

# Investigation report

Independent investigation into  
complaints following *'The Boys  
Who Killed Stephen Lawrence'*

## **Introduction**

On 26<sup>th</sup> July 2006, the BBC Panorama Programme broadcast a programme entitled “**The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence**”. The programme explored the events of 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1993, when Stephen was murdered and interviewed witnesses to the incident. Mark Daly the journalist who made the programme also interviewed Neil Putnam a former Metropolitan Police Officer who during the course of his interview made allegations that Officers withheld information involving ‘corruption’ in the original Police Investigation into Stephen’s murder.

The producers of the programme had shown the recording to solicitors representing Neville and Doreen Lawrence, the parents of Stephen, prior to it being broadcast on national television.

As a result of viewing the programme Mr Imran Khan, of ‘Imran Khan and Partners’, on behalf of Doreen Lawrence wrote to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (“IPCC”) on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2006, to make a formal complaint against the Metropolitan Police Service.

On 26<sup>th</sup> July 2006, Jocelyn Cockburn from ‘Hodge Jones and Allen Solicitors’ also made a complaint on behalf of Neville Lawrence.

As a result of receiving the complaints, John Wadham, Deputy Chair of the IPCC, made the decision that an independent investigation would be undertaken.

Following a meeting with the complainants and their legal representatives the following Terms of Reference for the investigation were agreed.

# INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION INTO ALLEGATIONS OF POLICE CORRUPTION RELATING TO THE FIRST INVESTIGATION INTO THE MURDER OF STEPHEN LAWRENCE.

## Terms of Reference

- 1a. To investigate the allegation that ex Detective Sergeant John Davidson had a 'corrupt relationship' with Clifford Norris.
- 1b. To investigate whether any such 'corruption' tainted the actions of DS Davidson either directly or indirectly in the first investigation into the murder of Stephen Lawrence.
- 2a. To investigate the allegation that ex Detective Constable Neil Putnam provided information to the Metropolitan Police concerning the 'relationship' of DS Davidson and Clifford Norris and in particular that:
  - (ii) No action was taken by the Metropolitan Police in relation to this information.
  - (ii) The information was not passed to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry.
- 2b. To investigate the allegation that the Metropolitan Police despite knowing or strongly suspecting that DS Davidson was 'corrupt' misinformed and/or withheld such knowledge/suspicion from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry.
- 2c. To make recommendations regarding any possible criminal or misconduct culpability revealed.
- 2d. Make any recommendations on MPS or National Police Policy which arise from this Investigation. Any fast time learning issues will be conveyed in a timely manner.

2e The IPCC is aware that the family of Stephen Lawrence have long been suspicious and indeed allege that 'corruption' played a part in the 'First Police Investigation' into his death. The IPCC acknowledges that if such allegations are true then other officers may be involved. The Investigation will at all times have this in mind and should any information come to light during the course of the Investigation suggesting criminality or misconduct on the part of other Officers or ex-Officers this will be the subject of a fresh determination on how that information should be addressed.

## **Methodology**

The BBC programme featured elements of a murder investigation which has fundamentally changed the way the police service investigate murders. The murder of Stephen Lawrence has also impacted on people outside the police service. A number of Commissioners and staff within the IPCC have in some way, since 1993, been involved in the issues relating to the murder investigation and the related matters. In view of this a register of interests was established to ensure that any member of the IPCC could declare an interest in the investigation.

Whilst the investigation was carried out by a team of investigators from the London and South East region, three Commissioners were appointed to oversee the investigation and to establish a Strategic Support Group (SSG). The Chair of the SSG was a Commissioner from the Wales and South West region.

The complaints were categorised as follows:

- 1) Allegations that the officers, who had debriefed Neil Putnam, had failed to record or act upon information he had given them concerning 'allegations of corruption' in the original Stephen Lawrence murder investigation.
- 2) The Metropolitan Police Service had failed to advise The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry of the concerns regarding a witness, Detective Sergeant John Davidson.
- 3) The 'allegation of corruption' involving Davidson and Clifford Norris the father of one of the suspects implicated in the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

The 'first allegation' is linked to the arrest and interviews of Neil Putnam. Mr Putnam is a former Metropolitan Police Officer who was arrested in July 1998 for 'offences of corruption'. He decided to assist the officers from the Metropolitan Police who were investigating the 'corruption allegations' and after he was charged with various offences he was entered into the Resident Informants' Scheme and he subsequently provided information concerning

some of his former colleagues.

This investigation into the 'corruption' allegations was known as '*Operation Russia*'. A number of serving police officers were convicted of offences of 'corruption' and received substantial prison sentences.

The documentation from this investigation was held by the Metropolitan Police in secure storage. The IPCC was given full access to this material and as a result took possession of a number of documents including the records of interviews with Neil Putnam.

The IPCC investigation also interviewed a number of police officers, former police officers and witnesses including: members of Mr Putnam's family, leading counsel, former members of the CPS, and members of the media.

In respect of the 'second allegation', again documentation has been seized and witnesses both within the Metropolitan Police Service and former members of The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry team have been interviewed.

In respect of the 'third allegation of corruption' in the original murder investigation, the IPCC were conscious that the Metropolitan Police Service is still investigating the murder of Stephen. As a result it was important, at the outset, to draw up a memorandum of understanding with officers from '*Operation Athena Tower*', the re-investigation of the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Meetings were held with senior officers involved in the re-investigation. Whilst recognising that the investigation was still on-going the IPCC were given full access to the information available to the MPS.

