

# Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill

## Fact sheet: Appointment of Chief Constables (Clause 126)

### Background

1. The issue of choosing police leaders is of the highest importance to the future of the police. It was among the matters considered in Tom Winsor's Independent Review of Police Officer and Staff Remuneration and Conditions.<sup>1</sup> It is also a priority for the College of Policing, the new professional body for the police, which has a focus on developing the qualifications, training, practice and procedure for police officers and staff.
2. At present, all police officers join at the rank of police constable. To become senior officers, they work their way through the ranks in UK forces – taking an average of 20 to 25 years to reach the rank of chief constable. Officers gain valuable experience, knowledge and skills during such careers. But these are not necessarily the only skills and experience that can benefit police leadership. In his final report, Tom Winsor recommended three schemes that offer the opportunity to widen the talent pool from which police officers are drawn and bring in people from a diverse range of backgrounds: a fast-track scheme to the rank of inspector; direct entry at superintendent rank; and, for officers with relevant police experience overseas, direct entry as chief constables. Combined with the strong leaders already working in forces, and the improved nurturing of internal talent through the College of Policing, these schemes will help to create a police force that is even better at fighting crime.
3. The Government launched a public consultation on how these proposals could be implemented in January 2013;<sup>2</sup> the response was published on 14 October 2013<sup>3</sup>. The proposed fast-track scheme and direct entry at superintendent rank would not require primary legislation to implement. The Government is therefore working with the College of Policing to take those forward. The provision in the Bill relates to the third proposal, on the eligibility criteria for chief constables, and would give Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) more choice in appointing chief constables for their forces.

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<sup>1</sup> Published in March 2011 and March 2012. <http://www.review.police.uk/publications/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-the-implementation-of-direct-entry-in-the-police>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-the-implementation-of-direct-entry-in-the-police>

## **Eligibility criteria for appointment to the rank of chief constable**

4. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 provides that in order to be appointed as a chief constable<sup>4</sup> someone must have served as a constable in the UK. Tom Winsor's recommendation was that this should be amended to include, as an alternative, service in a role equivalent to a chief officer overseas, in a common law jurisdiction which practises policing by consent.
5. Clause 126 accordingly provides that a person can be appointed as a chief constable if they have served as a constable in the UK or if they have been a police officer in an approved overseas force at the approved rank.
6. It also provides that the College of Policing will be responsible for making designations as to which countries, police forces and ranks can be considered. The designation will have to be approved by the Home Secretary.
7. As part of the wider work on implementing direct entry, the College of Policing has been commissioned to design a process for helping PCCs to manage integrating a chief constable appointed from overseas into their workforce. For example, this could include developing an individual learning package.
8. It will still be for PCCs to appoint chief constables – or for the Home Secretary to make a recommendation to Her Majesty in the case of the appointment of the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service. The provision will not affect the terms and conditions for chief constables.

Home Office  
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<sup>4</sup> Or, in London, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner.