslow young male's group

However, fundamental views about the police, which underpin some of the willingness of individuals to report incidents, do vary widely, as the three quotes from the older men's group in Tower Hamlets illustrates clearly.

> *"I don't trust police. If anything happened with me I don't bother (to) report because they don't understand."*

> *"I trust the police they aren't bad."*

> *"Personally speaking I haven't had any problems with them. On a few occasions when I was younger I did…"*

Previous sections have already highlighted concerns about the effectiveness of reporting and the willingness of the police to respond in a way that victims view as effective. Additionally, along with a practical understanding both that there is little prospect of resolution because of lack of evidence and a certain stoicism which tends to result in the community tolerating incidents merely as part of everyday life and this, at least in part, explains low reporting levels.

Moreover there is a considerable sympathy from some respondents about the difficulties faced by the MPS in responding to Islamophobia. Again, amongst the group of younger males, there was recognition that it was difficult for the MPS to protect a group of people who were being negatively portrayed in the media (a reference to the issue already raised in other parts of this report). The role of this work, and similar work to understand Islamophobia was seen as a logical process of finding out the views of the community so that 'hate crimes against Muslims don't conflict against them'. There are expressed concerns about police not prioritising anti-Muslim behaviour, but the conflict explained by one respondent in the older women's group sets out much of the critical issue:

> *"The main thing is that we ignore it because you don't want to get in trouble, but if you start arguing with the other people as well you get more blame because you are Muslim."*

Reading between the lines of this comment, the hesitancy about reporting comes partly from an innate desire not to rock the boat but also because Muslims feel that acting to assert their rights might actually cause more problems for the individual and the community, not less.

5.8.2 Are incidents reported?

As we have already seen from some of the accounts of actual incidents reported, the extent to which incidents are reported varies for a number of reasons – the severity of the incident and the extent to which the victim thinks the police can or will do something about it (which in turn depends on whether there is evidence of identity, and the victim's general attitude to the police). The discussion across the groups provided a range of reasons which guided whether an incident was reported to the police - see the summary below:

- How likely it is that the police are going to identify the perpetrators and are able to take action? They thought the police would be able to take action if the perpetrator was the next door neighbour but if it was a random attack in the street how would the police find out who it was?
- There is a great deal of hearsay about the police not doing anything after such crimes are reported and awareness that such crimes are grossly under-reported.
- It is hard to report an incident if you didn't really see the person and you would not recognise them again.
- Some people may not even recognise that an 'incident' has taken place or don't think that an incident is serious enough to report and would simply be seen as wasting police time.

- Some people wish to avoid trouble and any 'comeback' by the perpetrator in the future.
- In particular the older persons group felt that the police actually 'took the opposite side' and had sympathy with the perpetrators of racist and Islamophobic crime

> *"They would be upset if something happened but they would be very hesitant to contact the police…they would say that it doesn't bother them, the police, it doesn't really interest them, what are they going to do about it…write it down."*
> Tower Hamlets older male's group

5.8.3 Expectation or acceptance of behaviour

There were complex and evolving discussions in the groups about the extent to which Muslim communities expected and perhaps accepted Islamophobic incidents and the impact of the non-reporting which that attitude engendered. There were also discussions about the police still seeming surprised if incidents were reported whilst others acknowledged that there was a degree of acceptance of Islamophobia within communities which resulted in underreporting. This was partly because of a lack of recognition that the incident constituted something which could or should be reported to the police. But, additionally, comments made by the older women were that reporting was discouraged by their husbands on the basis that the perpetrators are young and will 'grow out of it'.

However, when this issue was raised with the older male group it was dismissed. The younger women's group in particular highlighted a generational difference and recognised that the 'letting things be' attitude of many of the older generation has not benefited them and that problems can and often have escalated. The older generations tended not to want to make a fuss and are more forgiving – but the younger generations are likely to be more assertive and to have a different attitude.

> *"[A] culture of over-politeness, they don't want to make a fuss…the younger generation would get angry about what they hear and what people say about religion."*
> Young women's group

5.9   The process of reporting

Another critical issue around reporting was raised in several groups, but notably in the older men's group in Tower Hamlets. In a discussion around barriers to reporting the group identified a number of subtle cultural barriers, particularly for Muslim people who had either not grown up in the UK, or whose English was weak (or who were not confident in expressing themselves in English). The group felt that this could result in several issues:

- A lack of confidence to approach the police, because the process and institutions were daunting in a cultural sense;

- A lack of confidence which reflected a lack of confidence in expressing themselves in English, even amongst those whose English was competent in many other situations – in other words the issue is around confidence rather than fundamental language competence;
- An actual, functional limitation on the ability to communicate in English, especially about issues which are difficult either conceptually or emotionally.

The older women's group noted that there was 'no guidance from religion' about whether to report incidents and crimes. Many people across the group expressed in some way or another reluctance simply to approach the front desk on a police station to report an incident. This maybe because of a number of reasons; the natural assumptions or fears of older generations, concerns about language and cultural understanding, and a fear about being 'seen' to report and the potential repercussions that reporting may bring. The young male group expressed a strong preference for reporting by phone and referred to a number of potential barriers to reporting in person. For example, having to take children to the station when that may not be appropriate, worrying about who else might be at the police station at the same time and finally the 'hassle' and the time it takes.

The younger women raised a series of issues around emotional support and about the way in which a difficult situation is handled. They don't just want to be treated as a 'number' but expressed a wish to be able to speak to someone away from the counter, to be reassured that they were doing the right thing, and that the police viewed such incidents as serious.

There was extensive discussion in the young men's group about a range of related issues. One respondent said that his personal experience had been of police sensitivity and relatively swift response but another recounted an experience of indifferent treatment (comparing response times for a domestic burglary of a Muslim household with the response to an off license robbery, where the victim was white). The latter, according to the respondent, benefited from a much faster and more comprehensive response, which he attributed to a lack of interest in the Muslim victim compared with the white victim. There was some shared concern that ethnic and religious identity may play a part [in a lesser] resource prioritisation.

The personal attitude of police officers, particularly around an issue as simple as acknowledgement and greeting on the street, was also raised. The focus group which took place just after the Royal Wedding weekend gave the example of the warm attitude of police to all the people in the crowds on that day and contrasted this with the perceived attitude of some police officers locally, 'they look at you and they can be arrogant', resulting in the respondent saying that he would not want to approach an officer if they 'looked arrogant'.

5.10　Reflections and recommendations to the MPS

5.10.1 Police attitudes

According to the groups the police should endeavour to carry out the following;

- To deal with all situations as if they were 'colour blind'
- To take all crimes and including Islamophobic crime, as seriously as if it was their own mother or brother that was involved.
- They should try to judge the severity of the crime (and hence the resource they allocate) on the basis of the psychological perspective of the victim.
- To understand the root cause of these incidents, this may help to tackle the issue of Islamophobia.
- To understand how they can build trust so that people feel confident to report crimes.
- To connect with Muslim people in the street, not least the young men, being open and friendly, and not seeing this group in particular as a threat or arrogant.
- To learn about Muslim culture and customs, for example, what is considered polite by the Muslim community.

5.10.2 Communication

Thus, there were various comments encouraging the MPS to:

- Communicate the kinds of things which can be reported, and which constitute Islamophobia.
- Encourage reporting of more minor incidents, perhaps by use of a phone helpline, and by publicising a council hate crime number.
- Use posters, particularly in known areas where there have been Islamophobic incidents, to warn that the police do act and prosecute these offences.
- Address the issue of building confidence in reporting to the police by people with difficulties in speaking English, or who lack confidence in doing so, by providing the facility to speak in their own language.
- Build links with the community so that they can act as a channel for information about Islamophobic incidents and can verify the importance or the impact of particular incidents, and help the MPS to prioritise its resources, by providing sufficient information about incidents and trends.
- Provide direct numbers and e-mails to contact local officers – PCSOs can also take a role in being the known names and faces in a local area.

5.10.3 Operational issues

A number of comments were made by the groups related to operational issues – in effect how the police go about their day to day business:

- Even if the police don't have sufficient information to act on they should endeavour to have a local presence to build confidence and deter further incidents.
- In order to encourage people to report crimes the police may need to be discreet, as uniforms and sirens result in making people frightened of reprisals.
- Ensure a rapid response for households or locations where there is a known problem.
- Make it clear that major incidents are being seriously dealt with but also address the small incidents that could escalate or accumulate to cause bigger problems over time.
- Take every complaint seriously and ensure that victims understand that they have done the right thing by reporting.

6 Policing Islamophobic Incidents – Understanding the quality of investigation and supervision in Islamophobic incidents

6.1 Aim

This chapter reports on an in-depth analysis of textual information in the MPS crime reports for a sample of recorded Islamophobic incidents. The overall aim of the analysis was to determine the quality of the service provided to the victims (both in terms of investigation and supervision).

6.2 Objectives

(i)   To raise understanding of the nature of crimes motivated by anti-Muslim hate.
(ii)   To provide general information for preventative measures.
(iii)   To determine whether there are any gaps in the service provided.
(iv)   To identify areas where investigation, supervision and partnership working can be improved.

6.3 Method

A total of 143 Islamophobic incidents on the Crime Reporting information System (CRIS) were identified by DCFD for the months of October 2008, March 2009 and September 2009. The method used by DCFD to identify these incidents is discussed in more detail in chapter 4.

A scrutiny of the quality of the investigation and supervision, as well as other factors (including whether the impact on the wider community was considered by the investigating officer, the disposal of the incident and its appropriateness, and the timeliness of the investigation), was carried out by police officers in the CSU Service Delivery Team (based in TP CBS OCU), using a list of questions provided by DCFD. The instructions can be found in full in the appendix for this chapter.

The CSU Service Delivery Team officers reviewing the quality of investigation and supervision of the incidents identified 105 incidents that were either correctly classified as Islamophobic (69.5%) or were not classified as such, but should have been (30.5%). These 105 incidents provide the sample of incidents analysed in this section of the report.

6.4   Quality of the Primary Investigation

Figure 6.1: Details about quality of the primary investigation
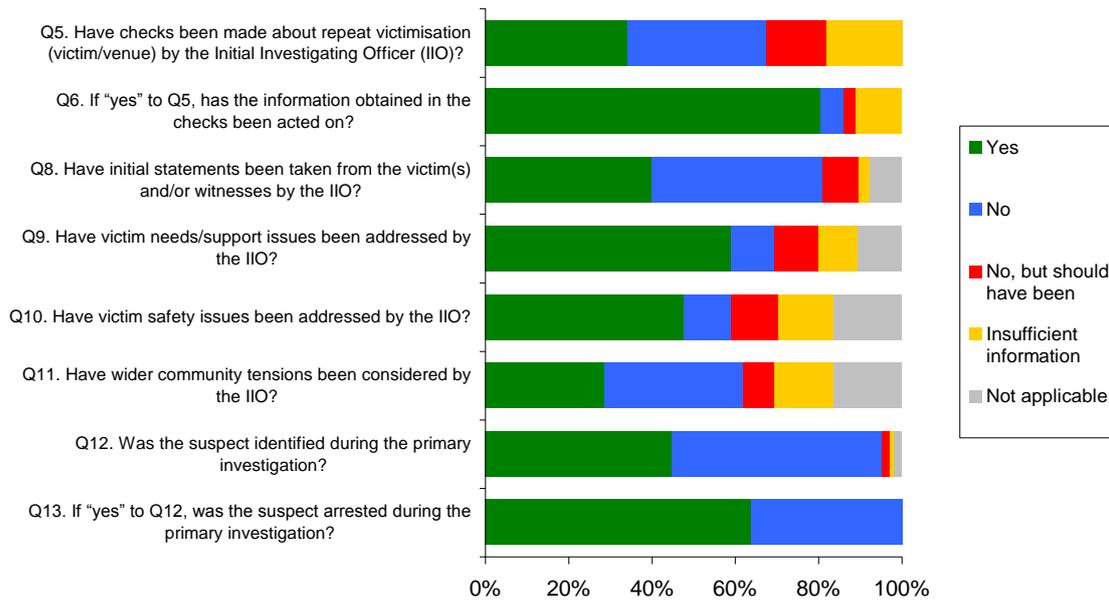
Initial Investigating Officers (IIOs) carried out checks on repeat victimisation in 34% of incidents. A further 14% of incidents were identified where checks were not carried out but should have been.

Good evidence gathering took place in 60% of incidents. Rudimentary evidence gathering took place in a further 26% of incidents (see figure 6.2). Incidents were identified where evidence gathering could have been more complete around: initial statements being taken from the victims (9%), addressing of victim needs or support issues (11%) and addressing of victim safety issues (11%).

Figure 6.2: Whether effective evidence gathering took place during the primary investigation
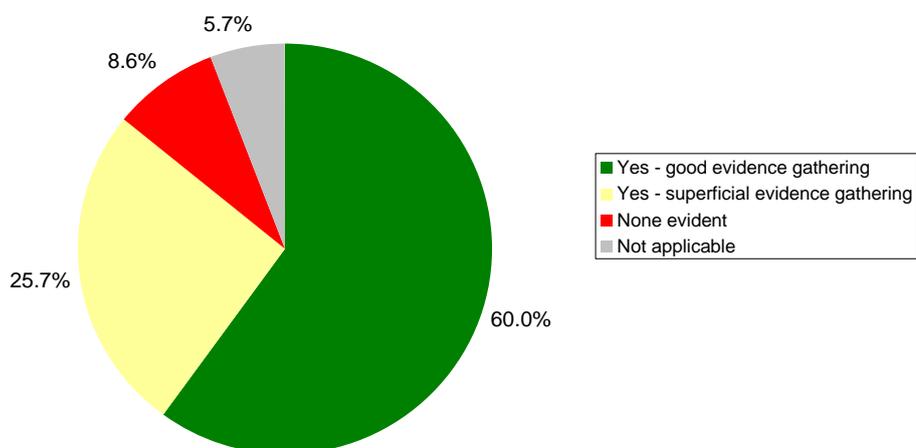
Wider community tensions were considered by the IIO in only 29% of incidents. Insufficient information was provided in the CRIS report to determine whether tension had been considered in a further 14% of incidents

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and a further 8% of incidents were identified where community tensions should have been considered but weren't.

The suspect was identified in 45% of incidents. The suspect was arrested in 30 out of those 47 incidents where the suspect was identified.

Just under half of incidents had been actively supervised (48%). A further 20% received a degree of passive supervision and 32% received no supervision at all. See figure 6.3 for further details.

Figure 6.3: Level of supervision of primary investigation
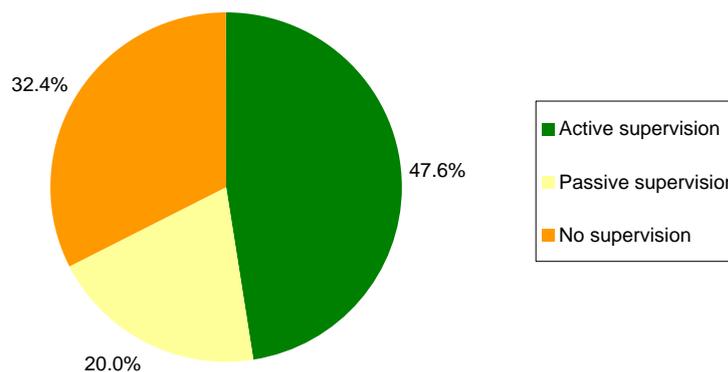
The overall quality of the initial investigation was graded as "good" in 36% of incidents, satisfactory in 52% of incidents and not to the standard expected in 11% of incidents. None were identified as having serious shortcomings. See figure 6.4 for further details.

Figure 6.4: Overall quality of the initial investigation
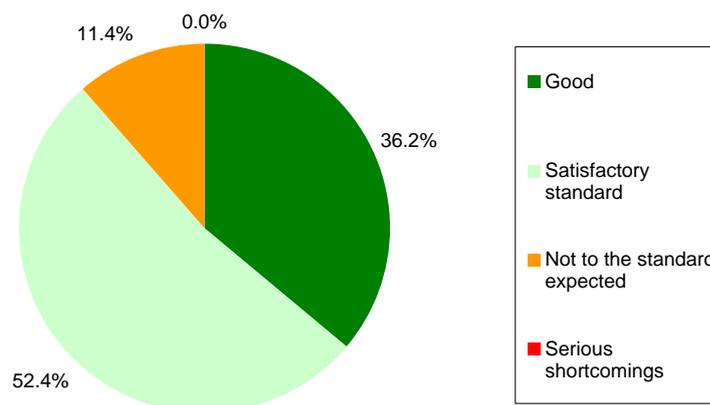
A proportion of incidents analysed provided insufficient information to be able to assess the quality of the initial investigation. This ranged from 3% to 18% of incidents. Insufficient information was less likely to be provided in relation to the identification of suspects or the initial statements taken by victims, but more likely in other aspects of evidence gathering.

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6.5 Quality of the Secondary Investigation by Community Safety Units (CSUs)

Figure 6.5: Details about quality of the secondary investigation
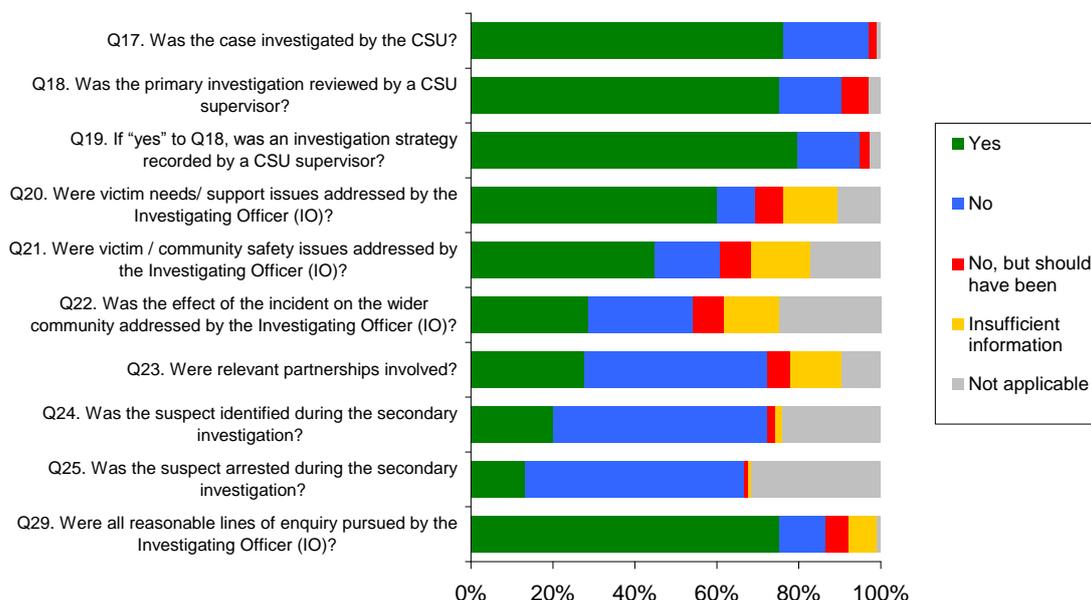
The primary investigation was reviewed by the CSU supervisor in 75% of incidents. A further 7% of incidents were identified that should have been reviewed but weren't. Insufficient information to determine whether the primary investigation should have been reviewed by the CSU supervisor was provided in 13% of incidents.

Victim needs and support issues were identified by the Investigating Officer (IO) in the CSU in 60% of incidents and should have been in a further 7% of incidents. Insufficient information to determine this was provided in 14% of incidents.

Victim or community safety issues were addressed by the CSU IO in 45% of incidents and should have been in a further 8% of incidents. Insufficient information to determine this was provided in 13% of incidents.
Relevant partnerships were involved in 28% of incidents and should have been in a further 6% of incidents. Insufficient information to determine this was provided in 12% of incidents.

The suspect was identified during the secondary investigation in 20% of incidents and should have been in a further 2% of incidents.

The suspect was arrested during the secondary investigation in 13% of incidents and should have been in a further 1% of incidents.

An avoidable time delay was only identified in 12% of incidents. In 7 out of these 13 incidents the time delay negatively affected the investigation.

The CPS had an involvement in decision-making in relation to the disposal of the suspect in 23% of incidents. The disposal of the suspect was deemed appropriate in only 41 out of 62 relevant incidents (66%).

All reasonable lines of enquiry were pursued by the CSU Investigating Officer in 75% of incidents and should have been in a further 6% of incidents. Insufficient information to determine this was provided in 7% of incidents.

The overall quality of the secondary investigation was graded as "good" in 35% of incidents, satisfactory in 45% of incidents and not to the standard expected in 18% of incidents. A further 2% of incidents were identified as having serious shortcomings or vulnerabilities in the secondary investigation. See figure 6.5 for further details.

