Profiling Populations Available for Stops and Searches

MVA
Joel Miller
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Policing and Reducing Crime Unit: Police Research Series

The Policing and Reducing Crime Unit (PRC Unit) is part of the Research, Development and Statistics Directorate of the Home Office. The PRC Unit carries out and commissions research in the social and management sciences on policing and crime reduction.

The Police Research Series presents research material on crime prevention and detection as well as police management and organisation issues.

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Foreword

This report is one of six to be published presenting the findings from a programme of work on stops and searches carried out by the Home Office's Policing and Reducing Crime Unit (Research, Development and Statistics Directorate). This programme was developed following the Report of the Inquiry into the Death of Stephen Lawrence. This highlighted anew minority ethnic communities’ lack of trust and confidence in police use of stops and searches.

The report presents the findings of research exploring populations available to be stopped and searched in five police force areas. ‘Available’ is taken here as describing people who use public places when and where stops and searches take place. In doing so, the research responds to concerns that comparisons between the ethnic breakdown of stops and searches and the ethnic breakdown of local resident populations are a misleading indicator of ethnic biases in stop and search activity.

The research shows resident population measures are very different from populations actually available to be stopped and searched. Specifically, the research suggests that available populations tend to include larger proportions of people from minority ethnic backgrounds than resident populations. Furthermore, when statistics on stops and searches are compared with available populations, they do not show any general pattern of bias against those from minority ethnic backgrounds, although there are some specific exceptions. The research also examines the geographical targeting of stops and searches in relation to crime for two sites. This suggest that stops and searches are generally targeted at areas where there are crime problems. However, there are some exceptions to this, and these exceptions can have the effect of increasing levels of disproportionality.

The report cautions against seeing the results as ‘good news’ for the police. Firstly, the research does not dismiss the possibility of discrimination in police practice. Secondly, it suggests that disproportionality is, to some extent, based on structural factors beyond the control of the police. This means that stops and searches are likely to continue to disproportionately affect those from minority ethnic groups. Therefore, the police will need to work hard to minimise the bad feeling associated with stops and searches if they are to ensure trust and confidence among all sections of the community.

Carole F. Willis
Head of Policing and Reducing Crime Unit
Research, Development and Statistics Directorate
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October 2000
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The Authors

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Executive summary

Introduction

The report of the Inquiry into the Matters Arising from the Death of Stephen Lawrence (1999) highlighted minority ethnic communities’ general lack of trust and confidence in the police, particularly in relation to officers’ use of stops and searches. This follows a significant body of evidence which has shown a higher rate of stops and searches by the police of people from minority ethnic groups, particularly black people compared to their numbers in the population. (e.g. Willis, 1983; Smith, 1983; Young, 1994; Bucke, 1997; Home Office, 1999). While the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report identified discrimination as a major element underpinning this ‘disproportionate’ use of stops and searches against those from minority ethnic backgrounds, it also acknowledged that the reasons for it are complex.

More recently, her Majesty’s Inspectorate of the Constabulary (HMIC, 2000) recommended that research be carried out to explore this issue. Specifically, it highlighted problems with comparing resident population statistics with statistics on searches, given that populations ‘available’ to be searched by the police may be quite different from the resident populations.

This research identifies three different explanations for disproportionality:

- there is ethnic bias in officer decision-making on the street about who to stop or search;
- the populations available for stops and searches include a larger proportion of people from minority ethnic backgrounds than local resident populations; and
- stops and searches are targeted at areas which have high concentrations of people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

The research explores these issues by measuring available populations, and comparing them with resident populations and with those stopped and searched. It also explores the geographical relationship between stops and searches and crime.

For the purposes of clarity, stops without searches are referred to here as ‘stops’, while stops followed by searches are referred to as ‘searches’.

Methodology

A methodology was developed for this study involving the following key elements:

- identification of hotspots or ‘zones’ within each of five study sites areas where most stops and searches take place;
obtaining profile information of the available pedestrian and vehicle populations within the specified zones using video cameras and observers situated in vehicles driven within the zones;

- comparing these available population profiles with resident populations and those stopped and searched; and

- for two of the five sites, comparing the distribution of crimes with the distribution of stops and searches, and exploring reasons for any differences.

**Answers to key questions**

**How useful are residential population figures as a measure of the population available to be stopped or searched?**

The research presented here shows, quite clearly, that measures of resident population give a poor indication of the populations actually available to be stopped or searched. The available populations in the five sites were quite different from the resident populations of the areas (as measured by the 1991 Census). Most significantly, within pockets of high stop and search activity, young men and people from minority ethnic backgrounds tended to be over-represented in the available population.

The research also notes significant problems with defining what should count as ‘local’ for the purposes of a resident population when compiling measures of disproportionality.

**Are stops and searches used disproportionately against minority ethnic groups in the available population?**

Overall, across the five sites, the findings of this research did not suggest any general pattern of bias against people from minority ethnic groups either as a whole or for particular groups:

- white people tended to be stopped or searched at a higher rate to the available population;
- Asian people tended to be under-represented in those stopped or searched (with some exceptions); and
- black people have a more mixed experience, sometimes under-represented in stops and searches and sometimes over-represented.

Despite these findings, it is noted that possibility of discrimination by officers should not be dismissed.
Do geographic patterns of stops and searches reflect local crime problems?

The research found that stops and searches tend to be targeted at areas that have higher than average proportions of people from minority ethnic groups. It is important, therefore, that this targeting should be justifiable in terms of local crime problems.

A comparison of the geographic pattern of stops and searches with recorded crime in two sites suggest a fair degree of consistency between the two. However, in both areas, there were some important disparities; there were places where the levels of stops or searches were either higher or lower than would be expected from local crime levels. On one site where disparities occurred, stops and searches tended to be focused on areas with a particularly high minority ethnic populations. A small part of the disproportionality in stops and searches in this area might, therefore, follow from this mismatch.

Recorded crime figures should not be taken as a perfect measure of local crime problems, and it may be that there are other explanations for the patterns presented in the report. However, focusing stops and searches on areas which do not have high crime levels has the potential to exacerbate, unnecessarily, levels of disproportionality.

Conclusions and recommendations

One reaction to this research, is that police forces have little to worry about given that it does not indicate any general pattern of bias against those from minority ethnic backgrounds. However, in many respects, the findings of this research are bad news for the police. Most significantly, they suggest that disproportionality is, to some extent, a product of structural factors beyond their control. Yet, if the police continue to stop and search those from minority ethnic backgrounds more often than their white counterparts, they can still expect this to impact negatively on levels of confidence among these groups. This means that police forces must redouble their efforts to minimise the bad feeling that stops and searches cause, particularly among those from minority ethnic groups.

The research makes the following recommendations:

- Forces should continue to compile measures of disproportionality based on residential population figures, as these still provide a measure of the outcomes of stops and searches and represent the actual experiences of those from minority ethnic backgrounds.
• Forces should start to monitor populations that are available for searches in order to assess officer practice.

• Forces should closely target stops and searches on areas with current crime problems to avoid exacerbating levels of disproportionality unnecessarily.

• Forces should monitor officers’ use of stops and searches with a view to identifying any ethnic biases. Where these are identified, forces should act to address them.

• Officers should carry out searches only when they have good grounds and, as far as possible, when these grounds are informed by accurate and up-to-date intelligence.

• Police officers should manage stops and searches in ways which maximise public trust and confidence.
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1. Introduction

The Report of the Inquiry into the Matters Arising from the Death of Stephen Lawrence (1999) highlighted minority ethnic communities' general lack of trust and confidence in the police, particularly in relation to officers' use of stops and searches. This follows a significant body of survey-based research which has drawn attention to the higher rate of stops and searches by the police of people from minority ethnic groups, particularly black people (for example, Willis, 1983; Smith, 1983; Young, 1994; Bucke, 1997). Police statistics for England and Wales, published by the Home Office since 1996 under s95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991, have also consistently shown disproportionate rates of searches (Home Office, 1999).

While the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report delivered the verdict that “discrimination is a major element in the stop and search problem” it also acknowledged that the problem is “complex”. The report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of the Constabulary (HMIC), Policing London: Winning Consent (2000) gave further consideration to this issue in relation to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). The report noted that, among Londoners, there was a majority view that disproportionality in stop and search figures was singularly attributable to racist stereotyping among police officers. However, the report flagged-up a problem faced by the MPS of:

... addressing the disproportion that is clear from the figures, whilst isolating the variable factors that may quite rationally account for some of the disproportion, in order to reach a judgement as to what part of the disproportion was in fact attributable to stereotypical thinking and discriminatory action.

In elaborating this point, HMIC voiced important concerns about current measures of proportionality in the MPS, although similar arguments are likely to apply across the country:

The comparative proportions of stop and search activity are set against census data that is now out of date. The mobile population in central London renders such a comparison vacuous as the resident population is a tiny fraction of those who visit the West End for work or leisure. Whilst the irrelevance of population comparison is stark in central London, its relevance is questionable in many other Boroughs, where between 40% and 50% of stop and searches are of people who are not resident in that Borough. It is the view of Her Majesty's Inspector that independent research needs to be undertaken to define mechanisms to establish the available population in the streets and public places.
This research focuses on issues of the kind highlighted by the HMIC report and examines the characteristics of the population available to be stopped and searched by the police. By using the term ‘available’ in this report we refer to the people who use public places where and when stops or searches are carried out.

Specifically, the research addresses the following questions:

- How useful are residential population figures as a measure of the population available to be stopped or searched?
- Do police officers disproportionately stop or search those from minority ethnic backgrounds among the available population?
- Do geographic patterns of stops and searches reflect local crime problems?

The context of the study

This study forms part of a broader research programme on stop and search conducted by PRC following the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, and will refer readers to the findings from other projects in the programme where these provide more detail. The programme comprises the following elements:

1. Assessing the impact on crime and the community

This report takes a balanced look at stop and search both as a crime-fighting tool and in terms of its broader impact on the community. In particular, it focuses on the following questions:

- What role does stop and search have in policing?
- Are searches effective at tackling crime problems?
- Under what circumstances are they most effective?
- How do they impact on public perceptions of the police?
- How can negative impacts be minimised?
- What, therefore, are the implications for best practice in relation to stop and search?

This work is reported in Miller, et al. (2000)

2. An evaluation of the Inquiry’s recommendations on stops and searches

This research evaluates the impact of a pilot of recommendation 61 of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report. It recommended that a record be made of all police stops and searches, the record to include the reason, outcome and the self-defined ethnicity of the person stopped.
This pilot was carried out in five areas across the Metropolitan Police Service, Leicester Constabulary, Suffolk Police and West Yorkshire Police. The evaluation assesses, among other things, whether the changes produce improvements in public trust and confidence, monitoring and accountability, and search practice. The full results of this evaluation are presented in Bland, et al. (2000a).

3. Public views on stop and search

As part of the evaluation of the pilot, a large-scale qualitative research project was carried out by the British Market Research Bureau (BMRB) to gather the views of people who have experienced stop and search as well as community members more generally, drawing on the experiences and opinions of people across different ethnic backgrounds. This is reported in Stone and Pettigrew (2000).

4. Police stops, decision-making and practice

This project takes a detailed look at the factors which underlie police decision making in relation to stops and searches, and the risks that these may pose. It also attempts to identify what makes a ‘good stop’. This relates both to treating members of the public fairly, and to identifying circumstances when a stop or search encounter is more likely to be effective and legal. The findings of this research are presented in Quinton, et al. (2000).

5. Profiling populations ‘available’ for stop and search

This research is reported here.

6. Interventions to improve the management of searches

This study examines a range of initiatives being developed by a selection of forces which aim to make their use of stop and search more fair and effective. Interventions focus on improvements to:

- managerial effectiveness;
- operational effectiveness;
- recording practices;
- officers’ knowledge of stop and search powers; and
- community confidence.

The first phase of this research has been reported in Quinton and Bland (1999), and the final results are presented in Bland, et al. (2000b).
It is planned to bring together the key results from all this work in an extended briefing note which draws overall lessons from the programme.

The report

Chapter 2 discusses a range of explanations for disproportionality in figures, and explains how measuring available populations will help to identify which explanations are most likely to be correct. Chapter 3 outlines the methodology of the study. Chapter 4 compares local resident populations with populations available for stops and searches, and assesses the nature of differences. Chapter 5 compares available populations with records of stops and searches, and identifies whether and where there appear to be ethnic biases in patterns of stops and searches. Chapter 6 compares geographic patterns of stops and searches with crime, and draws out the implications of these patterns for disproportionality. Finally, chapter 7 draws together the conclusions from the research and makes recommendations.

Terminology

For the purposes of clarity, for the remainder of the report a clear distinction will be made between stops which do not result in searches and stops involving searches. When discussing the former, the report will simply refer to ‘stops’. In discussing the latter, the report will refer to ‘searches’.

Appendices

A set of appendices are available to accompany this report, providing further methodological information and additional statistics underpinning the research findings. These have been compiled in a separate volume, and are available from PRC upon request.
2. Understanding disproportionality and availability

In this chapter, we examine possible explanations for disproportionality, and show how an understanding of available populations is important in identifying which explanation is most likely to be correct. In doing so, the chapter offers a clear definition of availability which is taken forward in the study\(^1\).

