

# ACHIEVING DIVERSITY IN THE FILM INDUSTRY

## CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The BSAC Committee for Ethnic Minority Employment in Film was established in May 2000 at the request of Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The case for developing proposals to increase levels of employment for ethnic minorities in the UK film industry had emerged in 1999 from the Film Policy Action Group, on the advice of Treva Etienne, a member of the group.

The goal must be that the diversity of employment in film should represent the diversity in the population as a whole. It is clear to all who work in the film industry that people from ethnic minorities are significantly under-represented. Many people we consulted expressed frustration or anger that, although the problem of under representation has been recognised and discussed over a number of years, very little has been done.

We publish our report, for consultation, in the context of three important initiatives:

- the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain (The Parekh Report)
- the broadcasters' Cultural Diversity Network
- the DCMS/Skillset Audio Visual Industries Training Group

To some extent we are all inventing the same wheel. It is clear that if you wish to achieve increased levels of ethnic minority employment in film you must set targets and tie the provision of public funds to these being achieved. There must come a time when the Film Council says: "It doesn't get the money if it hasn't got the mix."

The Home Office report 'Race Equality in Public Service' provides an exemplar. In it, the Home Secretary re-stated the targets for ethnic minority recruitment in the Home Office and its services, together with "Current Representation" and "Milestones for Measuring Success" in 2002, 2004, and 2009. The Home Secretary has said that he intends that the Police and the Fire Service should reflect the diversity of the population as a whole within ten years and that a shorter timescale might be expected for some other organisations.

We propose that the Film Council, the BFI, the national Arts Councils, the British Council and all regional publicly-funded film bodies should follow the example of the Home Office with regard to its services. They should set and publish targets for achieving diversity of employment within their own structures and the organisations they fund, to mirror the demographics of the locations where their offices are based. As the

most influential public bodies established to fund and promote culture and cultural services, it is appropriate that they should be required to set demanding targets and timescales. Indeed, the Parekh report recommends that: “Organisations funded by public bodies lose some of their funding if they do not make changes in their staff and governance, and do not demonstrably make their programmes and activities more inclusive.”

Due to the fragmented nature of the film sector, the main facilitators for diversity initiatives in the commercial film sector are likely to be the best-resourced organisations. These are principally the UK broadcasters (already signed up to broadcasting diversity targets), the public film bodies and the UK subsidiaries or partners of the US majors. Since broadcasting and film frequently rely on the same pool of freelance labour, it makes sense for the two sectors to co-operate as much as possible. However, it is important to note that structural differences exist between the broadcasting and the film industries. Unlike the film industry, broadcasting is made up of large stable institutions with relatively predictable income and expenditure.

We expect a main facilitator for diversity in the publicly-funded sector to be the Film Council, which should progressively allocate available public funds to those productions achieving targets for diversity in employment. We propose that the Film Council should establish an Ethnic Minority Employment Action Group charged with responsibility for achieving the target of employment of ethnic minorities in the film industry, in line with the published figures for the ethnic minority population, of working age, within the area where production and business units are based. This target should be achieved within five years through a range of linked initiatives.

We believe that five years represents a realistic timescale for publicly funded film, particularly in the area of production, where permanent employment structures do not exist and units are created afresh for each new film. We also expect that, whilst subject to different pressures, the commercial sector will be fully involved in the action plan proposed here and, taking its lead from the public sector, will deliver satisfactory outcomes within the same timeframe.

We welcome the amendments to the Race Relations Act, 1976 which will introduce, in addition to the duty to avoid discrimination, a positive duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity. The Parekh Report recommends a single Equality Act with provisions which would be enforced by an Equality Commission. The goals of the Act should be: “a) the elimination of unfair discrimination and b) the promotion of equality with respect to sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin religion or belief, disability, age, sexual orientation, or other status.”

It also proposes that all public bodies and institutions, and businesses in the private sector should be required by legislation to develop their own employment equity plans and to adjust these on the basis of regular monitoring. Practical voluntary measures are suggested ahead of legislation. Implementation of these proposals would accelerate the momentum to diversity of employment in the commercial film sector.

The consultation period for this report closes on **30<sup>th</sup> March 2001**. Responses will then be taken into account and a final report will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. We hope that, in the consultation period, leading producers, film companies, the Film Council and other interested parties will come forward with proposals for what they can support in terms of action plans and a voluntary code. We also wish to hear if any of our proposals are seen as over or under-ambitious.

## **Acknowledgements**

Some reports become identified with their Chairman. That would be misleading in this case. I was responsible, with Fiona Clarke-Hackston, Director of British Screen Advisory Council, for setting up the processes for producing a report and chaired meetings of the full Committee. But the bulk of the work was undertaken in four sub-groups, of which we were not members.

Treva Etienne, Floella Benjamin, Peaches Golding and I were to become involved if any of the sub-groups failed to agree. In practice, there were no significant differences of opinion and so we were not required to intervene. Dr Mark Wheeler undertook a desktop survey and drafted preliminary reports. He minuted the Committee and sub-group meetings and assisted with drafts of this report. The final report draws on the work of all the sub-groups and on Terry Ilott's writing and Helen Baehr's compilation and editing skills.

I am most grateful to the Committee, the Chairs and members of the sub-groups. The Committee membership is listed below and members of the sub-groups are included under paragraph 18.

Simon Albury	Chair
Treva Etienne	Deputy Chair
Floella Benjamin	
Dinah Caine	
Steve Campbell	
Diane Freeman	
Peaches Golding	
Terry Ilott	
Alby James	
Frank Pierce	
Rick Senat	
Iain Smith	
Paresh Solanki	
Parminder Vir	
Mohammed Yusef	
Michael Seeney	DCMS Observer

We would also like to thank everyone who offered their views and advice to the Committee and its sub-groups in particular:

Albert Bailey, Film Technician  
Orin Beaton, 'The Gathering'  
Tim Bevan, Working Title  
March Boothe, Distributor  
Colin Codner, 'The Gathering'  
Richard Holmes, Civilian Content plc  
Duncan Kenworthy, DNA  
Joyce Nettles, Casting Director  
Robyn Slovo, Company Pictures  
Janice Turner, BECTU  
William Turner, Sky Movies  
Paul Webster, Film Four

Simon Albury  
Committee Chairman

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report was developed by the British Screen Advisory Council Committee for Ethnic Minority Employment in Film. The Committee was set up at the request of Chris Smith, Secretary of State for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport in May 2000 to develop proposals for ensuring increased levels of employment for ethnic minorities in the UK film industry.
2. The Committee supports cross-industry initiatives and the sharing of expertise, resources and models of good practice to ensure that film responds to changing demographics in its production and employment practices. Due to the fragmented and casualised structure of the film sector, whose leading players are the UK subsidiaries of the US majors and the film divisions of the British broadcasters, there are significant problems for all entrants to the industry regardless of their ethnicity, gender or social class.
3. The Committee, however, recognises that potential employees from ethnic minority backgrounds are likely to experience even greater problems because of what they perceive as the “closed” nature of the film industry and the existing networks of power, which are seen to be composed of “insiders” who are predominantly white and male.
4. The principal concern of the Committee is to encourage ethnic minority employment in the mainstream rather than in the margins of the industry, in both the commercial and the public film sectors.
5. The key recommendation is a five year programme designed to achieve a target of employment of ethnic minorities in the film industry, in line with the published figures for the ethnic minority population within the area where production and business units are based. The goal is that diversity of employment in film should represent the diversity in the population as a whole.
6. To achieve this target, the Film Council should establish a cross-industry Ethnic Minority Employment Action Group with responsibility for delivering the five year programme. This Group should include the public and the commercial film sectors, representatives from the US majors, broadcasters with film production and distribution divisions, trade associations, trade unions and guilds, the large independent film companies and the National Training Organisation (Skillset). The Group will report annually to the Department for Culture Media and Sport.
7. Action Points for the first year are to:
  - sensitise the industry
  - implement monitoring systems

- develop training programmes
  - create an online employment database
  - develop a voluntary code
  - set targets
8. Monitoring of the five year programme is vital to ensure that real change takes place in the film industry. In this respect the Committee recommends that the Film Council Ethnic Minority Employment Action Group should report annually to the Secretary of State. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport should take the lead in monitoring the progress towards achieving the targets and actions proposed in this report so that racial diversity, on and behind the screen, reflects today's multicultural Britain.
9. The Committee invites a wide degree of consultation and feedback from interested parties within the film industry and it is hoped that leading producers and film companies will come forward with proposals for what they can support in terms of a voluntary code.