Figure 6.6: Overall quality of the secondary investigation
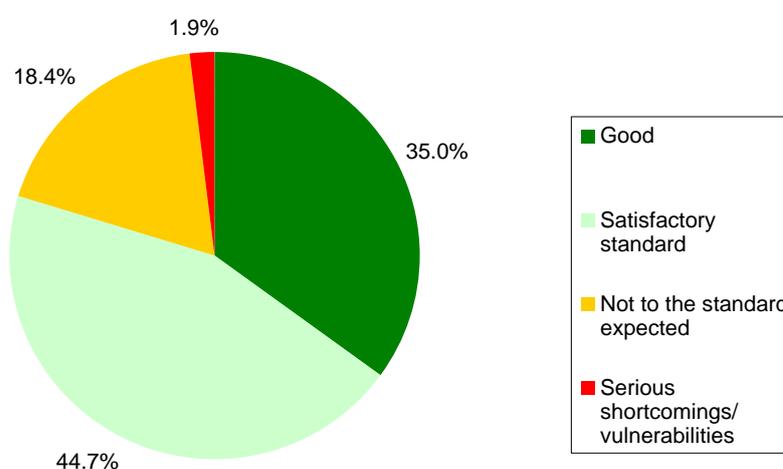
6.6 Summary of findings relevant to telephone interviews with First Response and CSU Officers

Both DCFD and CSU Service Delivery Team analyses identified incidents that were not correctly identified by investigating officers or supervisors as Islamophobic incidents. Flagging was not always used consistently. The telephone interviews addressed the issue of identifying incidents as Islamophobic in more detail to determine whether this is something that is an issue for police officers dealing with such incidents.

Analysis of the primary and secondary investigation has shown some deficiencies in terms of evidence gathering and recording of sufficient information on the CRIS reports. Supervision of the primary investigation was superficial or nonexistent in just over half of the incidents. This does not mean that there was no overall supervision of the investigation, as evidenced by the fact that CSU supervisors reviewed the primary investigation in the majority of cases before allocating it to their secondary investigators. However, it does show a lack of direct supervision of first response officers and their initial investigations, which is something that could be improved.

In addition, wider community tensions were often not considered, as well as partnerships or wider support structures that could have been brought in to support the victims. The telephone interviews with officers aimed to determine the extent of the knowledge that investigating officers (both first response officers and officers in CSUs) have around wider community tensions, partnerships and other support structures.

7 Policing Islamophobic Incidents – Experiences of First Response and CSU Officers

7.1 Background and Context

A further aim of the research is to understand collate and analyse information provided by groups such as First Response and Community Safety Unit (CSU) officers (specialist secondary investigating officers specifically trained in dealing with hate crime and domestic violence) to add context and depth to the findings.

Therefore, the CSU Service Delivery Team (based in TP CBS OCU), in partnership with DCFD, carried out individual telephone interviews with first response officers and secondary investigating officers in CSUs to gain an understanding of their experiences in dealing with Islamophobic or anti-Muslim incidents, including what they thought went well, as well as what they think would assist them in dealing with such incidents in future. The interview guide provided by DCFD to the CSU Service Delivery Team officers conducting the telephone interviews can be seen in the appendix for this chapter.

7.2 Aims and Objectives

- To understand the background and training of first response officers and CSU officers who have investigated incidents of hate crimes directed at Muslims
- To understand the decision-making process and reasoning that influenced the actions of first response officers and CSU officers who have investigated incidents of hate crimes directed at Muslims
- To gauge the experiences and perceptions of the first response officers and CSU officers who have investigated incidents of hate crimes directed at Muslims
- To increase our knowledge of possible barriers and risks to the victim reporting the crime or offering a full account of the incidents

7.3 Method

DCFD have worked closely with CSU Service Delivery Team (based in TP CBS OCU) to develop a set of questions to assess first response officers and CSU officers, with assistance and guidance from Ubaid Rehman in MPS Corporate Development and Fatima Khan from the Muslim Safety Forum (MSF).

A sample of 14 Islamophobic incidents recorded between December 2010 and March 2011 were selected using the following criteria:
- Incidents took place in one of the nine boroughs across the MPS that consistently show higher incidences of reported Islamophobic incidents over time

- Incidents reported at the front counter were excluded, as the first reporting officer is generally the officer or civilian working behind the front counter rather than a first response officer
- Incidents where the investigation was concluded
- Incidents showing a range of different outcomes, ranging from no suspect being identified and the suspect not being traced by police to incidents where the suspect was cautioned, charged or summonsed.

This enabled 14 first response officers and 13 CSU officers to be identified who would be contacted over the telephone.

Due to budget and legal constraints it was not possible for an independent market research company to conduct this stage of the research. Therefore it was decided that CSU Service Delivery Team officers (based in TP CBS OCU), who currently carry out an inspection role of CSU officers, were to conduct the interviews. These assessing officers were briefed to stress that the focus of the interview was on officers' experiences rather than a scrutiny of their performance.

It should be noted that the MSF had some concerns that the officers interviewed by other police officers would not feel as able to be candid as they could be compared to being interviewed by an independent researcher. Although this point was accepted as valid by the stakeholder group it was also accepted that there was value in the CSU Service Delivery Team officers carrying out the interviews. The reasoning behind this was they understood the complexities of the investigation and therefore could keep the officers focused on answering the required questions within the context of the police process. It should be noted that this issue is not just peculiar to this research project and this problems has been identified and referred to as the 'insider outsider' debate within the social science community.

7.4   Analysis

All discussions were carried out using the same process. All officers and their managers were informed before the interviews took place that they were going to be contacted about the incident. The officers were asked to familiarise themselves with the crime report of the incident and a date and time was set to carry out the telephone interview. All discussions were documented on the questionnaires and then inputted into an Excel spreadsheet so the findings could be analysed both quantitatively (for example, when responses required a specific "yes/ no/ don't know" response) and also qualitatively using a content analysis approach (that is, responses were summarised and placed under headings in order to represent common themes emerging from the interviews). It should be noted that although it was possible to provide an overview of the quantitative analysis[49], due to the small numbers these figures could not be considered as a representative sample of the whole MPS.

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[49] Please note that, due to small numbers, the overview of the quantitative analysis contained in this chapter does not provide exact figures (for example, 5 out of 11 officers) but instead provides a flavour of the distribution of responses (for example, half of the officers).

However, this process did allow the capture of a range of issues, experiences and views as well as capturing some explanatory variables similar to the focus group research with the Muslim community.

7.4.1 Profile of First response officers and CSU officers

A total of 11 First Response Officers and 9 Secondary Investigators were interviewed (including Community Safety Officers)

Location of CSU Officers:	Location of First Response Officers:
• Hounslow	• Hounslow
• Ealing	• Ealing
• Hillingdon	• Hillingdon
• Brent	• Brent
• Westminster	• Westminster
	• Camden
	• Islington

7.4.2 Work history

Two-thirds of First Response Officers interviewed had been police officers for between one to three years and one-third had been police officers for between four and ten years. On the other hand, half of the CSU officers had been police officers for between one to three years and the remainder had been police officers for between six to ten years (one CSU officer had been in service for 19 years). Half of the First Response Officers and CSU officers had worked on their borough for three years or less and the other half had worked on their borough for between four to ten years.

7.4.3 Role History

The majority of First Response Officers had either worked in this role for one to three years or four to seven years but one officer had on worked as a First Response Officer for less than a year. However the length of time that officers had worked as CSU officers was much shorter, with most having been CSU officers for under a year, although one had been a CSU Officer for 5 years. Part of the reason that most CSU officers have only been in post for a short time is the MPS requirement for police constables looking for promotions to have experience in a range of specialist roles and not remain too long in one specialist post.

7.4.4 Understanding the decision making process of officers

The majority of incidents were flagged immediately as an 'Islamophobic incident' by First Response Officer. They were aware from the start that this was an anti-Muslim hate incident and these decisions were supported by the CSU officers. When officers were asked what their reasoning was behind flagging the incident as Islamophobic they identified a number of themes

including the language used by the suspect and the recognition of the incident as a hate crime.

7.4.4.1 Language used by suspect

Officers noted that during the incident the suspect had used language that was insulting towards the victim and they perceived this to have a hate crime element.
However, Islamophobic statements made by the suspect were often interpreted as 'racial' remarks. For example, one officer stated,

> *"After speaking with the victim when he told me what remarks were made by the suspect I immediately realised it was racial"*

when the victim had been called a "Muslim b***h" by the suspect.

7.4.4.2 Recognition of the incident as a hate crime

Both First Response Officers and CSU Officers recognised that the accounts of the victims had elements of hate motivation and should be treated and identified on the crime report as hate crime. One officer stated that the incident, "fell within the definition of racism, i.e. where any one person regards it to be racist, therefore it is racist". It is heartening to note that officers do understand that it is not just their perception of the hate element that matters but the perception of the victim or any other person involved in the incident.

Also one officer did reflect on this point further stating that he knew that the incident was racist but not specifically anti-Muslim:

> *"I flagged the [crime report] as a racially aggravated assault. Not specifically an anti-Muslim incident".*

One issue which the Muslim communities (and indeed a number of religious communities) are particularly concerned about is that there is not enough recognition by the police about the religious element within an incident that is identified as motivated by hate and in particular there is confusion or preference about the race element of an incident. This apparent preference for identifying racial elements and lack of attention to the variety of cultural and other characteristics that hate crime offenders target can be problematic in terms of correctly identifying and dealing with such offences. Targeted communities can also feel that their specific concerns and vulnerabilities are not being listened to or appropriately addressed by the police when they focus on a more generic response to the situation.

7.4.5 Experiences and perceptions of investigating incidents of hate crimes directed at Muslims

The majority of First Response and CSU Officers felt either very or fairly confident of dealing with this type of incidents. However, just under a quarter of CSU and no First Response Officers felt that the flagging of the incident as anti-Muslim had an influence on the way it was being investigated. When asked to explain this further, CSU Officers said that as the incident was clear and straightforward, it did not warrant additional action and therefore it did not make a difference to the investigation that the incident was flagged as anti-Muslim. Nearly half of the CSU officers said that they would treat these incidents in the same way as others, although some realised that the hate element may have a different effect on this community compared to the general public. One officer said,

"I like to think every report is treated the same"

and another said,

"I wouldn't find dealing with people that have been racially assaulted or abused as difficult. There wasn't any need to approach the situation any differently from any other assault incident I might attend".

The reasons given by First Response and CSU Officers about why they felt confident about dealing with such incidents were because they found it very easy to talk to victim due to both their experience and training. However, where officers indicated they were not as confident at dealing with this type of incident, they indicated that, although they were aware of correct procedures and how to apply them, they still felt they needed to ask senior officers for guidance.

Only a quarter of CSU officers offered a view that an enhanced response should be given for these types of crimes. One officer made the following comment,

"As this incident should be charged as a religiously aggravated common assault there is extra work required to prove the religious element of the common assault".

It would appear that officers could be confusing the process of investigation relating to the crime type with understanding the nature and dynamics of hate crime. For example one officer commented,

"I recognised the racial element to an existing offence and reassured the victim that it will be treated as such. I just dealt with the call in the same way that we deal with any call [for this type of offence]. The religion of the victim was an aggravating factor, but no matter what race, religion or creed of the victim I would have dealt with the incident exactly the same."

It is perhaps this overriding policing culture that wants to ensure that there is consistency and equity in the way officers carry out their policing practice. As a result this 'one size fits' all mindset seems to be prohibiting some officers in having a cultural awareness and sensitivity in trying to understand the impact on this community and in turn offering a more responsive and adapted service.

7.4.6 Awareness of victimisation of Muslims

When asked the question, **"**Did you get the feeling that this was a 'normal' or 'everyday' experience for the victim?" all First Response and CSU Officers felt that this was generally not a 'normal' experience for the majority of victims. Officers gave accounts of the incidents stating that they remembered that the victim was traumatised, expressed disbelief and disappointment in the way they were treated by the perpetrator. However, the officers also realised that some victims had ongoing problems and had been abused on a number of occasions both because of their religion and their ethnicity. Officers reflected on this, stating that some of these victims had frequent contact with police and therefore these victims knew what to expect from police. From the crime records, one-third of victims indicated that they had experienced similar incidents before.

Over a half of First Response and one-third of CSU Officers had not asked the victim about previous experiences (it should be noted that a third of First Response and CSU Officers did not record this information). Equally, the majority of both First Response and CSU Officers had not asked the victims if their families or friends had experienced similar incidents before. Previous history is an important element of the investigation process and again this indicates that these officers don't quite understand the nature of hate crime especially if there is repeat victimisation at play.

7.4.7 Police engagement with the victim

First Response and CSU Officers felt that majority of the victims were either fairly or very cooperative and none of the victims appeared nervous or anxious about contacting the police. Officers felt that this was because this was down to their experience and training, which helped them talk with the victims and put them at ease. Officers also realised that the victims were accommodating, open to answering questions as they wanted as much done as possible to get the perpetrator arrested. However where victims didn't come across as cooperative, the officers felt that this was due to either language barriers or the victims not wanting to go to court and their fear of reprisals. These were, therefore, factors that officers realised were preventing the victims from providing information to them.

7.4.7.1 Reassurance

The majority of First Response and CSU Officers did try to reassure the victims. They did this by carrying out follow-up calls to reassure the victim and providing victims with information such as the CRIS details and contact numbers. Also they communicated to the victim that the MPS takes these incidents seriously, that the victim should not have to tolerate this type of abuse and the police would do as much as they possibly could and informed them of the police procedure. One officer felt that taking a detailed statement early on helped the victim feel that the incident was being taken seriously and another explained about 'special measures' if the case did go to court. One officer also explained that the police would conduct reassurance visits. A CSU officer also directly liaised with the Housing Department and put the victim in contact with the Borough Council Hate Crime Coordinator.

7.4.7.2 Determining the motivation of the perpetrator through information and evidence

All officers felt they were able to get as much information as possible from the victim and they were either fully or partially able to gain the confidence of the victim. Factors that officers felt contributed to this was respecting the victim's culture by taking their shoes off in the victim's home, by listening to the victim, immediately acting on the information or issues the victim gave them, and by fully explaining the options available to them and what actions the police would take. Just under two-thirds of the time the perpetrator was not identified but in over two-thirds of incidents the officer was able to identify the motivation of the perpetrator using evidence gained from the investigation. All First Response and CSU Officers felt they had enough time to investigate the incidents.

Officers felt that they were able to establish motivation through building a good rapport and asking the victim relevant questions about how the incident came about and whether there was any dialogue between them and the perpetrators.

7.4.7.3 Identify any risks to the victim

Just under a quarter of First Response and CSU Officers identified a risk to the victim, including the potential for ongoing harassment either because the perpetrator lived in the same local area or worked with the victim. One-third of First Response Officers and just over half of CSU Officers considered the implications or effect of the incident on the wider community, even after probing by the telephone interviewer.

7.4.8 Officers' awareness of external support agencies for victims

Two-thirds of CSU Officers indicated they were aware of external support agencies on their borough that provide support to victims. Conversely, three-quarters of First Response Officers were not aware of any external support agencies.

Very few officers were aware of any specific support agencies or groups for victims of anti-Muslim incidents. Very few First Response Officers referred the victim to or spoke to the victim about support agencies. On the other hand, the majority of CSU Officers did refer victims to agencies such as Victim Support or their Borough Council Hate Crime Co-coordinator. However, none of the officers specifically directed the victim to a support agency that was specifically Muslim.

7.4.9 Level of training and information officers received on issues specifically affecting Muslim communities

Half the First Response Officers had received training or information on issues specifically affecting Muslim communities and the majority of these had received this training during recruit training. One-third was aware of any borough engagement activity happening with the Muslim community. Approximately half of the officers felt they were fairly well informed about Muslim issues on their borough, while the remainder of the officers interviewed did not feel at all informed about Muslim issues on their Boroughs.

When officers were asked what additional training or information they thought would be useful when dealing with incidents affecting Muslim victims they indicated that they would like to know more about support agencies and have a better understanding of local issues and concerns affecting the Muslim community. They also indicate they wanted practical understanding of the culture including understanding of etiquette and the fears that the community may have of the police.

7.4.10 Community Confidence in the police

First Response Officers felt that the reasons behind some Muslim victims feeling a lack of confidence in coming forward to police to report incidents of anti-Muslim or Islamophobic behaviour that they experienced was because of negative media representation but also due to the cultural understanding they had of the police. They felt that the community still believes that the MPS may be institutionally racist and are influenced by friends' and families' negative experiences, feeling nothing would be done or the incident would not be taken seriously.

Some First Response Officers had a more sophisticated understanding, recognising that the Muslim community may be unsure how the police would react to being confronted with cultural difference and also had an awareness of some cultural barriers, such as being aware of religious festivals and ensuring that victims are able to speak to an officer of the same gender.

When officers were asked what they thought could be done to encourage Muslim victims to come forward to report incidents to the police the majority

advocated increasing community engagement opportunities through either liaison officers or Safer Neighbourhood Team meetings with the Muslim community at Mosques or talking with Imams. It was also noted that the police should not just engage with elders but talk to young people by holding open forums.

8 Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Conclusions

The term 'hate crime' conjures up images of violent crimes committed by extremist or far-right perpetrators driven by very specific hate fuelled ideologies. However, the Islamophobic incidents recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service demonstrate that, while the incidents have a significant and wide-ranging impact on the Muslim communities of London, there is very little, if any, evidence of this type of extremism at work. Instead, many of these incidents occur spontaneously as victims go about their daily lives, where either conflict situations become aggravated by Islamophobic or anti-Muslim words or actions or perpetrators take immediate advantage of an opportunity that presents itself. Even incidents that show some degree of premeditation by the offender mostly involve letters or phone messages rather than direct contact with the victim. Where perpetrators are known to the victim, these include neighbours and acquaintances or friends.

This does not mean, however, that the impact of these 'everyday'[50] incidents on the Muslim communities of London are any less severe or wide ranging. In fact, the 'everyday' nature of such incidents makes them more difficult for communities to avoid and their cumulative nature takes a large toll not just on individuals but on the communities as a whole. There was evidence from the focus groups with Muslim community members that the nature of the incidents had in many cases led to them normalising this as part of their everyday experience and not recognising the incidents as something that could be reported to the police thus leading to a large amount of under-reporting of such incidents to the police.

As with other forms of hate crime, visibility also plays a role in identifying targets. The visibility of Muslim women, together with the public debate around the 'veil', appears to have legitimised the targeting of Muslim women in public places to a greater extent than is apparent for other hate crimes that are reported to the Metropolitan Police Service (such as antisemitic crime, race hate crime and homophobic crime).

Furthermore, the language used by perpetrators in the anti-Muslim incidents shows that there is little real understanding or knowledge of any religious teachings or tenets of Islam. The language is instead targeted at the negative stereotype or misconception of Muslim people that the perpetrator holds. Race and faith hate language are often used together. The confusion and lack of real understanding about Muslims and Islam held by society in general as well as by perpetrators of anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents was also highlighted by members of the Muslim community that were spoken to as part of this research.

These incidents do need to be understood within their wider social and cultural context. The negative media reporting directed at Muslims, the impact of counter-terrorism policies such as 'Prevent', the perceptions of negative

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[50] 'Everyday' = commonplace, usual or ordinary (rather than referring to daily occurrences).

police attitudes towards young Muslims being played out in stop and search situations, as well as politicians' comments relating to Muslims in relation to 'veils' and multiculturalism all serve to generate a climate where Muslim communities are made to feel increasingly isolated and vulnerable and where bigotry is reinforced and seen as 'socially acceptable'. It is of concern that women in public places, often together with their children, are being seen as legitimate targets. Also, more efforts are needed to engage with and encourage young Muslim males and older Muslim females to report anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents that they experience to the police.

The nature of the incidents and social context within which they occur makes it far more difficult for police to target and disrupt the activities of such perpetrators. It also requires police officers to have an awareness of the social and cultural context within which individual incidents occur and also for them to be aware of wider community implications of such incidents.

It was evident from the research that efforts were being made by both first response and secondary or specialist investigating officers to reassure victims of such crimes that their experiences were being taken seriously and to investigate the incidents thoroughly. However, the overriding police culture of ensuring consistency and equity in the way officers carry out their policing practice appears, in some cases, to be prohibiting officers from being aware that a knowledge of cultural or social context is necessary to understand the impact of such incidents on this particular community and to offer a far more responsive and adapted service.

There were some gaps that were identified in terms of service delivery and supervision. Improvements can be made around evidence gathering in relation to initial victim statements and addressing victim needs and safety issues. In particular, recording of information about victim visibility or other information on how or why the victim was targeted, as well as an investigation into the offender's motivation are vital in terms of being able to effectively respond to and prevent such incidents from occurring. There were also specific gaps in the knowledge and training of the officers that need to be addressed. In particular, there was quite a wide-ranging lack of knowledge about hate crime, cultural issues affecting Muslim communities and of external local support agencies that could assist victims of anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents.

Finally, the focus on identifying racial elements within an incident and lack of attention to the variety of cultural and other characteristics that hate crime offenders target can be problematic in terms of correctly identifying and dealing with such offences. Different communities have their own specific concerns, different barriers to reporting and different vulnerabilities and these need to be listened to and appropriately addressed by the police.

8.2   Recommendations

R1	The MPS reviews its Hate Crime policy and toolkits to ensure that: • motivations are investigated to identify hate crimes, • anti-Muslim hate crimes are investigated within the context of the cultural background whilst considering wider community implications, and • positive action is taken within the framework of the MPS' Total Policing Strategy.
R2	Embed anti-Muslim faith hate crime within the Territorial Police performance framework and other corporate equality governance processes to ensure that scrutiny, supervisory activity and interventions are maintained.
R3	Territorial Police seek the support of the Directorate of Media and Communications in raising police officers and staff awareness of anti-Muslim hate crimes and the wider cultural issues facing the Muslim communities.
R4	Boroughs review and refresh their communication and community engagement action plans to be inclusive of issues facing the Muslim community.
R5	Territorial Police and Communities Together Strategic Engagement Team seek the support of the Directorate of Media and Communications and borough-based communicators working with Community Safety Units to ensure the work being done by the MPS to bring perpetrators of anti-Muslim hate crimes to justice and messages encouraging the reporting of offences including via third-party and online schemes are as widely publicised as possible - internally, to stakeholders and to the wider media.
R6	a) Review and update the Community Safety Unit hate crime course (affecting CSU Specialist investigators) to ensure changes to toolkits are implemented and investigating officers have comprehensive knowledge of the Association of Chief Police Officers Hate Crime manual. b) Review all hate crime training materials/ presentations/ course inputs for all relevant courses affecting call handlers, first responders to Senior Investigating Officers (SIO) to ensure they are current and up-to-date.

9   Appendices

Appendix chapter 3

Methodological notes for section 3.6

Data sources

Unless otherwise specified the data in section 3.6 of the report were extracted from the MPS Crime Report Information System (CRIS) over three time periods:

(i)   the Mar 2006 - Feb 2011 data were extracted from the system on 20/06/2011;

(ii)   the Mar 2011 - Sep 2012 data were extracted from the system on 18/12/2012; and

(iii)   the Oct 2012 - Dec 2012 data were extracted from the system on 07/01/2013.

Victim data

The majority of Islamophobic incidents (79.4%) had one victim recorded against them. Even when multiple victims are involved in incidents, the primary victim is usually recorded as 'victim 1'. Therefore, the most accurate and established method used in the MPS of extracting one set of victim information and linking it to the incident information is to extract information about 'victim 1' only. Consequently, the victim data reported on in section 3.6 of the report refer to the victim recorded in the crime report as 'victim 1'.

Suspect data

In order to link one set of suspect information to the incident information, the most accurate and established method used in the MPS has been to use the information recorded against 'suspect 1' in the crime report. Consequently, the suspect data reported on in section 3.6 of the report refer to the suspect recorded in the crime report as 'suspect 1'.

Accused data

In order to link one set of accused information to the incident information, the most accurate and established method used in the MPS has been to use the information recorded against 'accused 1' in the crime report. Consequently, the accused data reported on in section 3.6 of the report refer to the accused recorded in the crime report as 'accused 1'.

Base sizes

A total of 1977 Islamophobic incidents were recorded on the MPS CRIS system between March 2006 and December 2012.

A total of 1772 'victim 1' details were available for the Islamophobic incidents recorded over this time period, of which 131 were recorded as being companies or public bodies and 1641 were recorded as being individuals. Repeat victimisation information is provided for both companies or public bodies and individuals. However, victim details relating to age, disability. ethnicity, gender or injuries received relate to the 1641 individuals only.

A total of 1542 'suspect 1' details were available for the Islamophobic incidents, therefore the suspect data relate to this base size.

A total of 447 'accused 1' details were available for the Islamophobic incidents, therefore the accused data relate to this base size.

Figure A3.1: The number of Islamophobic incidents reported between March 2006 and December 2012

Borough	Number of Islamophobic incidents reported (March 2006 to Dec 2012)	
Westminster	183	
Tower Hamlets	111	
Camden	105	
Brent	94	
Islington	94	
Waltham Forest	81	80+
Harrow	78	
Newham	77	
Ealing	71	
Lambeth	69	
Hammersmith & Fulham	68	
Kensington & Chelsea	68	
Hackney	65	
Hillingdon	63	
Hounslow	63	
Barking & Dagenham	62	
Barnet	62	
Croydon	62	60-79
Haringey	54	
Redbridge	52	
Southwark	52	
Wandsworth	50	
Greenwich	47	
Lewisham	47	
Kingston upon Thames	35	
Merton	34	
Havering	30	30-59
Sutton	25	
Enfield	23	
Bromley	21	
Richmond upon Thames	20	
Bexley	11	11-29

Data extracted from CRIS (Mar 2006 - Feb 2011 data extracted 20/06/2011; Mar 2011 - Sep 2011 data extracted 18/12/2012; Oct 2011 - Dec 2011 data extracted 07/01/2013)

Figure A3.2: Muslim population in London boroughs, in descending rank order, London 2011

Borough	People stating religion as Muslim		Total population	
	Number	Percentage	Number	
Tower Hamlets	87,696	34.5	254,096	
Newham	98,456	32.0	307,984	
Redbridge	64,999	23.3	278,970	
Waltham Forest	56,541	21.9	258,249	20.0% +
Brent	58,036	18.6	311,215	
Westminster	40,073	18.3	219,396	
Enfield	52,141	16.7	312,466	
Ealing	53,198	15.7	338,449	
Haringey	36,130	14.2	254,926	
Hackney	34,727	14.1	246,270	
Hounslow	35,666	14.0	253,957	
Barking and Dagenham	25,520	13.7	185,911	
Harrow	29,881	12.5	239,056	
Camden	26,643	12.1	220,338	
Hillingdon	29,065	10.6	273,936	
Barnet	36,744	10.3	356,386	
Hammersmith and Fulham	18,242	10.0	182,493	10.0 -
Kensington and Chelsea	15,812	10.0	158,649	19.9%
Islington	19,521	9.5	206,125	
Southwark	24,551	8.5	288,283	
Croydon	29,513	8.1	363,378	
Wandsworth	24,746	8.1	306,995	
Merton	16,262	8.1	199,693	
Lambeth	21,500	7.1	303,086	
Greenwich	17,349	6.8	254,557	
Lewisham	17,759	6.4	275,885	
Kingston upon Thames	9,474	5.9	160,060	5.0-9.9%
Sutton	7,726	4.1	190,146	
Richmond upon Thames	6,128	3.3	186,990	
Bromley	7,841	2.5	309,392	
Bexley	5,645	2.4	231,997	
Havering	4,829	2.0	237,232	0-4.9%
Inner London	**466,265**	**14.4**	**3,231,901**	
Outer London	**546,558**	**11.1**	**4,942,040**	
Greater London	**1,012,823**	**12.4**	**8,173,941**	
England and Wales	**2,706,066**	**4.8**	**56,075,912**	

Source Table KS209EW entitled '2011 Census: Religion, local authorities in England and Wales', 2011 Census; © Crown copyright 2012
Available at: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-286262

Appendix chapter 4

Coding frame categories and definitions

1. Summary of incident

Please provide a summary of the incident, which should be no longer than 1 or 2 sentences.

2. Stage 1 code

1	Certain that it is anti-Muslim, targeted at Muslim(s) or perceived Muslim(s)
2	Backlash after extreme incident, but no evidence provided to enable determination that they were targeted by a case of mistaken identity. For example, firebombing of Sikh temple on night of 7/7
3	Definitely a Faith incident, but does not fall into the category of 1 or 2. This includes both inter-religious and intra-religious incidents.
4a	Clearly a Racial Incident but not enough information to indicate that there is a religious dimension. For example, comments like "Are you from Iraq? F*** off Iraqis"
4b	Incidents targeted at Jewish or Sikh individuals/ organisations. Under legislation, these are seen as incidents targeted at a race of people, rather than at a faith
8	Doesn't appear to be a faith or race hate incident at all
9	Unclear
10	CRIS reports related to actual bombers/ bombings (7/7)

3. Spontaneous vs. pre-planned

(i.e. was the interaction between the victim and suspect pre-planned in any way by the suspect)

Pre-planned	Interaction between the victim and the suspect appears to have some degree of planning (by the suspect) that has gone into it prior to the incident taking place
Spontaneous	Interaction between victim and suspect doesn't seem to show any planning prior to the incident taking place
Unclear	Some evidence of some degree of planning, but unsure whether this triggered the particular incident
Don't know	Not enough information to make any judgement on this

4. Language/ symbolism used

Please state the exact nature and/ or phrase of the language/ symbolism used. Please also provide details of the medium used for communication e.g. verbal abuse, graffiti, text message, letter, poster, etc.

Note: If more than one type of language/ symbolism is used, each type should be listed separately.

5. Level of interaction/ knowledge between victim and suspect

Relationship	Previous interaction has taken place between the victim and the particular suspect(s) involved
Knowledge	Some knowledge of the particular suspect(s) but no previous direct interaction between the victim and the suspect(s)
Stranger	No knowledge of or previous interaction with the suspect(s), but some awareness/ interaction for this particular incident
Unknown	Suspect(s) not identified (no interaction/ awareness)
Don't know	Not enough information to make any judgement on this

6. One-off incident vs. series of incidents

One-off	This incident is a one-off incident that is not linked in any way to any other incidents that may have taken place previously.
Series	This incident is part of a series of separate and distinct incidents that have taken place before – these incidents may be similar in nature and/ or involve the same suspect(s), but there needs to be some information available to link the incidents together in some way.

7. Who was the incident directed at?

Building/ Organisation	Is the incident directed at a Muslim organisation or building (or an organisation or building that has links with the Muslim community)
Person	Is the incident directed at a particular individual or group of individuals
Public property	Did the incident involve the damage of public property?
Private property	Did the incident involve the damage of private property?

If more than one, please list all relevant categories from the list.

8. Where did the incident take place?

Public	Did the incident take place in a public location e.g. organisation, religious building, school, etc.
Private	Did the incident take place in a private location (e.g. inside or in the immediate vicinity of a person's home, and so on)

9. Number of suspects

Please provide the number of suspects. If not known, state "unknown". If there is knowledge about the suspects but the CRIS report does not contain the details, state "not stated".

10. Category of incident

Typology	Definition
(i) Pre-meditated	Perpetrator takes some pre-meditated action to instigate the incident by engineering their interaction with the victim. A number of sub-categories have been distinguished which are differentiated from each other by the extent to which the perpetrators make themselves visible to victims:
a) Direct	Face to face interaction between the victim and suspect.
b) Indirect	Through letter or telephone call or message directed at a specific individual or organisation.
c) Indiscriminate	Anti-Muslim literature or graffiti in a public location.
d) Inadvertent	For example, the expression of Islamophobia or anti-Muslim sentiment overheard by someone for whom the message was not intended and that person taking offence.
(ii) Opportunistic	Perpetrator takes immediate advantage of an opportunity that presents itself to vent their Islamophobia or anti-Muslim sentiment, rather than engineering the incident in a pre-meditated way.
(iii) Aggravated	Perpetrator and victim are caught up in a conflict situation that initially does not involve anti-Muslim sentiment or Islamophobia. However, in the course of the conflict situation the perpetrator's anti-Muslim sentiment or Islamophobia emerges.
(iv) Interpersonal	A prior personal relationship exists between the perpetrator and the victim. Conflict emerges in the course of that relationship and the perpetrator's anti-Muslim sentiment or Islamophobia then surfaces.
(v) Interpreted	The defining characteristic of this type of incident is the interpretation that the victim, or another person such as police officer, places on the incident where there is no other information listed in the crime report that would enable any determination to be made about what is driving the incident.

