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**Subject:** Meeting with Cabinet Office

All

I've just been in the weekly Cabinet Office meeting of Perm Secs and wanted to report a few things back quickly.

1. Simon Case, the new No 10 Covid 19 Perm Sec, sketched out the **new committee structure in place from this week** to replace the MIGs etc. In future there will be:-

- The PM's Strategy Group – first meeting tomorrow
- The Operations Committee chaired by CDL which will meet more often. Today it meets to discuss the shielding programme, tomorrow the Joint Biosecurity Committee.

I asked how UKG plans to engage the DAs in this new structure and Simon replied that the plan is that DAs would be "more often than not" invited to the CDL chaired Ops Committee. No mention of the PM's Strategy Group. I'll follow this up to see if there's a proper plan for regular engagement, but it doesn't sound promising.

2. The main focus of today's Perm Sec discussion was on the summary presented by PHE on their **report on the impact of Covid 19 on BAME groups**. I've attached the slides which provide a helpful summary of the findings.

PHE reported that Covid 19 has replicated and probably augmented existing health inequalities. Whilst the highest risk factors remain age and gender, the review found that – with different outcomes across individual BAME groups - BAME people were more likely to catch C19 and if admitted to hospital were more likely to go to intensive care and die. The Perm Sec DHSC underlined that the report showed how little we actually know about the virus and that the Government can't easily act on it until we understand better the range of risk factors involved (eg population density, occupational risks, comorbidities etc). The ONS will be publishing on 19 June a report looking at the impact of Covid 19 on people in occupations with high levels of contact such as care workers, taxi drivers which should add to our understanding.

The meeting concluded with a powerful discussion triggered by Richard Heaton, Perm Sec MoJ who is the Civil Service BAME champion. He argued that the BAME staff networks in the Civil Service were dismayed by a combination of the PHE report and the inequalities it highlights, plus the US response to the death of George Floyd and a collective silence on both issues from the top. Apparently there's a BBC docudrama on Windrush scheduled for Monday which is likely to increase concerns. So Richard called for strong leadership messages across the Civil Service and more widely to recognise and respond to the depth of feeling in BAME communities on inequalities and injustice. Mark Sedwill endorsed this – Rupert McNeil will circulate some background briefing/points to make. I volunteered the Welsh BAME work community on C19 risk assessment and response as a contribution (Helena – could you please forward it to Alex Chisholm's office?).

*Shan Morgan*