

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND POLICE ACT 2001

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Schedule 3: The Central Police Training and Development Authority

Part 5: Police Organisation

Police Ranks

312. Following a recommendation of the Sheehy inquiry (“The Inquiry into Police Responsibilities and Rewards” published in 1993 (ISBN: 0101228023)) the ranks of deputy chief constable (and the equivalent rank of deputy assistant commissioner in the Metropolitan Police) and chief superintendent were abolished with effect from 1 April 1995. The Home Secretary announced in an answer to a written Parliamentary question on 2 March 1999 that he would reintroduce them at the earliest legislative opportunity.
313. The abolition of the rank of deputy chief constable has given rise to concerns about the selection procedures for assistant chief constable (designate) and the arrangements for the direction and control of a police force. Under the present arrangements an assistant chief constable (designate), has responsibility for managing the police force in the absence of the chief constable. He or she is selected from among the serving assistant chief constables in the force by the chief constable. This procedure differs from other appointments to senior positions which are made by the police authority following the post being advertised and an open selection procedure. Selection by Chief Constable alone may provide an unintended obstacle to the career development of assistant chief constables. The rank of deputy assistant commissioner in the Metropolitan Police which is deemed equivalent to deputy chief constable is also re-introduced in the Act.
314. The arrangements for the direction and control of a force are being improved by providing that in the absence of both the chief constable and deputy chief constable the police authority would be able to temporarily designate one of the assistant chief constables to direct and control the force in their absence.
315. The abolition of the rank of chief superintendent has led to inconsistencies and confusion with many police forces still using the term chief superintendent. It is now considered that there are advantages in having two superintendent ranks in terms of both command structures and personal positions.