**Explanations for disproportionality**

‘Disproportionality’, in this context, refers to the phenomenon by which those from minority ethnic groups are stopped or searched more than would be expected from their numbers in the population. Traditionally, calculations of disproportionality have compared the numbers of stops or searches of those from minority ethnic groups with the numbers of minority ethnic people in the resident population. As already noted, these comparisons have typically shown that those from minority ethnic backgrounds, particularly black people, are stopped and searched more than would be expected, and can therefore be said to be stopped or searched disproportionately (e.g. Young, 1994; Bucke, 1997; Home Office, 1999).

In order to shed light on the processes by which minority ethnic people are over-represented among those stopped and searched, we can envisage several different scenarios which might lead to this disproportionality. It is important to note, however, that while just one of these scenarios may provide the main explanation for disproportionality, it is also quite possible that it is a product of more than one of them. The key scenarios are illustrated in Table 1, and discussed below.

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\(^1\) In this discussion, we acknowledge the input of Peter Jordan who, through personal communication, has assisted us in our thinking.
Ethnic bias in officer decision-making on the street about who to stop or search

In this first and perhaps most stereotypical scenario, operational police officers on patrol are seen as more likely to stop and search someone they come across who is from a black or other minority ethnic background. This would mean that even among those available to be stopped or searched on the street, it would be those from minority ethnic backgrounds who would more often experience stops and searches.

Perhaps the most common explanation for this type of behaviour is stereotyping which leads officers to view those from minority ethnic backgrounds as more suspicious. While, on the face of it, this may suggest racism on the part of officers, it is important to remember that officers are often carrying out their duties on the basis of intelligence, or descriptions of suspects produced by victims or witnesses. Where minority ethnic suspects are over-represented in these sources, it is likely that, quite rationally, officer behaviour is likely to reflect this rather than any crude racism. This point is of particular significance if, as some authors suggest, people from certain minority ethnic groups may be more involved in crime (e.g. Smith, 1994; FitzGerald, 1993; Reiner, 1993).

Overall, however, in the scenario presented here, the practice of officers represents a key starting-point for understanding disproportionality and potential racist stereotyping by officers features as a potentially important issue.

Populations available for stops and searches include a larger proportion of people from minority ethnic groups

In this scenario, the people who are found in places and at times where stops and searches take place tend to have different characteristics to those in the local resident population, and these differences are reflected in figures on stops and searches. Specifically, this would involve important differences in the ethnic make-up of the resident and available populations.

The idea that those who spend more time in public places where and when stops and searches take place seems reasonable. Certainly, existing evidence suggests this is likely to be true. For example, based on a survey of 12 to 30 year-olds, Flood-Page, et al. (2000) found that going out regularly in the evening or hanging around in the street were associated with being stopped as pedestrians, even after controlling for other factors. Similarly, those going out regularly in the evening were more likely to be stopped while in vehicles.
Furthermore, there are a number of reasons for thinking that the available population may differ from the resident population, particularly using measures based on the 1991 Census. For one, as HMIC (2000) has pointed out, the 1991 Census is now out of date. Second, as we have seen, those going out more are also more likely to form part of the available population, and there are unlikely to be consistent patterns across demographic groups in this regard. Furthermore, it appears that those available to be stopped and searched within an area are very often not residents of that area. Certainly, where analysis has been carried out, substantial proportions of searches are of people who live outside the area in which they are searched (e.g. Quinton, et al., 1999; FitzGerald, 1999).

However, it is going a step further to suggest that there may be significant differences in the ethnic make-up of available and resident populations. This might imply important differences in lifestyle characteristics between people of different ethnic backgrounds. Yet there is evidence which, on the face of it, lends credibility to this idea. For example, FitzGerald and Sibbitt (1997) argue that there are three reasons for thinking that young black people would be more likely to be available for searching than white people. First, young black people have much higher rates of unemployment than white people, which may mean they are more often on the street during daytime and out later at night. Second, the higher rate of school exclusion for black pupils is likely to raise the numbers of young black people available to be searched. Finally, FitzGerald and Sibbitt cite evidence based on the 1994 British Crime Survey which suggests that black people are more likely to go out in the evening than those from other ethnic groups.

Available populations may also disproportionately involve those from minority ethnic backgrounds for demographic reasons. In particular, those people living, or at least spending time, in areas where there are more stops and searches are, as a result, more likely to be available for stops and searches. So if stops and searches take place more often in areas where there are larger proportions of those from minority ethnic groups, this would increase availability of those from minority ethnic groups. This point is taken up below.

Targeting of stops and searches at areas which have high concentrations of people from minority ethnic backgrounds

It seems inevitable that stop and search activity, rather than being evenly spread across police force areas or divisions, will be more common in some places than others. It is also likely that the demographic make-up of populations, both resident and available, will vary between places.
A question that follows from this is whether stops and searches are targeted at areas where there are higher than average concentrations of people from minority ethnic backgrounds? If they are, then this will give rise to disproportionality, even if street-level decision-making by officers shows no ethnic bias.

Furthermore, if disproportionality does arise from the way stop and search activity is targeted, a second question needs to be asked: is the geographical targeting of stop and search justifiable by crime patterns? In other words, are areas associated with high levels of stop and search the same areas where there are large numbers of crimes, or at least offenders?

It is certainly likely that high-crime areas are often the same areas that have high concentrations of people from minority ethnic backgrounds, and therefore more likely to attract attention from the police. For example, it has been shown that minority ethnic groups live more often in areas characterised by deprivation (see for example Social Exclusion Unit, 1998) and deprived areas are also those most often associated with crime (Audit Commission, 1996). In such a scenario, the police may be seen as justified in focusing on these areas, even though this will lead to disproportionality.

However, if the targeting of stops and searches contributes to disproportionality, yet is not seen to reflect patterns of crime, it is open to the charge of discrimination, whether deliberate or unwitting, at this more strategic level. It is important, therefore, that the overall targeting of stops and searches is examined alongside street-level decision-making by officers in assessing police practice.

**Resolving debates about disproportionality**

The above discussion makes clear that there are, in fact, competing explanations for the disproportionate numbers of stops and searches experienced by those from minority ethnic backgrounds. It is in resolving this debate that a measurement of available populations becomes important.

Specifically, if it can be shown that the relative proportions of different ethnic groups within the populations available for stop and search are different from local resident statistics, then claims of officer bias based on comparisons between stop and search statistics and local resident population statistics will be misleading.

Furthermore, in the most extreme case, if the distribution of stops and searches among different ethnic groups was found to be similar to that in the available population, even though it may be very different from the distribution of residents,
then this would suggest that ethnic bias in the street-level decision-making of officers was far less likely.

This being said, an acceptable level of stops or searches for any ethnic group should be judged not only by the population available to be stopped or searched, but also the nature of intelligence and information informing officer practice, in particular the ethnic breakdown of suspects. For example, even if it could be shown that a particular minority ethnic group was stopped or searched to a similar extent to their representation in the available population, this would be difficult to justify if their representation in suspect descriptions was much lower than for other ethnic groups.

This also leaves unanswered the question of whether stops and searches are targeted in the most appropriate areas. Resolving this question requires a different approach. At a basic level, it is necessary to establish whether the geographic patterning of stops and searches can be justified according to the geographic patterning of crime.

**Defining available populations**

For the purposes of this research, it is important to spell out precisely what we mean by an available population. This is particularly important, given that public availability for stops and searches will be influenced by location and time, given that stop and search varies according to these factors (e.g. FitzGerald, 1999) as does people’s use of public spaces.

A definition of available population

We have defined available populations as the people who use public places where and when stops or searches are carried out. Availability will, therefore, be greater for people using public places where there are frequent stops or searches than where they are infrequent. Similarly, availability will be greater for people using places at times when stops or searches are frequent, than at times when they are infrequent.

To make clear what this definition means, it is important to flag-up certain assumptions it makes:

- a person’s availability is greater the longer they spend within a public place;
- a person’s availability is greater when they spend time in places at times where stops and searches are more frequent;
- a person’s availability is greater when they spend time in places when stops and searches are more frequent;
- an available population is not an absolute number of people - it is the demographic ‘profile’ of those the police are able to observe during their stop and search activity; and
the definition of available populations does not imply anything about the suspiciousness of the people in the population.

It should be noted from this that availability is determined in part by the actions of the public and in part by the actions of the police. With regard to the public, it depends on whether they spend a significant amount of time in public places. And because people can only be available if they are in places where and when the police carry out stops and searches, police decisions about where and when to target stops and searches will also structure available population characteristics.

Four different available populations

The idea of available populations can be unpacked further to take into account important differences between types of encounter. Specifically, we can conceive of four different types of available population.

These follow, first of all, from a distinction between pedestrian and vehicle populations. The activities of people using public places while in cars are likely to be different from those using public places as pedestrians. Similarly, the police may stop or search pedestrians or vehicles at different places and times.

Second, available populations may be different for stops as opposed to searches. That is, police use of searches may show important differences, both in terms of geography and time of day, than their use of stops.

The four types of available population that arise from these distinctions are illustrated in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Four types of available population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Available for:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those in vehicles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is specifically these four populations that will each be explored within this study.
3. Methodology

In this chapter, we present details of the methodology used in this research. As a preamble to this, we provide a discussion of the reasons for choosing this methodology, over and above the alternatives.

**Introduction**

Key research questions

We noted in the first chapter of this report that we were interested in answering three key questions:

- How useful are residential population figures as a measure of the population available to be stopped or searched?
- Do police officers disproportionately stop or search those from minority ethnic backgrounds among the available population?
- Do geographic patterns of stops and searches reflect local crime problems?

In order to answer these higher-level questions, it was recognised that the research needed to meet a range of empirical objectives. These are listed below:

- Identify where stops and searches are taking place within police force areas;
- Obtain a profile of the pedestrian population available for stops;
- Obtain a profile of the pedestrian population available for searches;
- Obtain a profile of the in-vehicle population available for stops;
- Obtain a profile of the in-vehicle population available for searches;
- Compare these available populations with a corresponding profile of local residents and assess any differences;
- Compare the profiles of people stopped and people searched with the available pedestrian and in-vehicle population profiles and assess any differences; and
- Compare geographical patterns of stops and searches with patterns of crime.

This being said, there were a number of things this study was unable to do, which would have informed our understanding of disproportionality. The research did not examine the ethnic breakdown of stops and searches in light of the suspect descriptions that may have driven them. Nor did the research distinguish between ‘high’ and ‘low-discretion’ encounters (FitzGerald, 1999). Low discretion encounters relate to stops or searches which are closely directed, for example as a result of a call-to-service. High-discretion encounters arise more from proactive work by police officers. These two sets of encounters may show different patterns when compared with available populations, and indeed suspect descriptions. Similarly, this research was unable to look at differences between successful and unsuccessful searches (i.e. whether they produced an arrest) which may also have displayed different characteristics.
Research sites

Five sites were involved in the study. These sites were chosen for a number of reasons. First, the sites were already involved in the pilot of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Recommendation 61 and had been recording details of both stops and searches, and were therefore able to provide statistics on both of these types of encounters to facilitate this research. It also meant that the Home Office had existing contacts with these areas through the PRC research programme on stops and searches, which could facilitate the work. Finally, these sites represent a diverse range of policing environments, both in terms of crime problems and ethnic make-up, allowing us insights into the nature of disproportionality in a range of areas. The areas studied were:

Central Leicester – Leicester Constabulary;
Greenwich – Metropolitan Police Service;
Hounslow – Metropolitan Police Service;
Ipswich – Suffolk Police; and
Chapeltown, – West Yorkshire Police.

Table 3 provides some useful background to the sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Summary characteristics of pilot sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hounslow Borough, MPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● covers Hounslow, Feltham, Chiswick, Brentford and Isleworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● majority white population but significant minority ethnic, specifically Indian comprising almost a fifth of the borough's population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenwich Borough, MPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● covers Greenwich, Eltham and Plumstead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● predominantly urban area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● mixed population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapeltown District, West Yorkshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● covers NE Leeds from Chapeltown in the south to Wetherby in the north</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● mix of deprived inner city out to affluent rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Chapeltown has a high minority ethnic population, including a well-established black community. Wetherby is predominantly white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Area, Suffolk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● covers Ipswich town and the rural areas of south Suffolk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● predominantly white population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester Central Area, Central Leicestershire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● covers Leicester city centre and two residential areas (east and west of city centre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● west end near university, so largely mixed student population; east has high Asian and smaller black population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is also important to explore patterns of disproportionality in these sites. Statistics on the ethnic breakdown of the 1991 Census resident population, along with ethnic breakdown of stops and searches (based on officer-defined ethnicity) are presented in Table 4. Statistics on stops and searches are based on records collected during the pilot of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report recommendation 61.

The table shows that, for all areas, black people are over-represented in those stopped and searched both as pedestrians and in vehicles. While this is not true for Asian people across sites, they are over-represented in some stops and searches, most notably in Central Leicester.

### Table 4: Ethnic profiles of police force areas and those stopped and searched within them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>White (%)</th>
<th>Black (%)</th>
<th>Asian (%)</th>
<th>Other (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greenwich:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (Area Level – unweighted)</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops (1 Dec 99 - 31 March 00)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches (1 Dec 99 - 31 March 00)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hounslow:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (Area Level – unweighted)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops (1 July 99 - 31 March 00)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches (1 July 99 - 31 March 00)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central Leicester:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (Area Level – unweighted)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops (15 Nov 99 - 31 May 00)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches (15 Nov 99 - 31 May 00)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ipswich:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (Area Level – unweighted)</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops (15 Nov 99 - 25 May 00)</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches (15 Nov 99 - 25 May 00)</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapeltown:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (Area Level – unweighted)</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops (22 Nov 99 - 23 May 00)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches (22 Nov 99 - 23 May 00)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Choosing a methodology for measuring available populations

In devising a methodology for the study, a high level of reliability was required from the results of the analysis. Yet, there was little previous work in this field which could provide a model for the research, so careful thought had to be given to the possible approaches that might be taken.
Initially, consideration was given to two main approaches which were, on the face of it, promising. The first of these involved using Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) to monitor the demographic characteristics of those in public places. This idea had already been applied by some forces in attempts to arrive at a measure of their available pedestrian populations. The second approach involved using on-street researchers to manually record the demographic characteristics of passers-by (referred to as a ‘clicker-count’ approach).

Drawing on work carried out by James Crease at the Research and Survey Unit (PIB3) of the Metropolitan Police it was clear that both of these approaches suffer from certain limitations, some of which are common to both methods.

Using CCTV

Key disadvantages associated with a CCTV approach include the following:

- the area that a positioned camera can view is restricted;
- the positioning of CCTV cameras does not reflect research considerations, and therefore does not necessarily provide representative coverage of available populations;
- there is no control over the movement of CCTV cameras, introducing the potential for inconsistencies;
- different CCTV cameras used in different areas would involve inconsistent coverage; and
- while CCTV may provide visual information about pedestrians, the same is unlikely to be the case for those in vehicles.

Using ‘clicker-counts’

The main disadvantages of a clicker-count approach were identified as:

- the area that an individual, stationary observer can view is restricted;
- having large numbers of observers, one on each street-corner, would be expensive; and
- positioning of observers introduces significant risks of biasing results, as passers-by will reflect the nature of nearby amenities, venues etc. which may have distinctive ethnic constituencies.

Arriving at a solution: the moving camera approach

In view of the important limitations of the above approaches, they were not deemed adequate for the task in hand. Instead, an approach was devised which, while drawing on the use of video-cameras, was significantly different. Specifically, it
involved mounting a camera on a moving vehicle, which could be used as a basis for recording the ethnicity of those in the available population. The key advantages of this approach are:

- the mobility of the cameras means they can be used to monitor the profile in areas chosen to suit the research (i.e. focusing on those areas where stops and searches are known to take place);
- the available population captured by a moving camera most closely approximates to what is ‘seen’ by patrolling police officers;
- observers in vehicles could also be used (as in the ‘clicker-count’ approach) to provide demographic information on the available population, which could be used to supplement the video information; and
- cameras could be used, simultaneously, to cover both pedestrians and those in vehicles.

This method nonetheless has certain limitations. For one, it clearly relies on the observers’ judgement about the ethnicity of those surveyed. It would, however, be extremely impractical, and potentially very intrusive, to devise a method which involved approaching large numbers of pedestrians and drivers to ask them to define their ethnicity. Furthermore, the main reason for examining disproportionality in stop and search figures is to establish whether there is evidence of ethnic bias in officer decision-making. Should such bias exist in stop and search practice, this is very likely to depend on the basis of officers’ visual perception rather than the self-defined ethnicity of the person stopped. So, despite this problem, the use of observer defined ethnicity is reasonably well suited to this issue.

A second limitation of this method is an ethical one. The use of video cameras to record details of people in public places may not be seen favourably by all sections of the public. To offset these issues, MVA undertook the following actions:

- recordings were made only of people in public places;
- the recordings were used only to provide basic demographic information, not to identify individuals or their activities;
- the recordings were not passed to or viewed by any other organisation except MVA, and used for no other purpose than this research;
- we determined to destroy the recordings on completion of the study; and
- the work was undertaken in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Market Research Society and the Ethical Guidelines of the Social Research Association.

Furthermore, the police forces involved in the research presented the proposals for the research to community representatives, so that they were aware of the research, and so that any concerns about the research could be taken into consideration.
Methodological details

The approach taken in this study can be boiled down to the following key elements:

1. To identify ‘zones’ or hotspots within each of the five areas where most stops and searches take place using a geographical information system (GIS).

2. Obtain profile information of the available pedestrian population within the specified zones by training an in-vehicle camera towards the pavement to record the faces of passers-by as the vehicle is driven along specified routes, and at specified times, within the designated study areas.

3. Obtain profile information of the available in-vehicle population within the specified zones by training an in-vehicle camera straight ahead to record the driver of all vehicles coming in the opposite direction, as the vehicle is driven along the same routes.

4. Supplement this pedestrian and in-vehicle profile information using observers in the moving vehicles at times when the clarity of the camera picture would be insufficient to allow the ethnicity and other characteristics of people to be determined (for both the pedestrian and in-vehicle populations).

5. Analyse the recording to classify and count the characteristics of pedestrians and drivers by area, day and time of day.

6. Analyse Census statistics (and explore commercially available updated population profiles) to derive local resident profiles and analyse police pilot records to obtain profiles of people actually stopped and searched within zones.

7. Conduct short on-street interviews to collect socio-economic data and information on where people live to provide further insight into the comparison of the available pedestrian population profile with other population profiles.

8. For Chapeltown and Central Leicester, where sufficient data exists, to compare the distribution of crimes with the distribution of stops and searches, and to explore reasons for any differences.

These stages are elaborated in more detail below.
Defining the zones

Naturally, the comparisons of the different populations needed to be at the places and at the times that stops are carried out. These could have been at any place and at any time but it was expected that they would be concentrated in space and time.

The data collected on the police pilot stop forms described the location, time and characteristics of stops and searches of pedestrians and persons in vehicles. This information was analysed via GIS that enabled the location and time of different types of encounter to be displayed.

The first task was to define, digitally, each of the five selected sites. Digital boundary information was available for Central Leicester and the two London boroughs and lists of Enumeration Districts and Wards were available for Ipswich and Chapeltown.

A database of police records of stops and searches was provided by each of the five sites, using data generated from the pilot of recommendation 61 of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report. The records contained the following information on each stop and search incident:

- time and date;
- location of stop;
- whether a pedestrian or vehicle was stopped;
- the type of encounter (i.e. stop or search); and
- the grounds for the search.

The database covered those records which had been entered at the time of this phase of the research (for details see table 5 below).

It needs to be remembered, as was subsequently established by the evaluation of the pilot (Bland et al., 2000a), that there was evidence of under-recording of encounters for both stops and searches during the pilot. However, there is no reason to think that this under-recording applied to some localities more than others. Overall, then, even bearing in mind the under-recording of encounters, the existing records were believed to represent a reasonable approximation to the overall geographical patterns of stops and searches.

Much of the data needed cleaning. In particular, shorthand references to roads needed to be amended so that a suitable digital mapping reference could be matched to each location. Therefore, the second task was to sort and edit each database.
The third task was to ensure that each database was converted into a common format and contained only stops consistent with definitions used in the pilot.

The fourth task was to devise a programme to assign digital co-ordinates to all stop locations that could be matched.

For this initial analysis of pilot records, we analysed records of stops and searches on all days except Sunday to identify zones where most stops take place (henceforth referred to as stop zones). All stops on a Monday to Thursday (including early Friday morning) were used to identify the stop zones for a typical weekday, whilst analyses for Friday (including early Saturday morning) and Saturday (including early Sunday morning) were kept separate on the assumption that the times and places of stops and searches may differ on these days.

The success rate at which locations on records of stops and searches were successfully matched to map locations was as follows:

- Greenwich 86%;
- Hounslow 86%;
- Central Leicester 78%;
- Ipswich 79%; and
- Chapeltown 79%.

This matching and mapping rate of the pilot records of around 80% for each study area was considered to be both satisfactory and an indication of the quality of stop records during the pilot period. There was no indication that the minority of locations that could not be matched were in different locations to the vast majority that were. The main reasons for mis-match were:

- the lack of meaningful (or sometimes any) location description;
- ambiguous road name;
- incorrectly spelt road name; or
- the provision of a general road reference such as a large ‘A’ Road which went through a large part of the study area and was, hence, difficult to pin-point with precision without more information.

The final task was to map the incidences of the four different types of stop by site, day and time of day. By way of example, the thematic maps depicted in Figures 1 to 5 show, for each of the five sites, the stop zones where there are the greatest incidence of pedestrian searches on a typical weekday. Thematic maps showing the full range of survey days are presented in the separate appendices.
The stop zone boundaries were drawn up by examining grid maps which showed the incidence of stops in the area by a series of concentric rings of various shades of colour reflecting different concentration levels of stops and searches. These maps highlighted the main clusters of stops and searches for each site. The clusters differed to varying degrees across the different days of the week and for different types of stop or search. The maps in this chapter also show the stop zones encompassing most stop and search locations. The stop zones were defined so that all four population-types (i.e. both pedestrian and in-vehicle, and both stop and search) were comprehensively covered by the same system of zones on a particular day. Different stop zones were defined for the different days of the week.

Overall, for any day-type, stop-type (i.e. stop or search) and person-type (i.e. in-vehicle or pedestrian), the stop zones covered a minimum of 70% of encounters. In practice, however, figures were typically around the 80% mark, and ranged up to 100%. The appendices provide full details of the rates at which different types of records coincided with the stop zones. It should, however, be remembered that although the stop zones cover most of the mapped records of stops and searches for each area, they do not cover all of them. So the patterns of stops and searches within the stop zones, which form the basis of analysis here, should not be taken as representative of the stops and searches for the whole of each police force area.

Table 5 provides a summary of the coverage of stops and searches by stop zones for each site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Coverage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greenwich:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops (Dec 00 - Mar 00, N = 1,586)</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches (Apr 99 - Feb 00, N = 712)</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hounslow:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops (July 00 - Mar 00, N = 3,036)</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches (Apr 99 - Jan 00, N = 2,136)</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central Leicester:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops (Nov 99 - Mar 00, N = 816)</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches (Nov 99 - Mar 00, N = 520)</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ipswich:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops (Nov 99 - May 00, N = 882)</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches (Nov 99 - Mar 00, N = 143)</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapeltown:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops (Nov 99 - Feb 00, N = 728)</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches (Nov 99 - Feb 00, N = 268)</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: This applies to stops and searches on weekdays, Saturdays and Sundays (as defined for the purposes of the survey) and relates only to those stops and searches which could be linked to map co-ordinates.
Figure 1: Greenwich: Stop zones for weekday pedestrian searches

Pedestrian searches on weekdays

Key
- Police force areas
- Stop Zones
Figure 2: Hounslow: Stop zones for weekday pedestrian searches

Key

- Police force areas
- Stop Zones
Figure 3: Central Leicester: Stop zones for weekday pedestrian searches.
Figure 4: Ipswich: Stop zones for weekday pedestrian searches

Key

- Police force areas
- Stop Zones
Figure 5: Chapeltown: Stop zones for weekday pedestrian searches

Pedestrian searches on weekdays

Key
- Police force areas
- Stop Zones
The maps are designed to provide the location of stops across a whole area and, as such, do not do justice to the actual precision of the recording and analysis of the pilot stops. In fact, the police stop records have been matched (and mapped) to 100 metre Ordnance Survey grid reference points facilitating the “zeroing-in” on any area, however small, to see which precise road, or other reference location, was actually where the stop took place. This was essential when developing our survey routes for monitoring populations.

Profiling pedestrians and drivers available for stops and searches

The previous task identified the location of police stops and searches within each stop zone. This information was used to schedule the movements of our video-equipped survey vehicles, within each stop zone across the three day-types.

For each area, within each site, two sets of three 18-hour shifts were devised so that:

- overall, a full 24-hour period was covered on a Wednesday, Friday and Saturday (for each site); and
- they over-lapped (i.e. we obtained two sets of observations) during the 18-hour period when there was the greatest incidence of stops.

These shifts were designed so that the same three days were covered twice, one to two weeks apart. It was intended that this would, as far as possible, offset any variations in the make-up of available populations through time. Indeed, the surveys carried out showed that the available populations sometimes showed large variations between the two survey periods (full details of this are provided in the separate appendices).

A video camera was mounted in a forward facing position alongside the vehicle driver to allow an unrestricted view of oncoming vehicles and pedestrians on the offside of the road. Another camera was side-mounted to capture pedestrians on the near side of the road. In order to ensure discreet monitoring, the cameras were small (about the size of a thumb), and kept hidden.

Drivers were responsible for following the route schedules and for starting and stopping the camera recordings at the beginning and end of each segment of their shift. An observer accompanied the driver during all periods. At times of poor light, the observer recorded appearance details of pedestrians and vehicle drivers selected using a random procedure. At times of good light, the observer needed to record the appearance details only of vehicle drivers (selected randomly), as the video footage was sufficiently clear to allow analysts to determine the characteristics of
pedestrians. The video camera was in operation during all periods in order to keep a count of pedestrians and vehicles. The observers did not therefore need to operate a clicker.

Initial analysis of the police pilot data showed that some stops were made in areas beyond the view of patrol cars. While accounting for only a minor proportion of the geographical survey area, it was important that they were included and not under-represented. We therefore allocated segments of each route schedule to observations away from the cars. When surveying these pedestrian-only areas, the vehicle crew parked and visited the specified site on foot and counted and classified the pedestrians.

The video recordings were timed and dated and were analysed by experienced data processing staff. The following data were extracted from the observer and video recordings, for a random sub-sample of pedestrians and vehicle drivers in each stop zone and time-period:

- estimated age group;
- gender; and
- ethnic appearance (categorised as ‘white’, ‘black’, ‘Asian’ and ‘other’).

When recording ethnicity from video footage an additional category was used i.e. ‘non-white’. This applied where a video analyst was sure that a person’s ethnicity was not white but was unsure whether to record the ethnicity as ‘black’, ‘Asian’ or ‘other’. If such a category had not been available the analyst would have had no option but to record the ethnicity as ‘don’t know’. These people would then have been excluded from the on-street profiles and would have led to an over-estimate of white people in the available population.

To gather additional information on non-observable pedestrian characteristics the observers, always accompanied by drivers, conducted brief personal interviews at selected sites within the defined stop zones. These interviews were boosted by also employing a number of on-street interviewers.

The interview procedures were developed with full regard to the need for sensitivity in the approach towards members of the on-street population and the personal security of survey staff. To ensure that representative samples of pedestrians were approached for interview, selection rules were based on sampling one person out of every given number, based on people crossing defined points.

The interviews often needed to be carried out at night and in areas where people may have felt insecure. People were to be intercepted during their journey, and their
apprehensions at being stopped and asked questions needed to be quickly and reassuringly dispelled. Survey staff wore high-visibility waistcoats to distinguish them from a distance, together with prominent identification badges. They were supplied with letters of authority and thank you slips for introduction and handout, clearly explaining the purpose of the survey and establishing bona fides.

The data to be gathered in these brief interviews included area of residence, occupation if employed, socio-economic group, ethnic group, age group and gender. In the event of missing answers or refusals, interviewers recorded details of observable characteristics.

To enable suitable comparison with the police pilot records, the overall profile for the whole study area (i.e. all time periods and stop zones) was calculated by weighting the observed profile by the proportion of police stops. The weighting of data is discussed in more detail below.

Profiling local residents

Although relatively out-of-date, the main comparisons between available population profiles and resident populations involved statistics from the 1991 Census. This was principally because the detailed area breakdowns offered by the Census allowed most easily for the range of comparisons made in the report.

The local resident profiles based on the 1991 Census were estimated by combining the profiles for all Enumeration Districts (EDs) within each stop zone. Profile information was obtained for ethnicity, age and gender. The local resident profile for the whole study area was calculated by weighting the local resident profile in each stop zone by the proportion of police stops.

We also investigated, within this research, the likely change in local resident profiles between 1991 and 2000 using commercially available gender, age and ethnicity projections of the Census data. The gender and age projections, supplied by CACI Ltd., are based on the 1991 mid-year population estimates and take account of change in the Office of National Statistics estimated populations up to 1997, migration trends between 1992 and 1997 and local authorities' expected level of dwelling stock, and have been analysed at ward level.

Ethnic populations, supplied by the Greater London Authority are projected from 1991 using cohort progression methods that incorporate 1991 Census migration flows for each group and also the latest information on asylum seekers, visitor switchers and international flows into each borough. Borough and ethnic group specific fertility differentials are also employed.
Profiling people stopped and searched by police

Details of all people stopped relied on the records which were collected by the police of stops and searches as part of the pilot of recommendation 61 of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report. These were analysed by:

- encounter type: i.e. whether stop or search;
- person-type: i.e. pedestrian or driver;
- day of week;
- time of day; and
- stop zone.

We should bear in mind, however, that there was under-recording of both stops and searches by police officers over the period of study (Bland et al, 2000a), which may have had some effect on the ethnic breakdown of those stopped and searched. Insofar as we might anticipate a systematic bias in recording, it is likely that those from minority ethnic backgrounds may be slightly over-represented, given the observation that some officers feel a need to ‘cover their backs’ during searches with minority ethnic people by filling in forms (see FitzGerald and Sibbitt, 1997).

The period for which pilot records have been analysed varied by site according to their availability at the time of analysis. The period covered and the number of records analysed for each site is reported in Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Period Covered</th>
<th>Number of Records</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greenwich:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td>Dec ’99 – May ’00</td>
<td>1541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches</td>
<td>Apr ’99 – Feb ’00</td>
<td>3289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hounslow:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td>Jul ’99 – Mar ’00</td>
<td>3469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches</td>
<td>Apr ’99 – Mar ’00</td>
<td>3920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Leicester:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td>Nov ’99 – May ’00</td>
<td>1403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches</td>
<td>Nov ’99 – Mar ’00</td>
<td>938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipswich:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td>Nov ’99 – Mar ’00</td>
<td>1023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches</td>
<td>Nov ’99 – Mar ’00</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapeltown:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td>Nov ’99 – May ’00</td>
<td>1503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches</td>
<td>Nov ’99 – May ’00</td>
<td>604</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In our surveys we have focused on collecting profile data of vehicle drivers only (not vehicle passengers). The pilot records of vehicle searches did not consistently
differentiate between drivers and passengers. Analysis of vehicle searches in Central Leicester and Ipswich showed that only around five percent of vehicle searches were on passengers. The ethnic profiles of passengers and drivers were found to be similar and the impact of passenger ethnicity on driver ethnicity profiles is negligible.

The period covered varied from four months (November to March 2000) for Ipswich to one year for both Greenwich and Hounslow (April 1999 to March 2000). The Chapeltown and Central Leicester pilot data were the most up-to-date, both covering the seven-month period November 1999 to May 2000.

Comparing patterns of crime and stops and searches

Crime data were made available at the level of operational police beat level for Chapeltown and Central Leicester. Using GIS methods, similar to those previously described, we mapped the incidence of crime (and also certain types of crime). Comparisons were then made with the incidence of police stops and searches in these areas, to highlight the degree of overlap between crime and patterns of stops and searches.

Analysis and weighting of data

By adopting the methods described above, profiles by ethnicity, gender and age were determined, within each stop zone, for:

- pedestrians available for stops;
- pedestrians available for searches;
- pedestrians actually stopped by the police;
- pedestrians actually searched;
- drivers available for stops;
- drivers available for searches;
- drivers (and passengers) actually stopped by the police;
- drivers (and passengers) actually searched; and
- local residents in stop zones.

These profiles were collected and analysed for different times. When bringing together information from across zones, the data was weighted in a specific way. This weighting process needs to be understood in order to make proper sense of the results of the research.

It was decided that the absolute numbers of people observed within zones should not be used to calculate the profiles of the available population. Rather, the demographic characteristics (e.g. the ethnic breakdown) in each zone should be...
weighted according to the levels of stops or searches that were actually carried out within each zone, regardless of their absolute numbers of people observed\(^4\).

This decision was taken because it follows directly from the way that ‘available’ has been defined in this report. Specifically, it follows from the idea that availability is structured by police stop and search activity, so that:

- a person’s availability is greater when they spend time in places where stops and searches are more frequent; and
- a person’s availability is greater when they spend time in places when stops and searches are more frequent.

In this context, the numbers of people observed in different stop zones are irrelevant. It is the levels of stops or searches within stop zones which will influence the profile of the available population.

An important feature of this weighting process is that the weighting factors applied to determine the population available for searches differ from the weighting factors used to determine the population available for stops, and hence their overall profiles also differ.

As well as simply applying weights to the available populations observed within zones, it was also important to weight the local resident profiles within stop zones for some comparisons. This was so that measures of the residential zone profiles would reflect the different levels of police activity (defined in relation to levels of stops and searches) within each of the zones, as well as their basic demographic make-up. In order to do this, weighting was based on the incidence of pedestrian stops and searches by day and zone and was applied in a similar way as for the available populations. Again, this meant that, in calculating the overall residential profile, the characteristics of residents in zones where there was more stop and search activity were given more weight than zones where there was less activity.

**Definition of terms**

The stops and searches recorded and analysed as part of this research are in accordance with the Home Office definition developed for the pilot of Stephen Lawrence Inquiry recommendation 61.

Any search conducted under whichever appropriate legislation, or voluntarily, should have been recorded as a ‘search’. Stops were defined for recording purposes as follows:
When a police officer requests a person to account for their actions, behaviour or possession of anything the encounter will be regarded as a ‘stop’ for the purposes of this pilot.

However, the following were not recorded as vehicle ‘stops’ for the purposes of the pilot:

- where an officer stops a driver because they have committed a moving traffic offence (e.g. Vehicle Defect Rectification Scheme or Fixed Penalty Notice); or
- where a driver is stopped following an accident.
4. Exploring resident and available populations

Introduction

This chapter brings together the analysis of data collected from observing the available populations with analysis of local resident profile data obtained through the 1991 Census. Direct comparisons between the two populations provides important insights into the appropriateness of using local Census profiles for assessing the police's use of stops and searches. Specifically, this chapter will address the following questions:

- how valid is the Census as a measure of resident population?
- are the residential populations of whole police force areas/divisions different from the specific residential populations within areas of high levels of stop and search activity?
- are residential populations, however defined, different from available populations?

In order to explore these questions, comparisons will be made which draw on the following separate population measures:

- **Area level residential population (1991 Census)** - This is the full population in each of the police force areas or divisions recorded by the 1991 Census.
- **Stop zone residential population (unweighted 1991 Census)** - This is the 1991 Census residential population just for the stop zones in each area (based on the Enumeration Districts encompassed by the stop zones).
- **Stop zone residential population (weighted 1991 Census)** - This is the 1991 Census residential population just for the stop zones in each area (based on the Enumeration Districts encompassed by the stop zones). However, the population has been weighted by the levels of pedestrian stops and searches within any given area. This means that the demographic characteristics of places with higher levels of police activity are given a greater weight than those with lower levels.
- **Available for pedestrian search** - This represents the pedestrian population observed in the stop zones and is weighted by the levels of police searches of pedestrians.
- **Available for pedestrian stop** - This represents the pedestrian population observed in the stop zones and is weighted by the levels of police stops of pedestrians.
Available for vehicle search - This represents the vehicle population observed in the stop zones and is weighted by the levels of police searches of vehicles.

Available for vehicle stop - This represents the vehicle population observed in the stop zones and is weighted by the levels of police stops of vehicles.

As discussed in the previous chapter, in each of the five sites, the available population has been estimated from monitoring on three days of each of two different weeks in May (see separate appendices for details of the survey shifts). A return to each of the sites for two separate observation periods was undertaken to reduce the risk of daily fluctuations affecting the available population estimates and to provide some insight into whether there are differences between days, weeks or months. Profile comparisons between the two waves of fieldwork suggest some variation in profiles between the two weeks and this was sometimes substantial (see separate appendices). For the purposes of comparison with local resident profiles and the pilot records we have combined the data from the two fieldwork waves.

It is important to note that comparisons of the two survey periods indicate that the available population is actually quite changeable, even within a short time-period. Given this, even the combined measures of available populations used in this analysis are unlikely to perfectly represent the average available population over time in the five areas. With this in mind, in assessing the results from the study, particular attention is drawn in particular to those findings which tend to be common across sites. This is because we can be more confident about the general picture that emerges from an overview, than in the specific detail of an individual site.

Limitations of the Census as a measure of the resident population

Before embarking on an analysis of the various population comparisons, it is first important to establish the validity of the Census measures which will be used as a basis for the analysis here. Given that these data are now close to being ten years old, there remains a question over their reliability for estimating current resident profiles.

The findings reported below are based on the resident population measures based only on wards overlapping with stops zones within each site. They suggest a clear decline in the percentage of white residents between 1991 and 2000 in all sites, except Ipswich, where the ethnic profile remains fairly constant. Where there has been a decline in white residents, the main ethnic group increasing in number is black residents (in Greenwich) and Asian residents (in Hounslow, Central Leicester...
and Chapeltown). In three sites, the decline in white residents is about five per cent whilst in Hounslow, white residents have reduced in number by 10%. There have been some changes in age profile within each of the five sites and all have had a small increase in the number of men relative to women, of between one and three per cent. However, it should be remembered that these comparisons are at ward level and not at the more localised Enumeration District (ED) level at which profiles of local residents and available populations are compared in later sections of this chapter. As we have described in the previous chapter we have been able to compare the 1991 statistics with commercially available projections for 2000 at ward level. The profile comparisons of local residents in each ward for 1991 and 2000 (projected) is reported in the separate appendices. Therefore, conclusions on the likely variation in ethnicity, age and gender between 1991 and 2000 can only be drawn for each site as a whole (comprising those wards encompassing all stop zones). The results of the analyses are described below by site and reveal significant changes in ethnicity profile in some sites.

In Greenwich, the study area encompassing the stop zones comprised 33 of the 36 wards within the borough. The percentage of white people in the population has declined between 1991 and 2000 in every ward, whilst the percentage of black and (separately) Asian and other people (including Chinese and Arab) have either increased or remained the same. On average, the percentage of white residents has declined by six per cent, whilst the percentages of black, Asian and other residents have increased by three percentage points, 1.5% and 1.5% respectively. Additionally, there are now more men residing in Greenwich than in 1991 (1.5%) and more people aged 15 to 24 (up by one per cent) and 45-64 (up by two per cent) and fewer elderly (down by three per cent).

In Hounslow, the study area encompassing the stop zones comprised all 21 wards within the borough. The percentage of white people in the local population has declined considerably between 1991 and 2000. In wards in Hounslow there are typically now 10% fewer white people and six per cent more Asian people, two per cent more black people and two per cent more people from other backgrounds. As in Greenwich, there has been a small increase in the number of men in Hounslow (up by two per cent) whilst the age breakdown has remained fairly constant.