There have also been a number of previous investigations, and reviews into the murder of Stephen on 22 April 1993. There was also the PCA/Kent complaint investigation and the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. The IPCC has had access to all the documentation from these inquiries, investigations and reviews.

The IPCC has also had access to confidential information held by the Anti-Corruption Command of the Metropolitan Police. Access was obtained to

reports concerning alleged 'corruption' of a number of former officers of the Metropolitan Police.

It was apparent at the outset that the MPS conducted a number of different inquiries over the possibility that 'corruption' may have been a feature of the Murder Investigation. Copies of these reports have been obtained.

A number of former police officers, serving police officers and civilian witnesses have been interviewed.

## **Allegation 1**

***Allegations that the officers who had debriefed Neil Putnam had failed to record or act upon information he had given them concerning allegations of 'corruption' in the original Stephen Lawrence murder investigation.***

### **Background**

In December 1997, the former Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service, Sir (now Lord) Paul Condon advised the Home Affairs Committee that it was suspected that one percent of the Metropolitan Police were in some way 'corrupt.' This was widely reported to be some 200 -250 officers.

The briefing for the Metropolitan Police Commissioner was provided by the Complaints Investigation Branch (CIB 2). The MPS had undertaken a 'covert operation' to assess the scale of 'corruption' and then moved to an 'overt phase' in January 1998 with the formation of CIB3.

One of the early successes of CIB3 was '*Operation Russia*'. This commenced following an interview of a convicted drug dealer who gave information of dealings with members of the South East Regional Crime Squad based at East Dulwich.

As a result of the information received, CIB3 formed teams of officers to investigate the allegations against identified targets. These officers were specifically selected for the inquiry.

The information obtained from the convicted drug dealer led to the arrest of Neil Putnam, who at the time was a Detective Constable on the South East Regional Crime Squad.

In July 1998 Neil Putnam's home was searched by officers from CIB3. A few days following the search, Putnam contacted officers from CIB3 and confessed to offences of 'corruption'. He was charged with criminal offences, appeared before Bow Street Magistrates Court and was remanded in custody, he then entered into the Resident Informants' Scheme. This effectively meant he was taken to a police station outside of the Metropolitan Police area where

he remained in custody; he then assisted with the police investigation.

Once entered into the Resident Informants' Scheme, Neil Putnam admitted a number of criminal offences and also implicated a number of former colleagues from the East Dulwich Office of the South East Regional Crime Squad.

The process for obtaining the admissions and information from Mr Putnam was that he was interviewed by three members of CIB3. These officers, known as Debriefers, would interview in teams of two; information was recorded in various documents. Whenever a criminal offence was admitted by Mr Putnam he would be interviewed in accordance with the requirements of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

It should be noted that Neil Putnam was not the only person who had been granted Resident Informant Status, and was in the process of providing information and intelligence in relation to allegations of 'corruption' against police officers.

The information and intelligence obtained as part of this process was submitted through their line manager to the senior officers within CIB3, who were aware of the overall picture concerning the relevant Resident Informants and acted upon what information/intelligence was relevant.

The CIB3 Command had good liaison with the newly formed '*Visa Team*' within the Crown Prosecution Service. The barristers and solicitors within the '*Visa Team*' prosecuted all the defendants, including Neil Putnam, within '*Operation Russia*'.

Neil Putnam was convicted at the Central Criminal Court on 3 November 1998. He appeared as a prosecution witness at various trials of former colleagues. Neil Putnam was later sentenced to five years imprisonment.

In 2000, following his release from prison, he was interviewed by Graeme McLagan, a BBC journalist and he appeared in a Panorama programme called '*Bent Coppers*'. A book by Mr McLagan was also published and the '*Operation Russia*' investigation was one of the chapters of the book.

On 30 April 2002, *The Guardian* newspaper published an article by the journalist Vikram Dodd. As part of the research for the article, Mr Dodd interviewed Neil Putnam. The article featured the Crown Prosecution Service decision not to instigate proceedings against the suspects of the murder of Stephen Lawrence, following Deputy Assistant Commissioner John Grieve's re-investigation. The article goes into detail of the '*Operation Russia*' investigation.

A copy of the interview between Mr Putnam and Mr Dodd was obtained by the IPCC investigation team; during the interview Mr Putnam raises the issue of 'corruption' on the Lawrence murder investigation. He refers to a conversation with John Davidson during which he mentioned, "*Old man Norris putting some work their way.*"

In 2006 Neil Putnam was approached by Mark Daly, a journalist from the BBC who was carrying out research for the BBC programme, '*The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence*'. It was during his interview that he made the allegation that he told officers, debriefing him as a part of '*Operation Russia*', that one of his former colleagues ex-Detective Sergeant John Davidson had told Putnam; that he had looked after the interest of Clifford Norris's son David' during the initial Stephen Lawrence murder investigation and implied that '*he had received payment*' using the words; "*he's a good little earner*".

Davidson was a member of the initial murder investigation team into Stephen Lawrence's death. He joined the team the day after the murder; he was involved in the investigation for some weeks and gave evidence to Sir William MacPherson's Public Inquiry.

## **Investigation**

Following the broadcast of the programme and the complaints made on behalf of the parents of Stephen, it was established that two of the three officers who 'debriefed' Putnam were still serving as police officers within the Metropolitan Police.

The two officers were both served with Regulation 9 notices under the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2004. The notice alleged that the officers failed to

pass on information concerning the 'corrupt relationship' between Davidson and Clifford Norris or to act on the information received.