11. Is there any indication that the victim's first language is not English?

Please use this space for any information that is provided in the crime report, including whether the victim does not have British nationality, does not speak English very well. Where possible, provide details of where the victim is from and what their first language is.

12. Presence of alcohol or drugs

Please use this space to provide information on any drugs or alcohol that were involved in the incident, specifying whether it involved the victim, suspect or both.

13. Was the victim visibly identifiable as Muslim?

Please use this space to provide information on whether the victim was visibly identifiable as Muslim, for example, wearing a headscarf, hijab or other traditional dress.

14. Level/ intensity of violence/ intimidation

Please use this space to provide information on the level or intensity of the violence or intimidation used. For example, did it involve abusive language, pulling a headscarf off, slapping, hitting, etc.

15. Any other comments

Please use this space for any other comments that may be of relevance.

Typology of Islamophobic or anti-Muslim incidents

Typology	Definition
1. Pre-meditated	Perpetrator takes some pre-meditated action to instigate the incident by engineering their interaction with the victim. A number of sub-categories have been distinguished which are differentiated from each other by the extent to which the perpetrators make themselves visible to victims:
a) Direct	Face to face interaction between the victim and suspect.
b) Indirect	Through letter or telephone call or message directed at a specific individual or organisation.
c) Indiscriminate	Anti-Muslim literature or graffiti in a public location.
d) Inadvertent	For example, the expression of Islamophobia or anti-Muslim sentiment overheard by someone for whom the message was not intended and that person taking offence.
2. Opportunistic	Perpetrator takes immediate advantage of an opportunity that presents itself to vent their Islamophobia or anti-Muslim sentiment, rather than engineering the incident in a pre-meditated way.
3. Aggravated	Perpetrator and victim are caught up in a conflict situation that initially does not involve anti-Muslim sentiment or Islamophobia. However, in the course of the conflict situation the perpetrator's anti-Muslim sentiment or Islamophobia emerges.
4. Interpersonal	A prior personal relationship exists between the perpetrator and the victim. Conflict emerges in the course of that relationship and the perpetrator's anti-Muslim sentiment or Islamophobia then surfaces.
5. Interpreted	The defining characteristic of this type of incident is the interpretation that the victim, or another person such as police officer, places on the incident where there is no other information listed in the crime report that would enable any determination to be made about what is driving the incident.

Methodological note: These definitions were developed together with Dr. Paul Iganski using a grounded theory approach. Starting from the typology developed for antisemitic incidents[51], the definitions were tested and adapted using a sample of anti-Muslim incidents to ensure that they accurately reflected the typology of these incidents.

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[51] See Iganski, Kielinger and Paterson (2005), Hate Crime Against London's Jews, published by the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, for further details.

Keywords used in the Integrated Information Platform (IIP)[52] searches carried out to find Islamophobic incidents on the CRIS system that had not been identified as such

TOWEL HEADS <OR> MOP HEAD <OR> RAG HEAD <OR> SAND NIGGER <OR> CAMEL JOCKEY <OR> MOHAMMEDAN <OR> OSAMA <OR> HIJACKER <OR> TALIBAN <OR> MUSLIM <OR> ISLAM <OR> MUHAMMAD <OR> MOSQUE <OR> QURAN <OR> RAMADAN <OR> HALAL <OR> HIJAB <OR> BURQA <OR> BIN LADEN

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[52] **IIP** is a 'Google' like search engine that searches a range of MPS crime and intelligence information recording systems.

Appendix chapter 5

Background

BMG Research has been commissioned by the Metropolitan Police Service to help them to understand the Muslim community's experiences of victimisation and of the police, and of outcomes that would help to build their confidence in the police in dealing with such situations. Areas of interest include:

- experiences and views of anti-Muslim crime, incidents and anti-social behaviour directed towards Muslims and perceived Muslims, and participants' perceptions of reasons for this
- the impact of such experiences on individuals, their families and their communities
- factors affecting whether this is reported, and if not, why not
- where it is reported, experiences and expectations of the police in dealing with the incident, and how this could be improved.

Discussion Aim

To provide MPS in-depth information (as opposed to numbers/ statistics) on the nature and context of anti-Muslim incidents, to help the police to respond to Muslim communities more effectively and in turn increase the communities' confidence in the police.

Method

All respondents were recruited face-to-face in the locality by a BMG recruiter, using a recruitment questionnaire and information leaflet. Respondents were then invited to one of four mini-focus groups which were facilitated by BMG researchers.

Young Muslim females

The focus group with young Muslim females was held in a community venue in Tower Hamlets in April 2011. Six females were recruited and five attended (one respondent cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances). Respondents were aged from between 18 and 30.

Young Muslim males

The focus group with young Muslim males was held in a community venue in Hounslow in early May 2011. Five males were recruited and three attended (one respondent failed to attend due to personal circumstances). Respondents were aged between 18 and 30. Two further individuals who did not attend a previous group arranged in Acton, were recontacted and participated in telephone depth interviews (this involved two young males from Southall, both aged 19).

Older Muslim females

The focus group with older Muslim females was held in a community venue in Hounslow in early May 2011. Five females were recruited and all five attended the discussion. All five lived with their children, one was a lone parent whilst all others lived with their husband (and in some cases other family members). All were aged 50 and over. The views of two further women who attended a group in Acton (which had to be abandoned because of poor attendance and language issues) were also taken into account.

Older Muslim males

The focus group with older Muslim males was held in a community venue in Tower Hamlets in April 2011. Five males were recruited and all five attended. All were aged 50 and over. One further male from Barking, who did not attend the group, was later interviewed by telephone.

Analysis

All discussions were digitally recorded (with consent) to aid the analysis process.

The analysis was conducted using a data-mapping matrix approach. This comprised an analysis grid for the classification and interpretation of qualitative data. The key themes and topics were identified through the topic guide and through an initial review of the group discussion. Each theme was then translated to a column heading in a matrix chart (created in Excel). Each row within the chart represented a focus group. Relevant data (and quotations) were then extracted and summarised for input into a specific cell within the matrix. The result was a series of tables representing all of the discussions. The researchers were then able to read across to get a full account of each group's views and experiences, with each vertical column representing a theme (for example, views on how the police engaged with Muslim communities). This process allowed the full range of experiences and views to be documented, as well as capturing possible explanatory variables. It also ensures that the process of the qualitative analysis was transparent and replicable.

Structure used for Focus Group Discussions

1. Introduction (2 minutes)
- Introduction to BMG and the purpose of the evaluation (as above)
- Emphasis of BMG as an independent research company
- Confidentiality, anonymity and data protection
- Permission to record to ensure that we have an accurate record of the discussions (for analysis purposes only, no-one outside of BMG team will hear the recording and no individual will be identified in any way)
- Any questions before we start?

2. Warm-up (5 minutes)
Note: to encourage the group members to speak, to relax the group and begin to engage
- Brief introductions (round the table, first name and who you live with)
- What it is like living in Ealing/ Tower Hamlets?

3. General thoughts on attitudes (5 minutes)
- In general, how would you describe attitudes in this area towards Muslims such as yourselves?
- Do you think this has improved, got worse or stayed about the same over the last say 5 years?
- Why do you think that is?
- Are there any particular issues in the local area that have affected views and attitudes? (for example, recent incidents, community actions, awareness events etc) Can you describe/ explain these?

4. General thoughts on how the police engage with Muslim communities (5 minutes)

Note: will come on to specific experiences/ examples later – this is just to get an overview of relationships with/ views on the Met police in general

- Generally speaking, how well do you think the Met police work with the Muslim communities here in Ealing/ Tower Hamlets?
- How sensitive would you say the police are with regard to anti-Muslim behaviour?

5. Definitions and Understanding (5 minutes)

Would like to move on now to your views and experiences of anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incidents. Just to be clear, these are a form of 'hate crime'. The incidents could involve anything from name-calling and harassment; threatening behaviour; damage to property; threatening or offensive letters, emails text messages or phone calls; to physical violence and assaults.

A Hate Incident is defined by the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Met Police as "Any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate." [put on flip chart]

An Anti-Muslim or Islamophobic Hate Incident is defined as "Any incident that is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated or aggravated by fear and or hatred of Islam, Muslim people or Islamic culture' [put on flip chart]

An Anti-Muslim or Islamophobic Hate Crime is defined as "Any incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, that is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated or aggravated by fear and or hatred of Islam, Muslim people or Islamic culture' [put on flip chart]

Were you aware of these definitions? Do these definitions make sense to you? If not, why not?

6. Experiences of anti-Muslim and Islamophobic incidents (15 minutes)

How many of you have experienced, or know someone who has experienced, an anti-Muslim or Islamophobic incident?
Can you briefly describe these incidents?
What do you think the reasons were for the perpetrator's actions (for example, because of where they were, what they were wearing, who they were with etc)
Did they start off as an anti-Muslim incident or as something else?
What would you say the impact of this/ these incidents is – on the individual, family and wider community
What about from a police perspective – how aware do you think they are about the impact or consequences of such incidents on the individual/ family/ wider community.

7.   Reporting incidents (15 minutes)

- Do you think that these kinds of incidents are generally reported to the police, or not?
- Why/ why not? (e.g., mistrust, fear, culture, language, vulnerability, perceptions of seriousness)
- Has anyone here ever reported an incident to the police that is anti-Muslim? If not covered previously
- Probe: do you think there is a degree of expectation or acceptance around this kind of behaviour?
- Probe: are there concerns about what other people think if you report something? (e.g., family, friends, community etc)
- Probe: are there issues in terms of identifying an incident as anti-Muslim?
- Who would you seek advice from about whether or not to report to the police?
- How would you report it? For example, by phone, by visiting a police station, with support from family member/ advocate/ intermediary etc
- What might stop you/ others from reporting something?
- Probe: might this vary according to the victim's age, gender etc or type of incident
- Are there examples of where an incident has been dealt with well by the police?

8.   Scenarios (25 minutes)

We have some incidents here, based on real life scenarios, which we would like your views on, in terms of whether you think this would, or should be reported, why/ why not, and how you would expect the police to deal with this kind of incident.

Scenario 1

A Muslim woman wearing a hijab is walking along the street with her young child in a pushchair. A car passes with a group of males in it, who shout anti-Muslim abuse and throw eggs at the woman. They stop the car and start getting out, threatening to chase the woman, but then get back into the car and drive off as other cars behind start hooting at them.

Scenario 2

A young Asian Muslim man is receiving repeated threatening and abusive anti-Muslim phone calls on his mobile from a group of male youths because he is going out with a white girl. They have previously beaten him up because of this, so he is quite worried that their threats are serious and that they mean to cause him more harm.