In Central Leicester, the study area encompassing the stop zones comprised the nine wards in the centre of the city. On average, there has been a decline in the percentage of white people residing in each ward (five per cent) and an increase in the proportions of Asians (up by four per cent) and other (up by one per cent) residents, with no change in the percentage of black residents. There has also been
a three per cent increase in the number of male residents in the area and a two per cent decrease in older people (aged 65 and over).

In Ipswich, the study area encompassing the stop zones comprised the 16 central wards. Although there has been some shifts in ethnicity in a few wards, the overall ethnicity profile for central Ipswich is relatively unchanged between 1991 and 2000. On average, the percentage of white residents has declined by one per cent with consequent small increases of less than half a per cent in black, Asian and other residents. On average, there has also been a slight increase in the number of men (up one per cent) and a decline in young people, aged 15-24 (down three per cent) whilst residents aged between 25 and 44 and between 45 and 64 have increased in number (up by one per cent and two per cent respectively).

In Chapeltown, the study area encompassing the stop zones comprised the four wards of Chapeltown and surrounding area (not the whole of Chapeltown Division). A fairly consistent pattern emerges from the comparison of ethnicity at ward level. The percentage of white residents in each ward has declined by around four percentage points, whilst there has been increases in the percentages of Asian, black and other residents of (two per cent, one per cent, and one per cent respectively, on average). There has also been an increase in the number of men (up by three percentage points) and, an increase in the 25 to 44 years age-group up by 2.5 percentage points) and a decline (down by 1.5 percentage points) in the 65 and over age group.

The above suggests, therefore, that there have been some important changes in the demographic make-up of the study areas in the period that has elapsed between 1991, when the Census was taken, and the time of the current research. In the analysis below, therefore, these changes are taken into account in interpreting the results.

**Resident profiles and stop and search activity**

In this section we compare the three types of residential population outlined above based on the 1991 Census: the area/division level population, the unweighted stop zone population, and the weighted stop zone population. Such comparisons provide an indication of whether stop and search activity tends to occur in areas which are representative, in residential terms at least, of the wider police areas and divisions more generally.
In particular, we are interested to know whether there are a disproportionately high number of minority ethnic residents in the areas where stop and search activity occurs. If there was such a tendency, we would observe that the percentage of minority ethnic people would tend to increase as we moved from the area level profiles to the unweighted stop zone profiles, and from the unweighted stop zone profiles to the weighted stop zone profiles. Clearly, relying on the 1991 Census may give a different picture to more up-to-date figures, if these were available. However, the Census should be adequate as a general indicator of differences between the three populations studied.

The findings are reported in Table 7 and show that, for all five sites, there is a tendency for stop and search activity to focus on areas with a disproportionately high number of minority ethnic residents. While the tendency is not very strong, it is most evident in Chapeltown and Central Leicester, less so in Ipswich and the two London boroughs. The profile of each of the three local populations, defined above, in each of the five sites is contrasted in Figures 6 to 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7: Local resident profile comparisons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greenwich:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (area level - unweighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (stop zones - unweighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (stop zones - weighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hounslow:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>991 Census (area level - unweighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (stop zones - unweighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (stop zones - weighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central Leicester:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (area level - unweighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (stop zones - unweighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (stop zones - weighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ipswich:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (area level - unweighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (stop zones - unweighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (stop zones - weighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapeltown:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (area level - unweighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (stop zones - unweighted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991 Census (stop zones - weighted)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Weekday stop zones only
2 Weighted according to pedestrian pilot stops and searches on a weekday

The findings are reported in Table 7 and show that, for all five sites, there is a tendency for stop and search activity to focus on areas with a disproportionately high number of minority ethnic residents. While the tendency is not very strong, it is most evident in Chapeltown and Central Leicester, less so in Ipswich and the two London boroughs. The profile of each of the three local populations, defined above, in each of the five sites is contrasted in Figures 6 to 10.
It should be noted, however, that the evidence presented here does not tell us why the police focus on these areas. However, we will explore in chapter 6 the extent to which the focus of police stop and search activity appears to reflect patterns of crime for Chapeltown and Central Leicester.

**Figure 6: Greenwich Ethnicity of residents (1991 Census)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whole area</th>
<th>Stop Zones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unweighted</td>
<td>unweighted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 7: Hounslow: Ethnicity of residents (1991 Census)

Figure 8: Central Leicester: Ethnicity of residents (1991 Census)
Figure 9: Ipswich: Ethnicity of residents (1991 Census)

Figure 10: Chapeltown: Ethnicity of Residents (1991 Census)
In Greenwich, 87% of residents in the area are white. However in the localities where police carry out most of the stops and searches the proportion of white people is 85%. The percentage is even lower (83%) when weighting by the incidence of stops and searches. Conversely, the percentage of black and Asian residents increases as we move from the unweighted profile of the wider area to the stop zones weighted by stop and search activity. This indicates a slight tendency for the police to focus their activities in resident areas with disproportionately high numbers of minority ethnic people.

In Hounslow, 76% of residents in the area are white, and this percentage rises to 77% in the localities where police carry out most of the stops and searches. The percentage falls to 71% when weighting by the incidence of stops and searches. Whilst the percentage of black and other residents remain constant, the percentage of Asian residents increases from 19% in the borough overall to 24% in the areas where stops and searches are carried out, when weighted by stop and search activity. These findings suggest a tendency for police to focus their stop and search activities in the areas with disproportionately low numbers of white residents and disproportionately high numbers of Asian residents.

In Central Leicester, 89% of residents are white, and this percentage is considerably higher than in the localities where police carry out most of the stops and searches (74%). Conversely, the percentage of black residents in these populations increases (from 1% to 6%). There is also a significant rise in the representation of Asian people in the population residing in the stop zones when weighted by stop and search activity. Therefore, there is a tendency for police to focus their stop and search activities in resident areas with a disproportionately high number of black and Asian residents and a disproportionately low number of white residents across the area.

In Ipswich, there is a slight trend suggesting a tendency for police stop and search activity to occur in areas with disproportionately high numbers of minority ethnic populations but the differences in ethnic profile across the three sources are small.

In Chapeltown, 83% of residents in Chapeltown division, are white. This percentage falls to 63% in the stop zones when weighting by the incidence of stops and searches. However, for both black and Asian residents, the opposite is true with much higher representation in the stop zone population weighted by stop and search activity (14% compared with 6% for black residents; 19% compared with 9% for Asian residents). This implies a tendency for police to focus stop and search activity in areas with higher resident minority ethnic communities.
Comparing available populations with resident populations

In this section, we carry out a comparison of the four different available populations which we have previously defined, with local resident populations, as defined by the 1991 Census. With the regard to the latter, we focus specifically on the area or division level census population, and the weighted census population within the stop zones.

The unweighted local resident profile for the whole area or division is included in this comparison because this type of broad residential population measure serves as a common basis for measures of disproportionality (e.g. Home Office, 1999). However, the reported available populations correspond to those “pockets” (stop zones) within each police area where most (70% to 80%) of all stops and searches occur. We, therefore, have included the profile of local residents within the stop zones weighted by stop and search activity to enable a more precise comparison of available and local resident population profiles. It is this zonal derivation of local residents that we have focused on particularly when assessing profile differences between resident and available populations.

This section also makes use of on-street surveys of pedestrians that were carried out within the five sites to establish whether those in the available populations could be said to live locally. Details of how local was defined for the purpose of the survey are covered in the appendices. However, local was understood to represent those people living in or immediately around the stop zones within the sites studied. Interviews were carried out during the day and early evening at selected points.

Overview

In all five sites, there is strong evidence that the populations available for stops and searches in zones are very different to the local resident population. Notably, when compared to the weighted residential stop zone populations, young men are over represented in available populations whilst the elderly, who comprise around one-fifth of the total resident population in each area, are relatively rarely observed on-street in our survey.

Importantly, across sites there were significant differences in ethnic mix between the local resident populations and the four available populations. While there are some variations for particular ethnic groups, or populations, there is clearly a general tendency for minority ethnic groups to be over-represented in the available populations, when compared to resident populations.
Some of the reported differences can be explained by the estimated increases in the proportion of the population residing in each of the five areas who are young men that have occurred over the last 10 years. However, the increases do not account for all the recorded differences in age, gender and ethnicity. This finding is confirmed by the analysis of over 4000 on street interviews which showed that, generally, over half of the available pedestrian population resides outside the local areas.

Greenwich

The results for Greenwich provide a clear indication that there is a significantly different ethnic mix available to be stopped by the police than is suggested from the local resident profile, whether based on the police area as a whole or based on the weighted stop zone populations.

Thus, the percentage of white people within both of the local resident populations exceeds the percentage of white people within the available pedestrian or vehicle populations. Conversely, the percentage of black and Asian residents are significantly greater in each of the four available populations compared with the local resident populations. In other words, the street population available to be both stopped and searched contains far more people from minorities ethnic groups than do the local resident populations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>White (%)</th>
<th>Black (%)</th>
<th>Asian (%)</th>
<th>Other (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residents of area (unweighted 1991 Census)</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents of stop zones (weighted 1991 Census)</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for pedestrian search May 2000 (N = 2,687)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for pedestrian stop May 2000 (N = 2,687)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for vehicle search May 2000 (N = 4,617)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for vehicle stop May 2000 (N = 4,617)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference in percentage points for white people in the local and available populations (within the stop zones) is around 15 to 20. Comparisons between the 1991 Census and 2000 projections suggest that the percentage of white people resident in Greenwich has fallen by around six per cent in the borough overall. Therefore, some of the differences in ethnic mix between the 1991 Census and available population profiles highlighted in Table 8 and Figure 11 can be explained by the former being out of date. However, the shift in ethnic mix within the Greenwich community does not account for the full magnitude of the disparity in
ethnicity reported in Table 8 suggesting that the available populations are significantly different from the current local resident population in Greenwich.

Age and gender comparisons for each available population and for the local stop zone resident population, as defined by the 1991 Census, have also been made, and are reported in the appendices for all five sites. On all days of the week there is strong evidence that the on-street population differs considerably to that of local residents in terms of gender split and age-breakdown.

The most striking aspects of the Greenwich comparisons are the over-representation of males on the street, compared with residents and the under-representation of the elderly (65 years or more). Further differences are that the local resident profile has a significantly greater proportion of older people (over 45 years) than the pedestrian populations and a significantly smaller proportion of younger people (15 to 24 years) than the in-vehicle populations. The pattern is consistent across all day-types.

As with the comparisons of ethnicity, the difference in percentage points between the populations is around 20% for both gender and age characteristics. The updated Census statistics suggested that the gender mix had remained relatively unchanged and the percentage of people of pensionable age had declined by around three per
cent on average. Although there was considerable variation across the 33 wards, not one reported sufficient variation between 1991 and 2000 to account for the large differences in age between the 1991 local resident population and the available populations.

A analysis of 715 short interviews carried out with a random sample of pedestrians across different times of day and day of week provided further evidence that the available population is fundamentally different from the local resident population. In Greenwich, just over half (54%) of people interviewed on-street on a Wednesday lived in or at a postcode in, or around, the borough. This percentage falls to 40% on a Friday and 26% on a Saturday.

The profiles of locals and non-locals on the street (in those times and places where interviews were carried out) were similar, and are reported in the appendices. A slightly higher percentage of non-locals were black (24%), male (57%) and aged 25 to 44 (51%) than locals (21% black, 54% male and 42% aged 25 to 44).

Overall, the analysis by gender and age confirm the view that the available and local resident populations in Greenwich are significantly different and should not be used to approximate to one other.

Hounslow

Table 9 provides a comparison of the ethnic profile of the (unweighted) 1991 local (Area Level) residents, the 1991 (weighted) local (stop zones) residents and the four available populations in Hounslow. The percentage difference between the available populations and the local resident populations is less than was reported for Greenwich but the differences are still statistically significant. Indeed, with the exception of the available population for stops on a weekday (see appendices), the percentage of white people who reside locally far exceeds the percentage of white people available to stopped by police, either as a pedestrian or in-vehicle.

Conversely, the representation of black people in the available population is much higher than in the local population. This applies to all four available populations across the three day-types where the percentage rises from three per cent black in the local population to 10 to 16% in the available populations. Similarly, the representation of Asian people amongst the available vehicle population is much higher than in the local population across all day types. However, the findings are less clear when comparing the local population with the available pedestrian population. On a typical weekday, the percentage of Asian people in the weighted local stop zone population is higher than in the available pedestrian population, whilst on a Friday the opposite occurs.
A analysis of the Census updates suggested that there has been a reduction in the number of white people living in Hounslow over the last 10 years, which has been associated to a considerable degree by a rise in the number of Asian people. The reduction is estimated to be between five per cent and 15% across the different wards. Therefore, some of the differences between resident and available populations for white and Asian people might be explained by the change in ethnic mix that is believed to have occurred during the Nineties. However, the same could not be said of the black population in Hounslow, which shows fundamental differences with the available populations.
Profile comparisons by gender and age were carried out for Hounslow and the results are documented in the appendices. As with the Greenwich results, there is clear evidence of a disproportionately high number of males in the available population and a disproportionately low number of the elderly, compared with the local resident stop zone profile. Some of these differences can be explained by changes in resident population in the last ten years. However, the reported differences between the local and available populations for gender and age are around 10 to 15 percentage points whilst the increase in male residents only applies to a few wards and then by no more than six per cent. Therefore, the available populations differ from the local resident population in terms of age and gender but it is less clear whether they differ in terms of the current ethnicity mix, although they differ from the ethnic mix of 1991.