Neil Putnam was interviewed by members of the IPCC. During the course of the interviews, Mr Putnam repeated the 'allegation' broadcast during *'The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence'* programme. He also stated that he told other Officers, members of his family/friends and members of the media about the 'link' between Clifford Norris and John Davidson.

It is clear that during the 1980's and early 1990's that a man by the name of David Norris was an informant (covert human intelligence source) to the East Dulwich Office of the South East Regional Crime Squad, although it must be stated that this fact has never been confirmed by the Metropolitan Police.

David Norris was handled by a number of different officers from the East Dulwich Office. It is apparent that he provided information to the Police in respect of drugs and lorry hijackings in return for reward money.

From documentation seen by the IPCC investigation team, it is clear that the information from David Norris was one of the main sources of work for the office at East Dulwich, and it is apparent that the inquiries undertaken from the information given by Norris would have resulted in the officers from this office earning considerable amounts of money through overtime payments.

This fact has led to David Norris being described in the book *'Bent Coppers'* by Graeme McLagan as "a *good earner.*"

David Norris was murdered in 1991.

Clifford Norris, one of the central issues of the IPCC investigation, has a son called David Norris. This is not the same David Norris who was an informant of the East Dulwich Office of the South East Regional Crime Squad.

David Norris (son of Clifford) has been named as one of the five suspects for the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

It is clear from the documentation examined by the IPCC investigation team, that there was confusion as to whether David Norris (deceased) was related to Clifford Norris. From enquiries made during this investigation, there is no

apparent relationship between the two men.

During the course of his interview with the IPCC investigation team, Neil Putnam was questioned regarding the phrase used to describe David Norris (deceased) in the book *'Bent Coppers'* as "a good earner" and the similar phrase being attributed to John Davidson in the programme *'The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence'*, when describing his alleged 'relationship' with Clifford Norris. Mr Putnam was adamant that he had not confused the two men and reiterated his allegation.

Mr Putnam stated that he told the debriefing officers and his witness protection officers of the allegations concerning a 'link' between Davidson and Clifford Norris.

*'Operation Russia'* commenced following the disclosures of 'corrupt practices' by a convicted drugs dealer.

Neil Putnam was arrested in July 1998, and he cooperated with the investigation and after being charged with criminal offences he entered the Resident Informants Scheme.

The process for debriefing Neil Putnam was governed by a Home Office Circular issued in 1992.

Assistant Commissioner John Yates, who in 1998 was the Senior Investigating Officer for *'Operation Russia'*, has stated that the Home Office Circular was, by 1998, out of date. However, the general principles of the document, in relation to inducements, transparency and accountability were sound, and the debriefing officers used the Circular as the basis of their investigation. The CPS Visa Team also advised CIB3 on the debriefing process.

Mr Yates stated that the critical issue around handling resident informants for any senior investigating officer was to ensure that, insofar as was possible, there should be a documented audit trail to prevent any allegations that the evidence from the witness was coached or was tainted in any way.

To ensure that *'Operation Russia'* complied with these principles, clear Policy

Guidance was provided to the debriefing teams. This is evidenced by the way in which the intelligence and information was handled by the Senior Management Team.

Mr Yates in his statement to the IPCC investigation team has stated, "At the various 'voir dices' and trials that took place resulting from the investigations in 'Operation Russia', there were numerous and strong challenges around the debriefing process and the way in which police handled and dealt with Putnam. Mistakes were made and this was conceded by the Prosecution. However, these were considered to be of a minor nature and did not fundamentally undermine the case. Further, following convictions, there were challenges in the Court of Appeal and later in the House of Lords specifically around these issues. To date, no appeal has been allowed.

The debriefing process adopted by CIB3 was criticised by a journalist Michael Gillard when he was interviewed by the IPCC Investigation Team. The criticism centred on the method in which the information from the 'Residential Informants' was recorded. It was accepted by Mr Yates that the manner in which Residential Informants were dealt with in 1998, would be different today, especially in relation to the recording of the intelligence / information received.

Mr Yates was interviewed by Mr Daly during the BBC programme 'The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence'. The allegations made by Mr Putnam were put to him on the programme. The IPCC investigation also asked Mr Yates to comment on the allegations. In his statement to the IPCC Mr Yates states; *"The allegation was also made in that programme that MPS Officers deliberately suppressed the fact that Putnam had mentioned Clifford Norris and 'corrupt links' to Davidson in his debrief on the basis it was either/both too difficult for the MPS to get involved or too embarrassing for the MPS. I refute these allegations and believe that Putnam was mistaken on these points"*.

During the course of the IPCC investigation, a former MPS officer who was a member of the debriefing team was interviewed. He outlined the procedure carried out during the 'debriefing' process. He described that Putnam was interviewed at any one time by two of the debriefing team, notes were made during this and these were later recorded in more detail in various books. Neil

Putnam would sign the records as being an accurate record of the interview. He denied that Putnam had ever mentioned any 'relationship' between John Davidson and Clifford Norris, and the first time he was aware of the alleged 'relationship' was when viewing the TV programme.

When he entered the 'Resident Informants Scheme' Neil Putnam was also assigned to members of the Witness Protection Unit. Three members of the Metropolitan Police Witness Protection Unit were interviewed; they outlined their role and dealing with Neil Putnam. All three members of the team deny that Neil Putnam ever mentioned to them any 'relationship' between Davidson and Clifford Norris.