Scenario 3

A Muslim family is experiencing repeated anti-Muslim incidents from a group of young people. They don't know the names or addresses of the young people but know that they live in their local area. The incidents have been going on for several months now and started out as verbal abuse and intimidating behaviour when they leave or return to their home, but now also involve the throwing of eggs and stones at the windows of their home when they are at home.

Scenario 4

A young woman who has converted to the Muslim faith and now wears a hijab and a jilbab has been receiving verbally abusive anti-Muslim phone calls from friends of her brother since converting. These include references to her now being a suicide bomber because of what she is wearing. Her brother thinks she is taking things too seriously and that the calls are only meant as "a bit of a laugh".

Scenario 5

A male Muslim taxi driver picks up a young woman who has had too much to drink. When they arrive at their destination, he asks her to pay her fare. She disputes the amount, becoming aggressive and saying "You f***ing Muslim! Go back to your own country!"

For each scenario:

- Would you report this to the police? why/ why not?
- How would you decide whether to report it to the police or not? Would you seek advice from someone? If so, how?
- If it was reported to the police, how would you expect them to respond? What would you hope they would do?
- If you would not report this to the police, would you report it to anyone else (such as the council, housing department, phone company, a support group or organisation, your local mosque)? why/ why not?
- If it was reported to someone else, how would you expect them to respond? What would you hope that they would do?

9.   Recommendations (15 minutes)

The Met police are keen to hear ideas from you as to how things could be improved, and what would make it easier for individuals to report Islamophobic incidents.

- What suggestions do you have? Probe for specific examples to ensure actionable suggestions
- How could the police gain your confidence and the confidence of others in your community?
- Are there any specific things that the police could do?
- What could others do (e.g., statutory services, community leaders etc)?
- What else needs to change?
- Are there examples of good practice that we can learn from?

10.   Overview and reflection (5 minutes)

- Any other issues respondents would like to raise
- Sum up – key emerging issues
- Our next steps – discussions with other groups, reporting to the Met police
- Any questions?

Thank and Close

Remind about confidentiality and anonymity
Re-iterate importance of their contribution

Appendix chapter 6

Instructions and guidance notes for the analysis of the quality of investigation and supervision of Islamophobic incidents

Questions	Responses	Guidance Notes
Recording of incident/ offence		
Q1. Has the incident been classified correctly?	*Yes* *No* *Insufficient information*	
Q2. *(If "no" to Q1)* What should the incident have been classified as?	*(please give details)*	State correct classification
Q3. Was the incident identified as an Islamophobic incident?	*Yes - Correctly* *Yes - Incorrectly* *No, but should have been* *No, not an Islamophobic incident*	
Q4. Please provide a brief summary of the circumstances of the incident	*(please give details)*	Please provide brief details. (e.g. Criminal damage to residential premises by neighbour)
Primary investigation		
Q5. Have checks been made about repeat victimisation (victim/ venue) by the Initial Investigating Officer (IIO)?	*Yes* *No* *No, but should have been* *Insufficient information*	
Q6. *(If "yes" to Q5)* Has the information obtained in the checks been acted on?	*Yes* *No* *No, but should have been* *Insufficient information*	

Questions	Responses	Guidance Notes
Q7. Did effective evidence gathering take place by the IIO?	*Yes – good evidence gathering* *Yes – superficial evidence gathering* *None evident* *Not applicable*	Please make a judgement on the level of evidence recovery has taken place during the primary investigation. In making your judgement, please consider whether more could have been done or whether you think that what was done was effective. ***Note:*** *evidence recovery could include, where relevant: recording (and photographing where equipment is available) evidence of injuries, damage, disturbance; seizing of tangible evidence including property & weapons; seizing CCTV; obtaining witness statements; conducting local enquiries; obtaining DNA samples; etc.*
Q8. Have initial statements been taken from the victim(s) and/ or witnesses by the IIO?	*Yes* *No* *No, but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q9. Have victim needs/ support issues been addressed by the IIO?	*Yes* *No* *No, but should have been* *Not applicable*	This includes any language needs of the victim (where relevant)
Q10. Have victim safety issues been addressed by the IIO?	*Yes* *No* *No, but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q11. Have wider community tensions been considered by the IIO?	*Yes* *No* *No, but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q12. Was the suspect identified during the primary investigation?	*Yes* *No* *No, but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q13. *(If "yes" to Q12)* Was the	*Yes*	

Questions	Responses	Guidance Notes
suspect arrested during the primary investigation?	*No* *No, but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q14. What was the level of supervision for the primary investigation?	*Active supervision* *Passive supervision* *No supervision*	
Q15. How would you grade the overall quality of the primary investigation?	*1 – Good* *2 – Satisfactory standard* *3 – Not to standard/ not addressed* *4 – Serious shortcomings/ vulnerabilities*	
Q16. Please provide details of any shortcomings in the primary investigation	*(please give details)*	Please provide brief details.
Secondary investigation		
Q17. Was the case investigated by the CSU?	*Yes* *No* *No – but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q18. Was the primary investigation reviewed by a CSU supervisor?	*Yes* *No* *No – but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q19. *(If "yes" to Q18)* Was an investigation strategy recorded by a CSU supervisor?	*Yes* *No* *No – but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q20. Were victim needs/ support issues addressed by the Investigating Officer (IO)?	*Yes* *No* *No – but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q21. Were victim / community safety	*Yes*	

Questions	Responses	Guidance Notes
issues addressed by the Investigating Officer (IO)?	*No* *No – but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q22. Was the effect of the incident on the wider community addressed by the Investigating Officer (IO)?	*Yes - effectively* *Yes - partially* *No* *No – but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q23. Were relevant partnerships involved?	*Yes* *No* *No – but should have been* *Not applicable*	This can include both internal and external partners, including support services (both statutory and voluntary), for example: Local Authority, Housing, Staff Associations, Muslim Safety Forum, etc.
Q24. Was the suspect identified during the secondary investigation?	*Yes* *No* *No, but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q25. Was the suspect arrested during the secondary investigation?	*Yes* *No* *No, but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q26. Has there been avoidable time delay in the investigation?	*Yes - Affected the investigation* *Yes - No effect on investigation* *No* *N/A*	This could include officers' leave, sickness, other work commitments that prevent the investigation from moving forward in a timely way.
Q27. Has the CPS had any involvement in the decision-making in relation to the disposal?	*Yes* *No – but should have done* *No – but not necessary* *Not stated*	
Q28. Was the suspect disposal appropriate?	*Yes* *Partially* *No* *Unclear* *N/A*	

Questions	Responses	Guidance Notes
Q29. Were all reasonable lines of enquiry pursued by the Investigating Officer (IO)?	*Yes* *No* *No – but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Q30. How would you grade the overall quality of the secondary investigation?	*1 – Good* *2 – Satisfactory standard* *3 – Not to standard/ not addressed* *4 – Serious shortcomings/ vulnerabilities*	
Q31. Please provide details of any shortcomings in the secondary investigation	*(please give details)*	Please provide brief details.
Putting the CRIS away		
Q32. Was the investigation reviewed by a CSU Supervisor prior to it being closed?	*Yes - Good review* *Yes - Superficial Review* *No* *No – but should have been* *Not applicable*	
Final questions		
Q33. Any other comments	*(please give details)*	Please make any other comments you feel are relevant to the investigation or supervision of the incident.

Appendix chapter 7

Interview Question Guide (Police Officers)

Background to focus group/ interview work

The Diversity and Citizen Focus Directorate is carrying out a structured research project on behalf of TP Capability and Business Support OCU in partnership with the Muslim Safety Forum (MSF), the MPS Association of Muslim Police (AMP), MPS Communities Together Strategic Engagement Team (CT-SET), MPS Corporate Development Evaluation and Performance Unit (EPU), the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) and the National Community Tension Team (NCTT).

This research falls under the 'Fair and Responsive Services' and 'Community Engagement' elements of the MPS Diversity and Equality Strategy. It also falls under the 'Effectiveness', 'Accessibility' and 'Continuous Improvement' elements of the Territorial Policing (TP) Customer Service Strategy.

Aims of research:
- to support the MSF workstream "Islamophobia and Hate Crimes";
- to provide information that will raise the understanding of frontline officers of the nature of crimes motivated by anti-Muslim hate;
- to provide information on the nature and context of Islamophobic incidents to assist in the development of preventative measures;
- to determine whether there are any specific gaps in the service provided to victims of Islamophobic incidents and to identify areas where investigation, supervision, training and partnership working can be improved;
- collate and analyse information provided by groups such as frontline officers and Muslim community members to add context and depth to the findings;
- to provide recommendations for improvement that are practical and operationally focused.

A number of focus groups have been carried out with members of the Muslim community to enable the MPS to understand the Muslim community's experiences of victimisation and of the police, and of outcomes that would help to build their confidence in the police in dealing with such situations. Areas of discussion included:
- experiences and views of anti-Muslim crime, incidents and anti-social behaviour directed towards Muslims and perceived Muslims, and participants' perceptions of reasons for this;
- the impact of such experiences on individuals, their families and their communities;
- factors affecting whether this is reported, and if not, why not;
- where it is reported, experiences and expectations of the police in dealing with the incident, and how this could be improved.

Initial findings from the focus groups with the Muslim community include the following:

- Most have experienced abuse to some degree resulting from Islamic, or perceived Islamic clothing, or other identifying features such as beards.
- There is a great deal of under-reporting of Islamophobic incidents. Many reasons are given for under-reporting, including: that verbal abuse is unpleasant but something that they shrug off; that they feel that the police will not or cannot (through lack of evidence) do anything to help; language barriers; not wanting to 'make a fuss.
- Views of the MPS are broadly positive, with younger men most critical. Respondents in general are not opposed to police, but do wonder how much the police have the resources to deliver, and sometimes do not believe that they have a particular interest in tackling Islamophobic incidents. There was also a view, particularly among the women that police have more 'serious' crimes to deal with and they do not wish to take up valuable resources or time.
- Young men in particular feel under particular suspicion from the police, and are troubled that they are viewed more negatively because they are young, male, Asian or Black, and Muslim.
- Reporting: Some felt uneasy in attending the local police station to report an incident for fear of being recognised, whilst others were concerned that uniformed police visiting their home could warrant unnecessary attention.
- There was a real concern about the negative portrayal of Muslim people in the media (news reporting both on TV and in newspapers). They were concerned that this would impact on the perceptions, assumptions and behaviour of police officers and felt that it was important for officers to have a more rounded view of Muslim life and communities.
- Events such as 9/11 and 7/7 have raised the perceived level of tension for many Muslim people, and many recall the period before these events as being more peaceful and less troubled for Muslim people in London. One group also identified that the arrival of migrants from the Eastern European states had also caused an increase in Islamophobia, due to Eastern European societies being less multicultural than in London.