## INTRODUCTION

10. The British Screen Advisory Council is the only forum in Britain which brings together the full range of interests, experience and controls in the audiovisual industry. As an independent body it provides advice to government at a national and European level on matters of policy. Members include senior management from television, telecommunications and multimedia companies, international film producers and distributors, technical experts and business people with media interests.
11. The British Screen Advisory Council Committee for Ethnic Minority Employment in Film was set up at the request of Chris Smith, Secretary of State for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in May 2000 to develop proposals for ensuring increased levels of employment for ethnic minorities in the UK film industry. Initially, BSAC sought views and input from a wide range of interested constituencies, including trade associations, trade unions, local arts organisations and individuals.
12. The Committee's main aims and objectives are to:
  - develop proposals which will increase levels of employment for ethnic minorities in the UK film industry
  - put the employment of ethnic minorities firmly on the film industry agenda
  - serve as a catalyst for change.
13. The Committee supports cross-industry initiatives and the sharing of expertise, resources and models of good practice to ensure that film, as well as television, responds to changing demographics in its production and employment practices. It is hoped that the proposals outlined in this report will complement the work of the Cultural Diversity Network which aims to increase diversity in broadcasting.
14. A desktop audit of the empirical material concerning ethnic minority employment trends in the UK film sector reveals a paucity in detailed information. At present, most of the publicly available information in this area remains impressionistic and anecdotal at best. Whilst broadcasters have been required to provide figures and policy commitments to conform to their public charters and licences, a similar monitoring requirement has been absent from the film industry. Any initiatives aimed at improving ethnic minority employment levels in film will, therefore, require improved data collection and proper monitoring and tracking mechanisms.
15. The Skillset/DCMS Audio-Visual Industries Employment Census, conducted for the first time in May 2000, has provided estimates of the total employment and representation of ethnic minorities in all sectors except feature film. Skillset is reviewing its methodology so that next year's exercise will provide the first reliable figures on ethnic minority representation in the UK film industry. In order to ensure consistency and comparability, the full 16 Office for National Statistics 'Census 2001' classifications should be used wherever practicable.

16. In publishing this consultation paper, the Committee hopes to provide a framework of proposals which can be taken forward and submitted to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

## METHODOLOGY

17. The film industry is made up of different and distinct functions and BSAC wanted to ensure that these were reflected in the Committee's deliberations and recommendations. It was agreed that the major part of the Committee's work should be undertaken in four sub-groups. Each consisted of specialists who were asked to address the issues relating to ethnic minority access to employment in their particular sectors. Each group agreed on its own agenda and submitted a written report which was adapted to form part of a range of measures put forward by the Committee as a whole.
18. The sub-group reports formed the basis of the main report and the recommendations for the five year programme. The four sub-groups comprised:

- Distribution and Exhibition:

Frank Pierce	Chair
Lavinia Carey	Co-opted Member
Maj-Britt Kirchner	Co-opted Member
Parminder Vir	
John Wilkinson	Co-opted Member

- Production – Creative:

Alby James	Chair
Gurinder Chadha	Co-opted Member
Bonnie Greer	Co-opted Member
Diane Freeman	
Treva Etienne	
Hugh Quarshie	Co-opted Member

- Production – Technical:

Steve Campbell	Chair
Dinah Caine	
Paresh Solanke	

- Production – Financial:

Terry Ilott	Chair
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Andy Paterson                      Co-opted Member  
Rick Senat  
Iain Smith  
Parminder Vir  
Mohammed Yusef

19. The sub-groups covered a great deal of common ground as well as addressing issues particular to their own sector. For example, the Production-Finance group focused on the structural problems of the industry and the lack of professional qualifications; the Production-Creative group emphasised the need to capitalise on the talent that exists; the Production-Technical group focused on the need to take an integrative approach across film, television and commercials since they tend to share the same freelance pool of technical labour and the Distribution and Exhibition group discussed a number of strategies for widening access and encouraging more effective forms of professional development within their sectors.