The Police Federation representative who represented Neil Putnam was also interviewed. He stated that he was never aware of the alleged 'link' between Davidson and Clifford Norris; however he did state that he believed Neil Putnam if he said that he told his debriefing officers.

A chief probation officer, who had the responsibility for the management of offenders subject to the Witness Protection Scheme, was seen as part of the IPCC investigation. He states he was never told by Mr Putnam of the alleged 'relationship' between Clifford Norris and Davidson. He advised the IPCC of another former police officer who was also in prison subject to the Witness Protection Scheme, who had contact with Putnam. Whilst this person declined to be interviewed as part of the investigation, he denied that Neil Putnam had advised him of any 'link' between Davidson/Norris and the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation.

During his interview with the IPCC, Mr Putnam stated that he told members of his family and friends about the relationship between Davidson and Clifford Norris. As part of the IPCC investigation Mr Putnam's wife, sister, mother and her partner and a family friend were all interviewed and provided statements. With the passage of time it has been difficult to establish exactly what and when Mr Putnam told his family and friends, about the case but it is clear that he has mentioned the Lawrence murder investigation and allegations of 'corruption' to them all, he also told his wife that he had informed the debriefers. Mr Putnam's wife also stated she spoke to the BBC reporter Mr Graeme McLagan about Neil's allegations of 'corruption' when he saw her

whilst making the programme *'Bent Coppers'*.

Mr McLagan was interviewed by the IPCC investigation team. He gave the history of the Panorama programme, *'Bent Coppers'*. He confirmed that both Neil Putnam and his wife had mentioned that ex-Detective Sergeant Davidson was involved in 'corruption', but at no time did they make any reference to any 'corrupt links' between Clifford Norris and Davidson.

The IPCC investigation obtained from the BBC the unused footage of the Panorama programme *'Bent Coppers'* broadcast in 2000. This included DVD recordings and transcripts of the interviews between Mr McLagan and Mr Putnam.

During his interviews Mr Putnam clearly mentioned Davidson and his involvement on the Stephen Lawrence investigation. He was asked why Davidson was not prosecuted for his role in *'Operation Russia'*. Putnam informed Mr McLagan that he had been told that it was not in the public interest for him to be prosecuted because of his involvement in the Stephen Lawrence investigation.

Putnam was asked about the role that Davidson performed on the Lawrence investigation. *"Well he'd been the Family Liaison Officer. I understood, and I think that he'd been involved in some sort of corruption that they had uncovered in that. But they wasn't party to what it was or told, but they said it wasn't in the public interest, and that was told to me by CIB3 Officers."*

During the interview Mr McLagan questioned Putnam further in respect of the 'corruption' aspect, stating that *"the Lawrence Family had always said that there was corruption, some kind of corruption was involved in that whole case, and here would be evidence that one of the officers involved was..."* Before the question appears to have been completed Mr Putnam responded by confirming that 'corrupt acts' between him and Davidson had taken place, but he said *"I don't know what the allegation was against him on the Lawrence Inquiry."*

The interview with Mr McLagan and Mr Putnam took place in 2000, two years after his interview by CIB3 officers. Mr Putnam made no mention of the 'Clifford Norris / Davidson link' to Mr McLagan. There was however reference

to David Norris (deceased). Mr McLagan confirmed this to the IPCC investigation team.

In respect of the allegation of 'corruption' involving Davidson whilst working on the Lawrence investigation. He was criticised in relation to the handling of an informant using the pseudonym 'James Grant'. 'James Grant' was the member of the public who contacted detectives investigating the murder of Stephen at a very early stage of the Investigation. He gave police information concerning the named suspects.

The fact that 'James Grant' was providing information to the Police required that he should have been registered as an informant, in accordance with the procedures in place at the time (1993).

From evidence given to the Public Inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence it is clear that there was criticism of the way the informant was handled and also the procedures followed in respect of registration.

During his interview for the programme, *'The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence'*, Mr Putnam again made the allegation that Davidson had not been prosecuted in order to protect the Metropolitan Police because of his involvement on the Lawrence investigation. As part of the IPCC investigation into the allegations made by Neil Putnam, inquiries have been made with the Crown Prosecution Service ("CPS") in respect of the decision not to prosecute John Davidson.

Davidson was interviewed by the *'Operation Russia'* team in September 1998. This followed disclosures made by Neil Putnam in his debriefing sessions. There were three specific allegations against Davidson:

- the disposal of two stolen watches given to him by Putnam:
- the handling of stolen electrical equipment following the theft and recovery of a lorry owned by a mail order company: and
- the theft of cocaine from a drug dealer.

The CPS *Visa Team* were of the opinion that it was the lack of corroborative evidence which resulted in their decision not to prosecute Davidson, rather

than a 'public interest' reason. Indeed, the CPS view was that had there been independent evidence, the likelihood was that Davidson would have been charged.

So the assertion made to both Mr McLagan and Mr Daly that Davidson was not charged because it was not in the Metropolitan Police's interest, owing to his involvement in the Lawrence murder investigation is not sustainable.

Neil Putnam also advised the IPCC investigation team that he had also told the producer on the Panorama programme '*Bent Coppers*' about the 'allegation'. The producer of the programme has since left the BBC and is now living in Hong Kong. The producer of the programme has been contacted by the IPCC investigation team. She recalled that although Mr McLagan was keen to expose other allegedly 'corrupt' officers, including Davidson, it had not been possible due to legal constraints. She also stated that it was difficult to recall details due to the passage of time; however she does not recall Neil Putnam telling her of the 'corrupt link' between Davidson / Norris and the Stephen Lawrence murder.