Aim of interviews with police officers

The overall aim of the individual telephone interviews with first response officers and secondary investigating officers in CSUs is to gain an understanding of their experiences in dealing with Islamophobic or anti-Muslim incidents, including what they thought went well as well as what they think would assist them in dealing with such incidents in future.

Topics for discussion include the following:
- the understanding of issues affecting the Muslim community and barriers to reporting that may exist for the Muslim community;
- how they feel the confidence of the Muslim community to report Islamophobic or anti-Muslim incidents could be increased;
- what engagement mechanisms and partnership working with the Muslim community they are aware of on their borough;

- the extent to which they would refer Muslim victims on to external support services;
- extent to which wider community issues are considered when dealing with anti-Muslim incidents;
- what they think would improve the level of service they could provide to Muslim victims;
- what would enable them to respond to issues identified by the Muslim community more effectively.

Introduction for officers being interviewed

- Explanation of purpose of the interview - not assessing or judging the investigation or the quality of recording on the Crime Reporting Information System (CRIS), but focusing on their experiences of investigating such incidents.
- The information we are looking for does not have to be recorded on CRIS, any additional information is useful.
- Looking at anti-Muslim incidents (faith hate crimes directed at Muslims or perceived Muslims).
- Confidentiality, anonymity and data protection. Their supervisors will not be given results of individual interviews (even if they ask for them). Victims will not be contacted either. Results will be collated and anonymised so that responses cannot be traced back to individuals.
- Any questions before we start?

- **Introductory questions:** How long have you been a police officer? How long have you worked on the borough? How long have you been in your current role?

Reminder of incident being referred to

Synopsis of incident needs to be given, as well as outline of individual officers' roles in investigating the incident.

Question areas for first responders

- **Identification of incident as anti-Muslim/ Islamophobic:** *(Note to interviewer: Check when Islamophobia flag was added to the interview and adjust questions accordingly)*

  Were you aware from the start that it was an anti-Muslim incident?

  If yes, what was your reasoning behind flagging the incident as such?

  Did you deal with the incident any differently from other incidents because it was an anti-Muslim incident? If yes, please provide details.

  If subsequently flagged:
  Would you have dealt with the incident any differently if you had been aware from the beginning that it was an anti-Muslim incident?

- **Confidence in dealing with anti-Muslim incidents:**
  How confident were you in dealing with this particular incident?

- **Victim understanding of incident:**
  Did you get the feeling that this was a 'normal' or 'everyday' experience for the victim? If yes, please explain how/ why.

  Had they experienced similar incidents before? Had their families or friends experienced similar incidents before?

- **Contact with the victim:**
  How cooperative and open with you was the victim?

  Did you feel that there was anything that prevented the victim from providing information to you? If yes, what do you think the reason was?

  Did the victim seem nervous about getting the police involved? If yes, why do you think this was the case?

  Did you feel that there was a communication or understanding issue with the victim?

  Did you do anything to reassure the victim? If yes, what did you do?

  Did you feel you got as much information as possible from the victim about the incident?

  Did you feel you were able to gain the confidence of the victim? If yes, what do you think gave the victim that confidence?

- **The perpetrator:**
  (Note to interviewer: Check whether perpetrator was identified and what evidence was provided, if any, to establish the motivation of the perpetrator)

  Was the motivation of the perpetrator established? If yes, how?

- **Risk assessment:**
  Did you identify any risks to the victim? If yes, please provide details.

- **Effects on wider community:**
  Did you consider if this incident affected the wider community? If yes, please give details. How did you feel it affected the wider community? Did you take any action as a result?

- **Support needs of the victim:**
  Are you aware of external support agencies on borough that support victims? ….hate crime victims? ….victims of Islamophobia?
  If yes, did you speak to the victim about this?

- **Time spent on investigation:**
  Did you feel you had sufficient time to investigate or deal with the matter? If not, why not?

  Did you feel you were able to spend enough time with the victim(s)? If not, why not?

- **Training received by officer:**
  Have you received any training/ information on issues specifically affecting Muslim communities, either on borough or centrally? If yes, please provide details. How recent was the training? What issues did the training cover? Was the training useful? Have you had the opportunity to apply it?

  Have you received any training for engaging with the BME communities on borough? …for engaging with the Muslim communities on borough? If yes, please provide details. How recent was the training? Was the training useful? Have you had the opportunity to apply it?

  Are you aware of any borough engagement with the Muslim community? If yes, what engagement takes place? Can you provide details?

  Overall, how informed do you feel about Muslim issues on your borough?

  What additional training or information do you think would be useful to you when dealing with incidents affecting Muslim victims?

- **Reducing under-reporting and building confidence:**
  Why do you think that some Muslim victims may not feel confident to come forward to the police to report incidents of anti-Muslim or Islamophobic behaviour that they experience?

  Are there any particular barriers that you think apply to Muslim victims over and above barriers experienced by other minority or hard to reach communities?

  What do you think could be done by the police to increase trust and confidence in the Muslim communities?

  What do you think could be done to encourage Muslim victims to come forward to report incidents that they experience to the police?

- **Any other comments:** Is there anything else you would like to say about anything we have talked about?

Question areas for secondary investigators in CSUs

- **Identification of incident as anti-Muslim:**
  Do you think the flagging of this incident as anti-Muslim was correct? If yes, what was the rationale for this? If not, why not?

  Do you think that the flagging of the incident as anti-Muslim had an influence on the way it was being investigated?

- **Victim understanding of incident:**
  Did you get the feeling that this was a 'normal' or 'everyday' experience for the victim? If yes, please explain how/ why.

  Had they experienced similar incidents before? Had their families or friends experienced similar incidents before?

- **Contact with the victim:**
  How cooperative and open with you was the victim?

  Did you feel that there was anything that prevented the victim from providing information to you? If yes, what do you think the reason was?

  Did the victim seem nervous about getting the police involved? If yes, why do you think this was the case?

  Did you feel that there was a communication or understanding issue with the victim?

  Did you do anything to reassure the victim? If yes, what did you do?

  Did you feel you got as much information as possible from the victim about the incident?

  Did you feel you were able to gain the confidence of the victim? If yes, what do you think gave the victim that confidence?

- **The perpetrator:**
  (Note to interviewer: Check whether perpetrator was identified and what evidence was provided, if any, to establish the motivation of the perpetrator)
  If the perpetrator was not identified, what were the barriers?

  Was the motivation of the perpetrator established? If yes, how?

- **Risk assessment:**
  Did you identify any risks to the victim? If yes, please provide details.

- **Effects on wider community:**
  Did you consider if this incident affected the wider community? If yes, please give details. How did you feel it affected the wider community? Did you take any action as a result?

- **Support needs of the victim:**
  Are you aware of external support agencies on borough that support victims? ….hate crime victims? ….victims of Islamophobia?
  If yes, did you speak to the victim about this?

  Did you refer the victim to any support agencies? If yes, what did you do?

- **Involvement of the CPS:**
  Was the CPS asked for advice in relation to the incident?

  If yes, was their advice given in a timely manner?

  In your opinion, was this the correct advice?

- **Victim's willingness to support prosecution:**
  Was the victim willing to support the investigation through to prosecution?
  Did the victim have any fears/ concerns about their case progressing through the criminal justice system? If yes, how did you address those fears/ concerns? Did anything prevent you from addressing those concerns?

- **Time spent on investigation:**
  Did you feel you had sufficient time to investigate or deal with the matter? If not, why not?

  Did you feel you were able to spend enough time with the victim(s)? If not, why not?

- **Training received by officer:**
  Have you received any training/ information on issues specifically affecting Muslim communities, either on borough or centrally? If yes, please provide details. How recent was the training? What issues did the training cover? Was the training useful? Have you had the opportunity to apply it?

  Have you received any training for engaging with the BME communities on borough? …for engaging with the Muslim communities on borough? If yes, please provide details. How recent was the training? Was the training useful? Have you had the opportunity to apply it?

  Are you aware of any borough engagement with the Muslim community? If yes, what engagement takes place? Can you provide details?

  Overall, how informed do you feel about Muslim issues on your borough?

  What additional training or information do you think would be useful to you when dealing with incidents affecting Muslim victims?

- **Reducing under-reporting and building confidence:**
  Why do you think that some Muslim victims may not feel confident to come forward to the police to report incidents of anti-Muslim or Islamophobic behaviour that they experience?

  Are there any particular barriers that you think apply to Muslim victims over and above barriers experienced by other minority or hard to reach communities?

  What do you think could be done by the police to increase trust and confidence in the Muslim communities?

  What do you think could be done to encourage Muslim victims to come forward to report incidents that they experience to the police?

- **Any other comments:** Is there anything else you would like to say about anything we have talked about?

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This report presents the findings from a research project in order to provide a clearer understanding of the dynamics of Islamophobic incidents recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service in London and the impact of these on the Muslim communities within London.

For the first time in published form, Metropolitan Police Service records of Islamophobic incidents in London are placed in the context of the social and cultural context of the lived reality of Muslim communities in London and of police officers investigating such incidents. Drawing on crime reports from 2005 to 2012, the report not only discusses the nature and context of such incidents but also looks at the extent of premeditation visible through the language used and actions of the perpetrators, presenting a typology of incidents to assist further understanding and discussion. The crime reports are also examined from an operational policing perspective to determine the level of service police officers provide victims of such incidents, with the aim of identifying areas where training, investigation, supervision and partnership working can be improved.

By drawing on information provided by focus groups with Muslim men and women of different age groups in London and telephone interviews carried out with first response and specialist investigating officers investigating Islamophobic incidents, the findings from Metropolitan Police Service records are placed in a wider context. The added context and depth provided by the experiences of the Muslim communities and police officers enables recommendations to be developed that are both practical and achievable.

Overall, the research provides a valuable addition to current debates that are being held about Islamophobic and anti-Muslim hate crime.

"We know that Islamophobic hate crime, like other forms of hate crime, is under-reported. We also recognise the significant impact of such crime on communities We are, therefore, committed to robustly tackling all hate crime in liaison with our partners, which include a wide range of support groups and agencies. Research projects such as this can only improve our understanding of Islamophobic hate crime and will enable us, in turn, to improve our response to it. We welcome the recommendations in the report. In light of the findings, we will work hard to take them forward. "

Commander Nick Ephgrave
Territorial Policing Directorate, Metropolitan Police Service

About the authors
Vicky Kielinger (B.Sc., M.Phil.) and Susan Paterson (B.Sc., M.A.) are both currently working as Senior Criminologists in the Diversity and Citizen Focus Directorate of the Metropolitan Police Service.

Both authors received commendations from the Deputy Assistant Commissioner for the support they provided to the operational police response to the July 2005 London bombings.