A analysis of 1152 interviews carried out with pedestrians in Hounslow provide further evidence of differences between street and resident populations. On each day of interviewing, less than half the people approached resided locally:

- 29% - Wednesday;
- 44% - Friday; and
- 40% - Saturday.

The profiles of locals and non-locals, reported in the appendices, show little difference between the populations in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, income and socio-economic group.

Central Leicester

Table 10 reports the comparisons of the available and local resident populations in Central Leicester. The large sample sizes on which our available population profiles are based means that the 95% confidence limits around the estimates and reported in the appendices are small.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>White (%)</th>
<th>Black (%)</th>
<th>Asian (%)</th>
<th>Other (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residents of area (unweighted 1991 Census)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents of stop zones (weighted 1991 Census)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for pedestrian search May 2000 (N = 10,753)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for pedestrian stop May 2000 (N = 10,753)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for vehicle search May 2000 (N = 18,144)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for vehicle stop May 2000 (N = 18,144)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results show that the percentage of white people within the local resident populations are significantly greater than that within any of the populations available to be stopped. For the available pedestrian populations the percentage difference is around seven to eight per cent compared to the weighted stop zones, and around 20% compared to the area level population. The differences between the available vehicle populations and the local resident populations are even greater.

This is in contrast to the Asian representation in these populations which rise from nine per cent in the area resident population, and 16% in the weighted stop zone resident population to 22% in the available pedestrian populations and around 32% in the available vehicle populations. Black people are also over-represented consistently in all four available populations (around nine per cent) compared with the weighted stop zone population (six per cent) and the area population (just one per cent). The ‘other’ group are constantly under-represented (one to two per cent) in available populations compared with three per cent in weighted stop zone residents, but not with area-level statistics (one per cent). The population projections suggested that the number of white residents had declined by around five percent within the stop zones, which explains some but not all of the reported differences for this group.
The results of comparisons by gender and age are very similar to those reported for Greenwich and Hounslow. The available populations have disproportionately high numbers of young men, compared with local weighted zone resident profiles. The current year projections in Central Leicester suggested there has been a slight rise in the number of young men living locally (about three per cent) considerably lower than the disparity between the local and available populations, reported in Table 9, of over 10%.

A analysis of the 1134 on street interviews conducted in Central Leicester confirmed these differences. Just over one third of people interviewed on a Wednesday (36%) and a Friday (35%) were local residents and just over half (58%) of people interviewed on a Saturday were local residents.

Comparisons of the profiles of local and non-local people interviewed showed that non-locals were less often white than locals in Central Leicester.

Ipswich

Table 11 reports the comparisons of ethnicity amongst the local resident and available populations in Ipswich. The profiles are much more similar than was reported for Central Leicester or the two London boroughs. There is no strong evidence to suggest that white people are represented differently within the available populations than the weighted stop zone resident population although they are less common than in the area level resident population. However, there is a greater proportion of black people in the available pedestrian population and a higher representation of Asian people in the available in-vehicle population than in both local resident populations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>White (%)</th>
<th>Black (%)</th>
<th>Asian (%)</th>
<th>Other (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residents of area (unweighted 1991 Census)</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents of stop zones (weighted 1991 Census)</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for pedestrian search May 2000 (N = 1,846)</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for pedestrian stop May 2000 (N = 1,846)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for vehicle search May 2000 (N = 5,428)</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for vehicle stop May 2000 (N = 5,428)</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The comparisons of weighted stop zone resident population and available populations seem to vary for the different day-types. The results reported in the appendices suggest that, on a Friday and Saturday, among the available pedestrian population, white people are slightly under-represented whilst in the available in-vehicle population white people are over-represented. Across each day-type, there is a disproportionately high number of black people in the available pedestrian population and a disproportionately low number in the available in-vehicle population compared with the local population. For Asian people the converse is true.

Projections of the stop zone resident ethnic profile suggest that the number of white residents in our study area had declined by one to two percentage points but there is less than 0.5% change in the percentage of minority ethnic people. Therefore, it appears that differences between Census measures of the resident population and the observed available populations in Ipswich are unlikely to be explained by any demographic shifts over time.
Gender and age profile comparisons (documented in the appendices) are in line with those reported for the other sites and provide a strong indication that the available populations are fundamentally different to the local resident population in their composition.

Further evidence of this is provided by the analysis of the 809 on-street interviews carried out in Ipswich. The percentage of pedestrians living locally varied from 27% on a Friday to 56% on a Saturday. Therefore, the on street population clearly includes a considerable proportion of people from outside the locality.

Chapeltown

The ethnicity profiles for the local resident populations and the populations available to be stopped by police in Chapeltown are reported in Table 12. The percentage of white people within the area as a whole is, once again, significantly higher than that of the available pedestrian populations, although the populations of the stops zones are more similar, though still involve a slightly higher proportion of white people overall. Black and Asian people are all over-represented in comparisons with the area-level resident population. Compared with the weighted stop zone resident populations, Asian people are over-represented in the available vehicle populations, whilst black people are over-represented in the available pedestrian populations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>White (%)</th>
<th>Black (%)</th>
<th>Asian (%)</th>
<th>Other (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residents of area (unweighted 1991 Census)</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents of stop zones (weighted 1991 Census)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for pedestrian search May 2000 (N = 1,846)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for pedestrian stop May 2000 (N = 1,846)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for vehicle search May 2000 (N = 5,428)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available for vehicle stop May 2000 (N = 5,428)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 15: Chapeltown: Ethnicity of residents and available populations

Local residents of area (unweighted 1991 Census)
Local residents of stop zones (weighted 1991 Census)
Available for pedestrian search
Available for pedestrian stop
Available for vehicle search
Available for vehicle stop

- Other
- Asian
- Black
- White
5. Stops, searches and available populations

Introduction

The results reported in this chapter involve comparing, for the five sites, the police pilot records of stops and searches with the survey data of available populations. This helps us establish whether, at a street-level, there are any ethnic biases among officers regarding who they choose to stop or search.

It is important to note that the data on available populations were collected at specific times (see separate appendices) during a four-week period in May whilst the police pilot records for stops and searches covered a number of months including May (for some sites), as reported in Table 5. The analysis has been carried out separately for each of the four types of encounter: whether a stop or search, and whether pedestrian or in-vehicle. The results presented here represent the average across day-types, although more detailed breakdowns are presented in the appendices.

As already noted, comparisons of the two survey periods indicate that the available population is actually quite changeable, even within a short time-period. As such, even the combined measures of available populations used in this analysis are unlikely to perfectly represent the average available population over time in five areas. With this in mind, in assessing the results of this chapter, particular attention is drawn in particular to those findings in the overview section which tend to be common across sites. This is because we can be more confident about the general picture that emerges across sites, than in the specific detail of an individual site.

We have also reported, for each pedestrian or vehicle and stop or search and for each day-type, the number of observations analysed to give the available population profile and the number of pilot records analysed to give the profile of people actually stopped or searched. Where the number of pilot records is relatively low, under 75 cases, the profiles in the appendices have been reported in italics. Unlike the profile estimates for the available populations, the pilot record profiles do not suffer from sampling variation and so confidence intervals do not apply. However, it is clear that caution is needed when comparing profiles of people actually stopped or searched where such profiles are based on low numbers. Populations which suffer most from limited pilot records are for Friday and Saturday:

- vehicle searches in Central Leicester, Ipswich and Chapeltown;
- pedestrian searches in Ipswich; and
- pedestrian stops in Central Leicester and Ipswich.

The numbers of pilot records for weekday populations were always large, providing a reliable basis for comparisons. In the text that follows the Friday and Saturday comparisons are used as supportive evidence on which to draw conclusions.
Comparisons between available populations and patterns of stops and searches

Overview

In all five sites around the UK, there is considerable evidence that in stops and searches the police focus on young men disproportionately to their numbers in the available population. This is not really surprising, given that it is these groups who are most often involved in offending (Farrington, 1994).

Analysis by ethnicity showed some very important patterns which did not indicate any general pattern of bias against those from minority ethnic groups. This was true both for minority ethnic groups as a whole, and any particular minority ethnic group. The most notable findings, based on an average of a weekday, a Friday and a Saturday, are outlined below.

The most consistent finding across sites is that (with some exceptions) white people tend to be both stopped and searched at a higher rate than would be expected from their numbers in the available population.

By contrast, Asian people tend to be under-represented in those stopped or searched, compared to their numbers in the available population. There were, however, some exceptions. Most notably, in Central Leicester, Asian people were over-represented in vehicle stops and searches.

The general picture for black people is mixed. For Greenwich and Chapeltown, they are under-represented among those stopped or searched (with the exception of those experiencing vehicle stops in Chapeltown). In Central Leicester, they are under-represented in stops, and searched in proportion to their numbers in the available population. However, in Hounslow and Ipswich, black people are far more likely to be stopped or searched in vehicles than their available numbers would suggest, while the numbers of those stopped or searched as pedestrians are fairly similar, overall, to their numbers in the available population.

We should bear in mind, however, that there was under-recording of both stops and searches by police officers over the period of study (Bland et al., 2000a), which may have had some effect on the ethnic breakdown of those stopped and searched. Having said this, there is no reason to think there would be a very different statistical picture if recording had been complete. In fact, given the tendency observed in research for some officers to ‘cover their backs’ when recording searches of those from minority ethnic backgrounds (see FitzGerald and Sibbitt, 1997) it is probably the white people stopped or searched who would have been most affected by under-recording, rather than those from minority ethnic groups. If anything,
therefore, the results presented here would probably overstate any tendency by
officers to stop or search those from minority ethnic groups.

We should also note, once again, that available populations are variable. Given this,
the findings which are common across sites provide us with our most robust
conclusions, rather than the specific detail of individual sites. This should be borne
in mind in the sections below, which provide more detailed discussion of the results
for each of the research sites.

Greenwich

The results reported in Table 13 provide comparisons between the profile of people
available to be stopped and searched as pedestrians and the profile of those actually
stopped and searched as pedestrians. Comparisons of the percentage of white, black,
Asian and other within each population are reported in Figure 16 and are based on
the results table. The figure clearly shows that the percentage of white people
actually stopped or searched is greater than in the corresponding available
population for each of the four types of encounter (with one exception—pedestrian
stop on a Saturday and is based on far fewer pilot records than all other populations
in Greenwich). By contrast, a disproportionately low number of Asian people, and
to a lesser degree, black people, are stopped or searched in Greenwich.

The results suggest that in Greenwich, far from using stops and searches
disproportionately against the black and Asian community, the police search a
disproportionately high number of white people. Again, apart from the one
exception, this is a consistent finding for all three day-types. There is also clear
evidence that there is a tendency for a disproportionately high number of young
men to be stopped and searched.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>White (%)</th>
<th>Black (%)</th>
<th>Asian (%)</th>
<th>Other (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian searches (May 00, N = 2687)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian stops (May 00, N = 2687)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle searches (May 00, N = 4617)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle stops (May 00, N = 4617)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian searches (Apr 99-Feb 00, N = 2152)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian stops (Dec 99-May 00, N = 528)</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle searches (Apr 99-Feb 00, N = 1137)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle stops (Dec 99-May 00, N = 1013)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results show the percentage of white people actually stopped is significantly higher than that available to be stopped (by more than 10 percentage points for all four stop or search types). There is also clear evidence of a consistent under-representation of black and Asian people in the police records of stops and searches (by a minimum of 4 and 7 percentage points respectively).

There are also considerable differences by gender and age. For all stop or search types across all day-types a disproportionately high number of men are stopped or searched. In fact, the largest disparity is that for the 15 to 24 year age group where around three times more stops are conducted on these young people than would be the case if stops were proportionate.

Hounslow

The results of the ethnicity comparisons between actual and available populations in Hounslow are reported in Table 14 and Figure 17. Comparisons by gender and age are reported in the appendices. Again, there is a tendency for a disproportionately high number of young men to be stopped or searched. However, the pattern regarding ethnicity is less clear.
These results suggest that a disproportionately large number of black people and a disproportionately low number of Asian people are stopped or searched when in-vehicle.
Generally, there also appears to be a slight tendency for white people in Hounslow to be over-represented in stops and searches as pedestrians. With one exception, this pattern is consistent across the different day types and encounter types. The analysis by gender and age (reported in the appendices) indicates that a disproportionately large number of men and a disproportionately large number of people aged 15 to 24 are stopped or searched both as pedestrians and when in-vehicle.

Central Leicester

The comparisons of people actually stopped with those available to be stopped in Central Leicester suggest a tendency for police to stop or search a disproportionately high number of white people as pedestrians. There are also indications that a disproportionately high number of Asian people are stopped or searched when in-vehicle, however, analyses of stops and searches made of vehicles are less clear than for pedestrians in Central Leicester.