Two further people, who Neil Putnam stated he had informed about the 'allegation' or had requested to be updated about the progress of the investigation, were a Detective Inspector from CIB3 and former Detective Chief Inspector Simon Cousins.

Mr Cousins retired from the MPS in 2004 and is now a Senior Investigator with the IPCC. Apart from being interviewed in relation to the investigation, Mr Cousins has taken no part in this investigation.

Mr Putnam met both Mr Cousins and the Detective Inspector at a service station on the M25 in September 2000. The Detective Inspector was part of the '*Operation Russia*' investigation. Mr Cousins was in charge of the Witness Protection Unit. Both deny that Putnam mentioned the Lawrence murder investigation when he was seen. Indeed Mr Cousins stated that the contents of any conversation would have been recorded on a 'contact sheet'.

Inquiries with the MPS resulted in the Witness Protection file being examined and a 'contact sheet' for a meeting between Putnam, Cousins and the Detective Inspector for 20 September 2000 was traced. The 'contact sheet'

did not include any reference to Stephen Lawrence.

It should be noted that the meeting with the two officers occurred in September 2000, this is the same time that Mr Putnam was being interviewed by the BBC (Mr McLagan). As previously mentioned, he stated to Mr McLagan that he did not know what the allegation against Davidson was in relation to alleged 'corruption' during the Lawrence murder investigation, yet he is alleging that he asked the two officers what was happening about the allegation he made in 1998, concerning Davidson's alleged 'corrupt relationship' with Clifford Norris.

The senior officers in charge of CIB3 in 1998 were Deputy Assistant Commissioner Roy Clark, Detective Chief Superintendent (later Deputy Assistant Commissioner) David Wood and the officer in charge of the '*Operation Russia*' investigation was Detective Superintendent (now Assistant Commissioner) John Yates.

All three were seen as part of the IPCC investigation.

Mr Clark gave the background which resulted in CIB3 being formed. Mr Clark was adamant that the officers attached to CIB3 would have tackled any 'corruption' that they were made aware of. He gave examples of the type of investigations that CIB3 had been undertaking, including the closure of an office of the 'Flying Squad.'

Mr Clark was also in charge of the South East Regional Crime Squad when DS John Davidson was investigated by the MPS Complaints Investigation Branch concerning his involvement with an Australian businessman.

Mr Wood was tasked to lead the newly-formed CIB3 in January 1998; he interviewed the convicted drugs dealer that instigated the '*Operation Russia*' investigation. In his statement to the IPCC investigation, Mr Wood outlined the process undertaken by the debriefers. He stated that the individual debriefers would pass the information through their line managers. The debriefing officers would not have the overall knowledge that the Senior Management Team had and therefore they would not know what information was relevant to that or other investigations, and as such it would be very difficult for any member of the debriefing team to 'bury' any specific strand of

information, as they would be unaware of the 'big picture'.

Both Mr Clark and Mr Wood deny ever being advised that Putnam had mentioned a 'corruption link' between Clifford Norris and John Davidson in respect of the Lawrence murder investigation.

Mr Yates was the Senior Investigating Officer in '*Operation Russia*'. In his statement to the IPCC, Mr Yates outlines the policy for dealing with Residential Informants and the importance of 'sterile corridors' with the investigation phase.

A former member of the CPS, who in 1998 was part of the '*Visa Team*' - a dedicated team of lawyers working alongside the CIB3 officers) - was seen by the IPCC investigation team. He had conduct of the '*Operation Russia*' inquiry on behalf of CPS. He outlined the close working relationship CPS had with officers from CIB3. He stated that John Davidson was under suspicion. He was aware of the fact that John Davidson was a member of the Lawrence investigation team. He also states that he was aware that Davidson had an association with Clifford Norris and when he saw the programme, '*The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence*', he was not surprised at the 'link' being mentioned.

This was an important part of the IPCC investigation to establish the 'link' between Davidson and Clifford Norris; however the CPS barrister was unable to establish the source of the information that linked the two.

The Queen's Counsel ("QC") who conducted the prosecution in the '*Operation Russia*' case was seen by the IPCC investigation team. His notes contain a reference to 'one of the officers is linked to the Lawrence murder case'. This related to a letter sent by Mr Putnam to his solicitor. The QC could not recall the exact reference which his notes refer to.

Mr McLagan was able to state that he was in court when the reference was made to the letter sent by Mr Putnam to his solicitor, Mr McLagan referred to his notes, and was able to state that reference was made in the letter about a "cover up on the Lawrence investigation" but again nothing specific in respect of an allegation of 'corruption' involving Davidson and Clifford Norris.

The two officers who were part of the debriefing teams and who are still serving officers provided written responses to the 'allegations'.

The officers deny that Putnam ever mentioned to them about a 'corrupt link' between Davidson and Clifford Norris.

There is no evidence to support that Neil Putnam told his Debriefing Officers of an alleged 'corrupt relationship' between John Davidson and Clifford Norris which had influenced the investigation into the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

The senior officer responsible for CIB3 and '*Operation Russia*' has outlined the procedure for debriefing resident informants and has stated that, 'the debriefing officers did not know the overall situation of any investigation', therefore it would have been difficult for them to withhold any specific strand of information.

The members of Mr Putnam's family all indicate that they had been advised of the 'allegations' by Neil, albeit there is some difference in the timing of the knowledge.

When interviewed by the IPCC investigation team, Mr Putnam indicated that he had told or enquired with members of the Witness Protection Unit concerning the 'alleged relationship'. The Witness Protection Unit staff and other named members of the MPS have been interviewed and there is no corroboration for Mr Putnam's statement.

The evidence from the transcripts of the Panorama programme, '*Bent Coppers*', broadcast in December 2000 is compelling in that it clearly provided Mr Putnam with his opportunity to raise the alleged 'Clifford Norris / John Davidson link'. There is no evidence to suggest that he did.

There is no doubt that Neil Putnam told officers debriefing him about the allegations of 'corruption' involving him and John Davidson. He also provided evidence to help convict former colleagues of corruption. It is clear that he also told family members and others, including journalists, about the allegations. The officers involved in the debriefing of Mr Putnam, deny that he told them of any specific 'corrupt relationship' involving Davidson and the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation. Mr Putnam has stated that he also

enquired of a number of officers about the progress of the Investigation into this allegation. The officers that Mr Putnam named have been interviewed and deny that they were ever informed or advised of the allegation. The Stephen Lawrence murder inquiry was a 'high profile' investigation in 1998 as the Public Inquiry was hearing evidence and the Inquiry featured widely in the media. Members of the media and journalists have been interviewed during the IPCC investigation and they have clearly stated that, "if Mr Putnam had mentioned specific allegations of 'corruption' in relation to the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation, they would have acted on this". There is no corroborative evidence to support the allegation that Mr Putnam told any Metropolitan Police Officer of a 'corrupt link' between Clifford Norris and John Davidson or of any specific 'corruption' involving the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation. I am of the view that this 'allegation' is not substantiated.

## **Allegation 2**

### ***The Metropolitan Police Service had failed to advise The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry of the concerns regarding a witness, Detective Sergeant Davidson***

#### **Background**

Stephen Lawrence was murdered on 22 April 1993. There have been a number of investigations carried out by the Metropolitan Police however to date; nobody has been convicted of Stephen's murder.

In 1997 the Home Secretary announced that there would be a Public Inquiry into the circumstances surrounding Stephen's murder.

Sir William MacPherson of Cluny headed the Inquiry Team and Mr Stephen Wells, a civil servant, was Secretary to the Inquiry.

In December 1997, Sir Paul Condon, the then Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, gave evidence before the Home Affairs Committee in respect of 'police corruption'. The Commissioner reported that approximately one per cent (1%) of Metropolitan Police officers was corrupt in some form. The staffing establishment of the Metropolitan Police at the time was 26,000 officers.

As previously indicated, following this disclosure by the then Metropolitan Police Commissioner, to the Home Affairs Committee, CIB3 was formed under the direction of former DCS Wood which led to '*Operation Russia*'.

On 16 March 1998 the Public Inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence, under the chairmanship of Sir William MacPherson began to hear evidence.

On 11 June 1998, *The Guardian* newspaper published a front-page article under the headline "Police Corruption Exposed" and reported the numbers as indicated by Sir Paul Condon in 1997.

On 11 June 1998, Mr Stephen Wells wrote to Sir (now Lord) John Stevens, the then Deputy Commissioner of the MPS, concerning *The Guardian* article. He sought confirmation that the Metropolitan Police inquiry into 'corruption' did

not extend to any officers involved in the Stephen Lawrence case, or any relatives or associates of Clifford Norris, the father of David Norris one of the original suspects in this case.

On 12 June 1998, a letter from Sir John Stevens was sent to Stephen Wells. The letter confirmed that no police officer or former police officer, who has been called or is due to give evidence to The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, is under investigation for 'corruption' at this time.

The letter also refers to an intelligence database, but confirmed that there were no records relating to Clifford Norris or his son David. The letter does confirm that there were some references to a David Norris who was murdered in 1991. There were elements of confusion as to whether the murdered David Norris was related to Clifford Norris. From inquiries made by the IPCC, this confusion lasted for a number of years.

John Davidson joined the Glasgow City Police on 8 January 1968 and transferred to the Metropolitan Police on 29 June 1970. Davidson served with the East Dulwich office of the South East Regional Crime Squad in 1993. On 7 December 1995 he was returned to the Metropolitan Police and was suspended from duty in respect of an ongoing investigation into his association with an Australian businessman. This was a disciplinary investigation. He reported sick on 16 February 1996. Davidson was due to appear before a disciplinary tribunal in April 1998; however he left the Police Service on retirement in March 1998.

He gave evidence to Sir William MacPherson's Inquiry on 24 and 27 April 1998 and was recalled on 16 July 1998.

On 9 July 1998, Neil Putnam was arrested by CIB3. He was entered into the Residential Informants' System.

On 28 July 1998, Putnam gave information concerning the alleged 'criminal actions' of Davidson.

It is clear that Davidson had already given evidence to the Inquiry before

Putnam had implicated him in any 'criminal allegations'. It is also apparent that Putnam had not been arrested when the correspondence between the Inquiry and the Deputy Commissioner took place in June 1998. The evidence of the original source, who provided the intelligence to commence '*Operation Russia*', has also been examined. This person, whilst naming a number of officers from the East Dulwich South East Regional Crime Squad office, did not make a specific allegation against Davidson and in fact only mentioned that they were aware of his name.

On 11 September 1998, the Deputy Commissioner for the MPS wrote to Stephen Wells advising him that a new line of inquiry in respect of the 'corruption investigation' had opened and this implicated Davidson. The letter advised the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry that the information concerning Davidson had become available on 28 July 1998 and Davidson's house was searched on 10 September 1998. The Deputy Commissioner also advised Mr Wells that the information did not involve any connection with the Stephen Lawrence investigation.