Table 15: Central Leicester: Ethnicity of available and actual stop and search populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>White (%)</th>
<th>Black (%)</th>
<th>Asian (%)</th>
<th>Other (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian searches (May 00, N = 10,753)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian stops (May 00, N = 10,753)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle searches (May 00, N = 18,144)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle stops (May 00, N = 18,144)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian searches (Nov 99-May 00, N = 773)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian stops (Nov 99-May 00, N = 190)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle searches (Nov 99-May 00, N = 165)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle stops (Nov 99-May 00, N = 1,213)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis by day-type and encounter type showed that a disproportionately high number of white pedestrians are stopped or searched - only in one instance was this not the case (pedestrian stops on a Friday) and this was based upon the analysis of only 19 pilot records. There was, however, no consistent pattern across day-types of under or over-representation of black, Asian or other people among those actually stopped or searched either as pedestrians or in-vehicle at a more disaggregated level, although on average across days, black people were under-represented in stops. In contrast, there were clear indications that young men are stopped or searched disproportionately to their representation in all four available populations.
Ipswich

The results for Ipswich are reported in Table 16 and Figure 19. There is no great variation between the ethnic profile of those stopped or searched and the available populations.

Table 16: Ipswich: Ethnicity of available and actual stop and search populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>White (%)</th>
<th>Black (%)</th>
<th>Asian (%)</th>
<th>Other (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Available:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian searches (May 00, N = 1,846)</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian stops (May 00, N = 1,846)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle searches (May 00, N = 5,428)</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle stops (May 00, N = 5,428)</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actual:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian searches (Nov 99-Mar 00, N = 118)</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian stops (Nov 99-M ar 00, N = 223)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle searches (Nov 99-M ar 00, N = 43)</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle stops (Nov 99-M ar 00, N = 800)</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
populations. Far more significant is the over representation of young men in the population actually stopped, as reported by day-type in the appendices. However, it should be noted that the number of pilot records analysed for Ipswich was less than for the other sites and was particularly low for vehicle searches.

The results reported in Table 15 and Figure 19 indicate that there may be a tendency for police to stop or search a disproportionately large number of black people when in-vehicle. The differences in ethnic profiles, though, are slight and the analysis by day-type and stop or search suggest that any perceived patterns are not consistently observed. They also indicate the police are less likely to stop or search Asians in vehicles.

The most substantial difference between the profile of people actually stopped or searched and those available is the disproportionately large number of young men. This is the case for all stop or search populations across all day-types.

Chapeltown

The results for Chapeltown are reported in Table 17 and Figure 20. The evidence suggests white people are significantly over-represented among those stopped or searched, compared with the available populations. These results also indicate that a
disproportionately small number of black and Asian people are stopped, as pedestrians; and a disproportionately small number of Asian people are stopped or searched when in-vehicle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>White (%)</th>
<th>Black (%)</th>
<th>Asian (%)</th>
<th>Other (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian searches (May 00, N = 1,736)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian stops (May 00, N = 1,736)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle searches (May 00, N = 11,724)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle stops (May 00, N = 11,724)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian searches (15 Nov 99-25 May 00, N = 393)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian stops (15 Nov 99-25 May 00, N = 705)</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle searches (15 Nov 99-25 May 00, N = 211)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle stops (15 Nov 99-25 May 00, N = 798)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 20: Chapeltown: Ethnicity of available and actual stop and search populations
These conclusions are, generally, supported by the more disaggregated analysis of stops and searches by day-types.

The most significant difference between those stopped and searched and available population profiles is the disproportionately high number of young men present in the former.
6. **Geographical patterns of stops, searches and crime**

*Introduction*

In this final empirical chapter, we take a look at geographical patterns of stops and searches and compare them with patterns of crime. This comparison allows us to explore whether the varying levels of stops and searches between different places are, in a sense, justified by the differing levels of crime in these places. Furthermore, where apparent disparities are seen to exist, it allows us to explore whether such disparities contribute unnecessarily to levels of disproportionality.

In order to carry out this comparison, we used GIS software to map crime records for two of the five study sites, Chapeltown and Central Leicester, at police beat level and compared them with the pilot records of stops and searches. The data for the same time period were compared wherever possible. Analysis was restricted to these two sites because it was only in these places where crime data existed which was linked to geographical areas.

For Chapeltown, we focused on the most recent three-month period, September to November 1999, as the police pilot stop record data over-lap with that period. The Chapeltown crime data for this period comprised over 3,700 records.

We analysed all the crime data provided for Central Leicester. This comprised around 40,000 records covering Central Leicester for the period November 1999 to March 2000, of which just over 8,000 applied to the central area. This is the same period as has been covered by the pilot stop and search records analysed and reported in this chapter.

In the results that follow, we present patterns of crime, stops and searches according to the different police beats within each of the two study sites. Specifically, we report on the proportion (expressed as a percentage) of all crimes, stops or searches within each study site that occurred within a particular beat area. Our comparisons rely on two types of visual maps. The first reports only one variable (e.g. crimes, stops or searches) and highlights those beats with the greatest proportion and the beats with the lowest proportion of crime, stops or searches. The second type of map includes both crime and stop or search information and uses three shades of colour. The darker regions show where there is an over-representation of stops or searches relative to crimes, whilst the lighter regions show where there is an under-representation of stops relative to crimes.
Comparing stops and searches with crime

Overview

Overall, the results from Chapeltown and Central Leicester suggest there is a fair degree of consistency between the patterns of crime in general and patterns of both stops and searches, although in both areas search patterns appeared to be more closely related to the geographic distribution of crime than stop patterns. A comparison of just searches, with those crimes which are susceptible to searches, also shows that there is a reasonable consistency between the two. In other words, the patterns of both stops and searches appear, to a large extent, to be justified by the patterns of crime that can be found within the two sites studied.

For both the town centre within Central Leicester, and the ‘bottom end’ of Chapeltown, patterns of stops and searches appeared to match crime patterns slightly less than areas further away. These areas were also associated with the highest levels of both crime and stops and searches. They suggest that the levels of stop and search activity in some beats may not be justified by the (relatively) low level of crime, whilst the converse is true in some neighbouring beats.

Analysis of local resident and available population profiles showed that, in Chapeltown, the areas where a disproportionately high level of stops and searches were carried out, relative to crime levels, also have a disproportionately high number of black and Asian people both in residential and available populations. This was in contrast to areas which were stops and searches were less common than crime levels might predict, which had small proportions of people from black and Asian groups. Thus for this police division, while geographical patterns of stops and searches largely reflect the distributions of crimes, in the places where there are disparities between the two, these are likely to increase the levels of disproportionality of stops and searches against minority ethnic groups. In Central Leicester, by contrast, there was little evidence that disparities between stops and searches and crimes made any notable contribution to disproportionality. Rather, there was evidence in relation to searches that disparities would tend to have the effect of reducing the levels of disproportionality in Central Leicester, in relation to searches.

Chapeltown

The maps reported in Figures 21 to 23 respectively highlight the incidence of crimes, stops and searches in Chapeltown. The first two maps show that there is a fair degree of similarity between the patterns of crimes and searches. The greatest concentrations of both crimes and searches are towards the ‘bottom end’ of Chapeltown, whilst the least number of incidences of both crimes and searches
occur in beats in Wetherby. The pattern of stops is also concentrated towards the ‘bottom end’ of Chapeltown but there is also considerable stop activity in and around Wetherby.

There are some noticeable differences, however, particularly in the beats just south of Headingley and Chapel Allerton. Here there is a relatively high level of searches and a relatively low level of crime, whilst for three of the five beats just to the north the converse is true. These differences in each beat’s share of crimes and searches are highlighted in Figure 24.

The beats with search levels that are higher than would be predicted from the rates of crime also have a high percentage of black and Asian local residents (17% and 29% black; and 20% and 30% Asian) compared with the Chapeltown Division as a whole (six percent Black and nine percent Asian). By contrast, the three beats (noted above) just to the north, and the beat just to the south, that all have a disproportionately low level of searches, have on average a disproportionately low number of black (four percent) and Asian (seven percent) residents. Analysis of the available population in these beats (though approximated – see separate appendices) provides similar supporting evidence to suggest that the areas where a disproportionately high number of searches, relative to crime levels, are areas with high numbers of black and Asian people (both resident and available).

A slightly different geographical pattern emerges when comparing crime and stop distributions (Figure 25). The results indicate that there is a considerable disparity around the ‘bottom end’ of Chapeltown with a disproportionately low number of stops in some beats and a disproportionately high number of stops in neighbouring beats. Most noticeable is the relatively high number of stops in and around Wetherby which does not seem to map onto local crime levels. Cross-referencing these beats with census information (based on EDs) and available population data based on stops zones give similar findings to those stated above for searches. That is, in those areas where there are higher rates of stops than is warranted by the level of crime, there is a significantly higher number of black and Asian people compared to those areas than where there are disproportionately low numbers of stops.

The final two maps in this section explore patterns of ‘susceptible’ crimes – i.e. crimes perceived to be susceptible to the influence of stop and search tactic. These include: robberies, burglaries, vehicle crimes, weapons offences, wounding and drugs crimes and represent 64% of all recorded crime in Chapeltown during the period. Of particular interest is whether the distribution of police searches is correlated to the distribution of susceptible crimes. Figure 26 reports the pattern of susceptible crimes
and comparison with geographical patterns of all crimes show little variation. The direct contrast between susceptible crime patterns and all searches (Figure 27) is, therefore, very similar to that contrasting all crimes (Figure 24). A gain, there are disproportionately high numbers of searches just south of Chapeltown relative to numbers of susceptible crimes, and a disproportionately low number of searches in the beats just to the north. A gain, this would therefore suggest that differences between patterns of searches may exacerbate disproportionality.
Figure 21: Chapeltown: Percentages by beat of all crimes
Figure 22: Chapeltown: Percentages by beat of all searches
Figure 23: Chapeltown: Percentages by beat of all stops
Figure 24: Chapeltown: Percentage differentials between all searches and all crimes
Figure 25: Chapeltown: Percentage differential between all stops and all crimes
Figure 26: Chapeltown: Percentages by beat of crimes susceptible to searches
Figure 27: Chapeltown: Percentages differentials between all searches and all susceptible crimes.
Central Leicester

The maps reported in Figures 28 to 30 show the patterns of crimes, searches and stops in Central Leicester. Unlike Chapeltown, the study area does not contain any rural beats. The study area centres around the A594 inner ring road.

There appears to be a reasonably strong correlation between all crime, and patterns of both stops and searches in Central Leicester. The highest proportion of both crimes and searches occur in the centre of town and to the west. Generally the greatest incidence of stops is in the town centre and to the north east. Figures 29 and 30 show comparisons between search and crime patterns and stop and crime patterns. These maps suggest quite a strong degree of similarity between relative levels of crime, searches and stops by beat. Only in isolated pockets do any notable disparities exist.

The most noticeable imbalance is in the beat just north of the central clock tower area, between the two bus stations, where 14% of all searches occur compared to only six percent of all recorded crime. Interestingly, however, there is a disproportionately low number of stops carried out in this area, compared with crime levels.

There is also a small area just to the south west which also has a disproportionately high number of searches compared to crimes, whilst in between these beats there is a disproportionately low level of searches relative to crimes. Direct comparisons between stops and crimes (Figure 32) indicate a disproportionately low number of stops are carried out within the inner ring road, compared with the number of crimes there.

The profile of the local resident and available populations in all but one of the highlighted areas (dark or light) were found to be similar to that of the local resident profile for the area overall (89% white, one percent black, nine percent Asian, one percent other). That is, in general, there is little indication that stop and search activity is focusing on areas with high numbers of black and Asian people. However, there was one beat with a disproportionately high level of both searches and stops relative to crime that also had a greater percentage of black and Asian people in both the local resident profile (49% white, 10% black, 37% Asian, four per cent ‘other’) and the available population (48% white, 10% black, 37% Asian, five per cent ‘other’).
The final three maps in this section (Figures 33 to 35) report patterns of the susceptible crimes of robbery, burglary and vehicle crime along with those searches which might address these crimes. Because there was no separate crime information available for drugs in Central Leicester, searches for drugs have been excluded from the analysis. Surprisingly, while geographical comparisons of these susceptible crimes show a general similarity with patterns of corresponding searches (see Figures 34 and 29), there appears to be less correlation between these (Figure 35) than between all searches and all crimes (Figure 31). In view of this, it was important to explore what the implications of these disparities were for disproportionality. Comparisons of population profiles (of both local residents and available populations) in these areas of disparity give some interesting findings. The police beats with a disproportionately high level of searches actually have a greater proportion of white people and a lower percentage of black and Asian people than the police beats with a disproportionately low number of searches relative to the number of ‘susceptible’ crimes. This suggests, therefore, that overall, disparities between uses of searches and the levels of these crimes in Central Leicester would probably tend to reduce the level of disproportionality in relation to searches, rather than increase it.
Figure 28: Central Leicester: Percentages by beat of all crimes
Figure 29: Central Leicester: Percentages by beat of all searches
Figure 30: Central Leicester: Percentages by beat of all stops
Figure 31: Central Leicester: Percentage differentials between all searches and all crimes
Figure 32: Central Leicester: Percentage differentials between all stops and all crimes
Figure 33: Central Leicester: Percentages by beat of crimes susceptible to searches (minus drug offences)
Figure 34: Central Leicester: Percentages by beat of searches carried out excluding drugs searches
Figure 35: Central Leicester: Percentage differentials between all searches (except for drugs) and all susceptible crimes (except drugs offences)
7. Conclusions

In this concluding chapter, we consider the findings of this research in relation to the original questions posed. On the basis of these findings, we make recommendations to police forces about how they should address the issue of disproportionality in relation to stops and searches.

Questions

How useful are residential population figures as a measure of the population available to be stopped or searched?