On 21 September 1998, Sir William MacPherson wrote to the Deputy Commissioner. The letter addressed the issue of any contact between Davidson, Clifford Norris, another officer referred to as 'XX' and a case involving Clifford Norris and his brother. It is clearly apparent from this letter that the issue of a 'connection' between Davidson and Clifford Norris was a critical issue to the Inquiry. The Inquiry Chairman asked to be kept advised of any developments in relation to Davidson.

There was clearly evidence of a relationship between Clifford Norris and a Metropolitan Police Officer known as 'XX'. This former Detective Sergeant, (who is referred to in the Public Inquiry as Officer 'XX'), was witnessed by a Customs and Excise investigation team meeting with Clifford Norris the day before a planned operation to arrest Clifford Norris and his brother in respect of drugs offences in the 1980s. The Officer 'XX' was later disciplined by the Metropolitan Police in respect of the unauthorised meeting.

The only known link that the Officer 'XX' had in respect of the Stephen Lawrence investigation was the fact that he was one of a number of officers who were assigned to protect a key witness during the private prosecution.

The reason why this officer was allocated to these duties is unknown, but this was clearly unfortunate given his association with the father of one of the main suspects of Stephen's murder.

### **Recommendation**

*A recommendation to the Police Service would be to ensure any officer undertaking such sensitive duties has had no involvement in the investigation or links with key individuals to that investigation.*

The IPCC investigation team has examined the personal files of the Officer 'XX' and of ex-Detective Sergeant Davidson, and whilst both former officers were operating in the detective areas in South London it does not appear that they were ever on the same squad or station. However, it is accepted that police officers are associated to colleagues from other stations and areas.

There is no evidence to suggest that the Metropolitan Police withheld information concerning the integrity of Davidson from The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. In fact, it is clear from the correspondence obtained during the investigation that the MPS ensured Sir William MacPherson was aware of the emerging facts concerning the allegations around Davidson.

### **Allegation 3**

***The allegation of corruption involving Davidson and Clifford Norris the father of one of the suspects implicated in the murder of Stephen Lawrence.***

#### **Background**

The parents of Stephen Lawrence have suspected that 'corruption' existed between police officers involved in the murder investigation and associates of those responsible for Stephen's murder.

The BBC programme, *'The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence'* also raised the issue of 'corruption'.

To investigate alleged 'corruption' that took place some 14 years ago is extremely difficult, and to a large extent has been an examination of what inquiries the Metropolitan Police carried out.

It is apparent that after Sir William MacPherson's Public Inquiry Report was published, the Metropolitan Police appointed Deputy Assistant Commissioner John Grieve to head a re-investigation into Stephen's murder. The Inquiry was called *'Operation Athena Tower'* and was staffed by the newly-formed CO24 Racial and Violent Crime Task Force.

Former Deputy Assistant Commissioner Roy Clark, in his statement to the IPCC investigation, stated that Mr Grieve had concerns that there may have been an 'element of corruption' relating to the Metropolitan Police's failed investigation into Stephen's murder. Mr Clark asked Detective Chief Superintendent Wood to carry out research into any intelligence concerning 'corruption issues'.

Mr Wood confirms that research was carried out following Mr Grieve's concerns.

Mr Grieve was a former Deputy Assistant Commissioner with the Metropolitan Police. He retired from the Police Service in 2002 and he was seen as part of the IPCC investigation.

It has been established that four reports were compiled in 1999/2000 concerning 'intelligence around corruption issues, and links with known criminals'. However, no evidence has been discovered in relation to the 'corrupt relationship' of any officer on the Lawrence Murder investigation.

The IPCC investigation carried out an audit of the role of Davidson on the Lawrence Murder investigation. A number of identified witnesses were written to and requested to make contact with the investigation team.

Only three of the identified witnesses made contact, one of whom was Clifford Norris who advised the team that he had nothing to say to us.

The other two witnesses had dealings with Davidson as a result of the murder investigation; both refer to him as being 'professional' and could also be described as 'imposing'. Neither of the witnesses could give any reason to have concerns about Davidson's integrity whilst on the investigation.

A former member of the Inquiry team into the murder of Stephen and who worked with Davidson was also interviewed by the IPCC investigation team. He stated that he had no concerns in respect of Davidson's integrity.

The murder investigation has also been the subject of a Police Complaints Authority supervised investigation which was conducted by Kent Police.

Mr Robert Ayling, the former Deputy Chief Constable of Kent, Mr David Clapperton formerly of Kent Police who was the Senior Investigating Officer and Mr James Elliott the supervising PCA member, were interviewed as part of the IPCC investigation.

The Kent investigation did not look at the issue of 'corruption' until the final few weeks of their investigation. The issue had not been raised until September/October 1997. Kent Police concentrated their inquiries on the senior officers with the investigation (Inspector and above) and during this limited investigation they found no evidence of any 'corruption'. It should be noted that this Kent investigation did not examine Davidson in respect of any corruption issues.

As part of the IPCC investigation Mr Tom Cook, a former Deputy Chief

Constable of West Yorkshire Police and an advisor to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry was interviewed. Mr Cook was asked about the issue of 'corruption' with the investigation and his view was that the investigation failed due to it being a poor investigation rather than 'corruption'.

The IPCC investigation has attempted to establish a 'proven link' between John Davidson and Clifford Norris. This has resulted in interviewing a convicted murderer currently serving a term of life imprisonment and researching files of retired and deceased police officers.

There are a number of concerns about the 'activities' of a former Metropolitan Police Commander and his link with 'corruption'. Previous investigations have been undertaken and nothing proven against the former officer.

There is no known 'link' between David Norris (deceased) and Clifford Norris. There is a 'link' between David Norris (deceased) and the officers who were investigated by the *'Operation Russia'* team as he was the one-time partner of the convicted drug dealer who provided information to Mr Wood and he was an Informant of the office.

To date the IPCC investigation has not been able to establish a 'link' between Clifford Norris and John Davidson, or any 'corruption' in the original Stephen Lawrence murder investigation.

## **Additional matter**

During the course of the investigation, the IPCC took possession of a Metropolitan Police memorandum entitled '*Operation Russia*' that was dated 14 August 2000.

Contained within the document was the following paragraph: "*Disclosures relevant to Davidson's contact with the Norris family could have an adverse effect on the Commissioner's position in the ongoing High Court action by Mr and Mrs Lawrence. Part of their claim is based on 'Misfeasance In Public Office' and alleges wrongdoing in relation to dealings between police and the Norris family*".

This document was produced by David Hamilton the former Head of the Metropolitan Police's Legal Department.

The history behind the document relates to the fact that Graeme McLagan had been given access to Metropolitan Police files during his research for the TV programme '*Bent Coppers*'.

Mr McLagan requested access to a number of documents, and the MPS Liaison Officer requested guidance on what documents were released.

On 8 August 2000 Mr Hamilton produced an attendance note and the following paragraph is contained within the note: "*In relation to Davidson, it was said that the MPS does not have enough information to justify charging him. McLagan is interested in the connection with Norris and the Lawrence case. I pointed out that revelations in that area could jeopardise our chances of achieving a settlement in the Lawrence actions.*"

A schedule of the information Mr McLagan requested was produced, and on the schedule a column of comments was added.

D573 related to the complaint history of ex DS John Davidson.

The following paragraphs are contained in the comments column; "*Graeme McLagan is aware that Davidson was in close contact with John Donald at the*

*time of that officer's arrest for 'corruption'. He is also aware that Davidson was heavily criticised during the Stephen Lawrence investigation. Davidson was the Family Liaison Officer. Historically, it is believed that Davidson was a co-handler of David Norris (deceased) who was the uncle of Stephen Norris suspected of involvement in the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Mr McLagan is also aware of the allegations made by Putnam of the 'corrupt relationship' between Davidson and Peter Powell".*

*"It is anticipated that 'Panorama' will attempt to show that whilst Davidson was suspected of 'malpractice' he was allowed to leave the Service early."*

(It should be noted that Mr McLagan has seen this document and he has stated that this was not his view.)

The schedule formed the basis of the comments attributed to Mr Hamilton in his memorandum dated 14 August 2000.

The comments contained in the schedule appear to be inaccurate. There is no known relationship between David Norris (deceased) and Clifford Norris. It is Clifford Norris's son David, not Stephen who is suspected of involvement in the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

The officer who submitted the schedule has provided a statement to the IPCC investigation. He states that the paragraph which is quoted in the comments column relate to David Norris (deceased).

Assistant Commissioner John Yates was asked to provide comments on the documents. He is also of the view that it is not the Clifford Norris family being referred to; rather it is David Norris (deceased).

David Hamilton was seen as part of the IPCC investigation and he provided copies of the documentation. In respect of his advice contained within his memorandum of 14 August 2000, he stated that he had a recollection that there was - 'a suspicion of an association or contact between Davidson and the Norris family'- as far as he was aware, that 'suspicion' was never established.

Mr Hamilton's advice (14/08/2000) was relevant to the potential disclosure of

the 'suspicion or belief' that this 'contact' existed. He added in his statement to the IPCC – *“My instructions were to settle the ‘civil claim’ by Mr and Mrs Lawrence as soon as possible. Obviously it would have been unhelpful if unsubstantiated allegations against Davidson had come into the public domain.”*

The former producer of the 'Panorama' programme stated that Mr McLagan was keen to develop other leads within his research and it is known that by the time '*Bent Coppers*' had been produced, the CPS had decided that there would be no action taken against Davidson following a submission of evidence from the '*Operation Russia*' team.

Mr McLagan also states that it was always his view that it was David Norris (deceased) that is being referred to.

The IPCC investigation team contacted Mr Davidson's legal representatives and requested the opportunity to meet with him to discuss the investigation and the 'allegations' made by Mr Putnam. Mr Davidson declined the opportunity and stated he could add nothing to a press release which was issued following the broadcast of the programme in July 2006.

## **Conclusion**

The BBC programme, *'The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence'*, raised a number of concerns about the original murder investigation, the handling of information concerning 'potential corruption' and the failure of the MPS to advise The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry of the 'corruption concerns in relation to a key witness'.

The 'allegations' have been investigated by the IPCC, albeit, some of the 'allegations' are 14 years old, and to a certain extent, the Investigation into some of the issues has been confined to a review of investigations undertaken by the MPS.

We have found no evidence in support of the 'allegations' made during the programme. The former member of the CPS does state that he believes he was advised of an 'association between Clifford Norris and John Davidson' however, he was unable to find any document to source this fact.

During the course of the IPCC investigation comment was made by a number of former senior officers from the MPS that, "CIB3 were determined to investigate any 'allegations of corruption' and had there been evidence to suggest 'corruption' affected the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation they would have investigated the 'allegations' with rigour".