The research presented here shows, quite clearly, that measures of resident population give a poor indication of the populations actually available to be stopped or searched. By available, we are referring to the people who use public places where and when stops and searches are carried out. The research illustrates a number of issues relating to this question, which are discussed in turn.

The most significant finding is that, when we actually looked at the populations available to be stopped or searched within the research sites, they were quite different from the resident populations of the areas. Notably, compared with the residential profile (as measured by the 1991 Census) in pockets of high stop and search activity, young men were over-represented in the available population, and the elderly were rarely observed by comparison. Most significant, however, was the finding that, for at least four out of the five sites, those from minority ethnic backgrounds were over-represented in the available population compared to the resident population. This was true for both the resident population based on police areas or divisions as a whole, or just on those areas where stops and searches most often took place. What this means, in practice, is that if everything else was equal, we would expect minority ethnic people to be stopped or searched by the police more often than their numbers in the resident population would suggest.

Part of the reason for this is likely to be that many of those available to be stopped or searched are simply not local residents. On-street interviews with pedestrians in pockets of high stop and search activity gave some indication of people’s mobility. They showed that over half of those interviewed did not reside locally to the research sites.

The research raises some important issues when defining ‘local’ resident populations as a basis for measures of disproportionality. First, the extent to which those in the available population are likely to reside locally will depend on the size of the area under consideration. By focusing on larger geographic areas, the proportion of the available population who are not local to that area will be reduced, given the levels of mobility of available populations. Furthermore, based on the sites studied, there
was a clear tendency for the resident populations in zones with high levels of stops and searches also to have higher than average proportions of minority ethnic residents within them. This suggests that the levels of disproportionality will vary according to the size of the areas under consideration. These two issues raise important questions about how disproportionality should be measured, and what these measures actually represent - a point taken up further in the recommendations.

While these findings place in doubt the value of using resident population statistics as a proxy measure of the available population, we should not lose sight of the fact that these figures serve an important function in our understanding of disproportionality. Specifically, when they are based on a wide enough geographic area, they still give us an important indication of how often members of different ethnic communities are actually stopped or searched within that area. It may not tell us whether the disproportionality is a product of differences in the availability of different ethnic groups or a result of ethnic biases in street-level decision-making by officers, but it does describe the overall experience of different ethnic communities. For example, it reminds us that being black means that you get stopped and searched more often. It is important not to lose sight of this point, and the issue will be discussed in more detail below.

Do police officers disproportionately stop or search those from minority ethnic backgrounds among the available population?

We have established that the resident population is not a reliable measure of the available population. However, the question remains as to whether police officers are more likely to stop or search those from minority ethnic backgrounds among those they actually encounter in the available population. This issue was investigated in depth in this study.

Overall, across the five sites, the findings of this research did not suggest any general pattern of bias against those from minority ethnic backgrounds. This was true for minority ethnic groups as whole, as well as any particular minority ethnic group. Asian people tended to be under-represented in those stopped or searched, compared to their numbers in the available population, with some notable exceptions. The general picture for black people was mixed. For example, in Greenwich, and Chapeltown, they were mostly under-represented among those stopped or searched, yet in Hounslow and Ipswich, they were far more likely to be stopped or searched in vehicles than their available numbers would suggest. Perhaps surprisingly, the most consistent finding across sites was that white people tended to be stopped and searched at a higher rate than their numbers in the available population would predict.
While the overall picture does not, on the face of it, suggest a general pattern of discrimination against those from minority ethnic groups, it is important to flag-up certain caveats. First, the findings do indicate there are some situations where ethnic bias does occur. While it should not be assumed that discrimination underlies such biases, it does remind us that we should not be complacent in assuming there is no problem.

Second, without a full understanding of the ethnic breakdown of suspect information which informs police decision-making, we should not assume that there is no discrimination. For example, if a particular minority ethnic group was under-represented among police suspects, we would reasonably expect stops and searches of such a group to be lower than their representation in the available population.

Third, the picture presented by the research reflects the aggregate outcomes of stops and searches by officers. While at this level, there does not appear any general pattern of bias, it remains a possibility that that certain officers could still be stopping people from minority ethnic backgrounds disproportionately. And while this practice may be masked by the aggregate statistics, it remains a potential source of alienation at a street-level.

Fourth, even if there is no ethnic bias in street-level decision making by officers, there may be ethnic biases arising from the areas targeted by areas to carry out stops and searches. Where this targeting is not justified by local crime patterns, it may be seen as discriminatory. This point is taken up below.

Finally, the findings of this research relate to a period of police activity after the publication of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, which was critical of the police use of stops and searches and the five study sites were all involved in a pilot of recommendation 61 of this report. Both of these facts may have had some impact on officer practice, in particular making them more cautious about stopping or searching those from minority ethnic backgrounds. We cannot, therefore, be sure that the same picture would have emerged at a different time or in different study locations.

Do geographic patterns of stops and searches reflect local crime problems?

We have already noted that patterns of stops and searches, far from being evenly spread across police force areas, are focused on particular areas or pockets. We also noted that this focus tended to be on areas which, for whatever reason, contain large proportions of residents from minority ethnic groups. We might therefore expect this focus to contribute to a higher level of disproportionality than if stops
and searches were distributed evenly across police force areas. This raises the question: can the patterns of stops and searches be justified? Specifically, do stops and search map on to the geographical patterns of crime?

In order to address this question, geographic patterns of stops and searches were compared with geographic patterns of recorded crime in or two of the five study sites (Chapeltown and Central Leicester). Overall, the results from this suggest that there is a fair degree of consistency between the patterns of crime and patterns of both stops and searches. In other words, the patterns of stops and searches appeared, to a large extent, to be justified by the patterns of crime within the two sites.

This being said, in both areas there were some disparities between crime and stops and searches: there were places where the levels of stops or searches were either higher or lower than would be expected from local crime levels. Analysis of local resident and available population profiles in Chapeltown showed that where these disparities occurred, they tended to involve stops and searches focusing on areas which are disproportionately populated by people from minority ethnic groups (based on both resident and available population information). As such, a small part of the disproportionality in stops and searches in Chapeltown might follow from a mismatch between the use of stops and searches in different parts of the division and local crime levels. In Central Leicester, by contrast, there was no evidence that disparities between stops and searches and crimes made any contribution to disproportionality.

Overall, then, the research shows that stops and searches tended to focus on areas where there was more crime, but there was not a perfect fit. In some cases, this lack of fit may have involve an unjustified focus on areas where there are higher than average proportions of people from minority ethnic backgrounds, which contribute to levels of disproportionality. Of course we should be careful about taking recorded crime figures as a perfect measure of local crime problems, and it may be that there are other explanations for the patterns presented in the report. However, if nothing else, the findings illustrate that focusing stops and searches in places which do not suffer from high levels of crime has the potential to exacerbate, unnecessarily, levels of disproportionality.

What does this mean for the police?

One reaction to this research is that police forces do not have too much to worry about: the findings suggest (at least for the sites investigated) that police officers on the street do not, at an aggregate level at least, choose more often to stop or search
those from minority ethnic backgrounds; and officers are, more or less, targeting stops and searches at areas where there are crime problems.

However, in many respects, the findings of this research are a problem for the police. Most significantly, they suggest that disproportionality is, to some extent, a product of structural factors beyond the control of the police. Therefore, they may lack the power to eliminate disproportionality, based upon residential population measures, by changing their practices. So, despite the best efforts of police forces, those from minority ethnic backgrounds may continue to be stopped and searched more often than white people.

This has profound implications for police-community relations. For, as other research indicates (Miller et al., 2000; Stone and Pettigrew, 2000) experiences of stops and searches are often negative ones, and there is a clear statistical link between being searched and having a lower confidence in the police. So if the police continue to stop and search those from minority ethnic backgrounds more often than their white counterparts, even if this has nothing to do with officer discrimination, they can still expect this to impact negatively on levels of confidence in the police by those from minority ethnic backgrounds. This means that police forces must redouble their efforts to minimise the bad feeling that stops and searches cause, particularly among those from minority ethnic groups. This point is taken up in the recommendations below.

We should also not lose sight of the fact that this research did not give a clean bill of health to the police use of stops and searches. There were clearly examples where those from minority ethnic backgrounds were stopped and searched more often than would have been expected from their numbers in the available population. There was evidence that stops and searches were targeted at some areas where there disproportionate numbers of those from minority ethnic backgrounds, yet where the local crime rates did not appear justify this attention. And the ethnic profile of suspect descriptions was not taken into account when assessing the levels of stops and searches for different minority ethnic groups. This research should not, therefore, be seen as an excuse for the police turning attention away from the potential role of discrimination in disproportionality.

Recommendations to police forces

Following on from the above, it is important that police forces take the following steps to address the issue of disproportionality. These should be overseen and monitored by police authorities.
Forces should continue to compile measures of disproportionality based on residential population figures.

Measure of disproportionality based on the residential population are important for two reasons. First, these figures remain an important indicator of the actual experience of different ethnic groups within police force areas. A nother way of expressing this is that they describe the outcomes of stops and searches. This is a point which forces cannot afford to ignore if they are to understand their relationship with the community they serve. Second, it is important that forces are able to look objectively at these measures, and to justify them both to themselves and to the community.

Ideally, measures of disproportionality should be based on wider rather than narrower geographical areas. This is because the mobility of people within the available population means that measures of disproportionality based on smaller geographical areas are less likely to describe the experiences of people actually living within that area.

Forces should start to monitor populations that are available for searches.

It is also important that police forces are able to assess the ethnic breakdown of searches (and possibly also stops) in relation to the populations available for stop or search. This will allow forces to accurately assess whether decision-making by officers on the street involves any ethnic biases. This then provides a starting point for assessing whether there may be discrimination in officer practice.

It is not yet clear what method would allow for the routine and systematic measurement of available population profiles. Obviously this study represents one possible approach. However, the methodology used here is complex and would not be easily replicated by forces without the support of outside specialists. Furthermore, whilst this research was carried out with the broad support of community groups consulted in the areas concerned, it is possible that the use of mobile video cameras as the basis for a survey would not be acceptable to communities in all areas. It is also not clear whether this approach would be compatible with the Human Rights Act, which will come into force in October 2000.

Alternative approaches have been trialled by some police forces, and forthcoming research on available populations by Hertfordshire Constabulary using observers may provide a different model. Details of this approach are discussed in Bland et al (2000b).
One of the insights that has emerged from this research is that there may be large variations in the demographic make-up of available populations through time. Any methodology which is to reliably profile the available population of an area will need to take this into account. This might involve carrying out profiling exercises at a number of different points in time, and developing an average based on these measurements.

Overall, however, while measuring available populations is clearly a difficult task, forces should not shy away from the problem. Neither should they fall back on simplistic and methodologically inadequate approaches which may give misleading results. Some forces, for example, have measured available populations in small and specific areas which are not necessarily representative of the wider area, yet have taken searches from a wider area as a comparison.

Forces should closely target stops and searches on areas with current crime problems.

This research has shown that the focus of stops and searches on particular areas has the potential to increase the numbers of people from minority ethnic groups who experience stops and searches. It is therefore crucial that forces monitor the geographical distribution of searches (and, as far as possible, stops) against up-to-date information on crime patterns. Not only will this facilitate a more efficient and effective targeting of searches, it will also ensure that areas with large minority ethnic populations are not targeted unnecessarily.

Responding to ethnic biases in officers’ use of stops and searches.

There are a number of existing approaches which forces can take to address potential ethnic biases in officers’ use of searches, and these, or variations of them. For example, some forces have taken to monitoring the ethnic breakdown of searches carried out by individual officers. Where biases are identified, these are followed-up with the offices concerned. Approaches of this type should be adopted as a matter of course. For not only has this research pinpointed evidence of possible biases, but it is also important to ensure that such biases do not develop even where they do not currently exist. Full details of interventions which address this issue are provided in Bland et al (2000b).

Officers should carry out searches only when they have good grounds, and, as far as possible, when these grounds are informed by accurate and up-to-date intelligence.
Not only will such an approach mean that searches are used efficiently and effectively, it will also ensure that they are not used in situations where they are likely to be unproductive and potentially alienating. This appears particularly important when it is noted that public satisfaction with being stopped or searched is greater when people are given a convincing reason for the stop or search by the police (e.g. FitzGerald and Hale, forthcoming). More details on these issues are provide by Miller et al (2000).

Police officers should manage stops and searches encounters in ways which maximise public trust and confidence.

Finally, we have noted that the high levels of stops and searches experienced by some minority ethnic groups may not be reduced substantially, even if forces are able to remove any discrimination from their practices. It is therefore of particular importance that officers conduct these encounters in ways which minimise potential bad feeling. This is obviously important for encounters with all sections of the public, but has particular significance for relations with those minority ethnic groups that experience relatively high rates of stops and searches. More details on how this can be achieved are provided in Quinton, et al (2000).

Ideas for further research

A number of areas for further research might further improve our understanding of available populations:

- Research should address the role played by suspect profiles in decisions to carry out stops and searches. In particular, the ethnic profiles of suspects should be considered along with the available populations when assessing evidence of discrimination in officer practice.

- It would be useful to compare available populations with searches which come about for different reasons as part of routine police activity. In particular, it would be useful to explore differences between high and low-discretion searches (FitzGerald, 1999). Similarly, it would be useful to carry out analyses which distinguished between successful and unsuccessful searches.

- The current study was carried out under significant time-constraints. Further research in this area would benefit from exploring variation in available populations and patterns of searches through time. In particular, this might take into account variations according to season or local events.
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