## **DEFINITIONS OF ETHNIC MINORITY**

20. According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2.2 million people of working age in Great Britain belong to ethnic minority groups. This represents 6.4% of the total working population. Within this total, 610,000 are of Indian origin, 350,000 are from Pakistan, 340,000 are from the Black Caribbean, 230,000 are of African origin, 120,000 are Chinese and 110,000 are Bangladeshis.
21. For the purposes of its work, the Committee defined 'ethnic minorities' as: Black and Asian communities living within the UK including South Asians, Afro-Caribbeans, Chinese and Vietnamese, as well as other non-English language communities.
22. There are problems when ethnic minorities are grouped together as one category where employment targets are being considered. There is diversity within ethnic minorities which needs to be respected and understood. However, it is recognised that all candidates from the ethnic minorities have had significant difficulties in entering the UK film industry due to the particular economic disadvantages which members of these communities often face.
23. The Skillset Employment Census 2000 reveals that over half the audiovisual industry works in London and more than one tenth are employed elsewhere in the South East of England. In London, ethnic minorities make up 8.7% of audiovisual employees and 7.7% of freelancers, compared with 24.7% of London's population of working age.
24. Ethnic minorities constitute 7% of the UK's population. An estimated 80% is between the ages of 16-35, influential with a significant disposable wealth contributing £32 billion to the economy. In London, it is estimated that ethnic minorities will make up 30% of the population by the year 2001 and in the Midlands 12%.

## **THE NATURE OF THE UK FILM INDUSTRY**

25. The film industry is hampered by a lack of reliable employment data. Establishing a system for the regular collection of employment information is a pre-requisite to the setting and monitoring of employment targets. It is hoped that the Skillset Employment Census 2001 and the Film Council's proposed Market Intelligence Unit will provide an accurate picture of the size and shape of the film industry workforce for future use.
26. The UK film industry is a disparate collection of businesses engaged in the development, production, distribution and exhibition of feature films. The leading players in the industry are the UK subsidiaries of the US majors and the film divisions of the British broadcasters. The UK production sector is comprised of several hundred small, independent companies all of which rely, to varying degrees, upon the support of the US majors, the British broadcasters and/or the various sources of private and public finance, including European co-production.
27. The industry is small, volatile, fragmented, high risk, largely unprofitable and undercapitalised. Employment is mostly freelance, contracts are short term. This does not provide the most conducive environment for structured initiatives to promote ethnic minority employment, as there are significant problems for all entrants to the industry regardless of their ethnicity, gender or social class. The focus for employment action plans has to be on what is manageable and practical, building upon existing professional structures and focusing on the significant employers, in particular the broadcasters and the publicly funded film organisations.
28. Due to the fragmented nature of the film sector, diversity initiatives are best led by the best-resourced organisations. These are principally the UK broadcasters, the public film bodies, the UK subsidiaries or partners of the US majors, the National Training Organisation (Skillset), the trade associations and trades unions. The newly-established National Learning and Skills Council will also play a pivotal role, given its remit to develop a strategic approach to investment in training and education from employers and individuals in all industries.
29. Now that the Film Council has been given responsibility for cultural and industrial film policy, the time is ripe for it to take a lead by encouraging diversity of employment in film, as recommended in this report.
30. The Film Council has announced the mechanism for the divestment of public subsidies and development funds, its development strategy for film in the English regions is underway and there is work in progress on a film policy for the Nations. It follows, therefore, that initiatives to increase diversity of employment should form an integral part of this strategic plan.

31. The success of any initiatives taken in the areas of training, equal opportunities, sensitisation, research and active monitoring will depend upon the increased professionalisation of the film industry as a whole. The lack of coherent entry qualifications and clear career structures puts all would-be entrants, regardless of ethnic origin, at a disadvantage. It could be said that ethnic minorities are doubly disadvantaged.
32. There is an expectation that the digital future will significantly reduce the barriers to entry to film production by reducing the costs of distribution and marketing whilst, at the same time, improving the prospects for films geared specifically to minority or specialist audiences. With barriers to entry lowered and obstacles to advancement removed, the film industry could more closely resemble the music industry, which appears to have much easier entry-level access for all parts of the community, including ethnic minorities. It can be assumed, however, that beyond entry level and in the managerial domain, ethnic minorities face much the same barriers to employment in music as they do in film.
33. In the longer term, the Committee takes a mostly optimistic view of the prospects of digital technology for improving opportunities for ethnic minority employment in the film sector. This optimism is rooted in the creative and entrepreneurial vigour of ethnic minority communities and from an expectation of increased access in the digital future.

## **WIDENING ACCESS**

34. The principal concern of the Committee is to encourage ethnic minority employment in the mainstream rather than in the margins of the industry, in both the commercial and the public film sectors. It seeks to remove the barriers, both real and perceived, which have hitherto led to the marginalisation of the ethnic minority communities within the UK film industry.
35. Only through the entry of individuals drawn from ethnic minorities into all levels of the industry, particularly into senior and decision-making positions, can the UK film industry transform itself into a multi-cultural sector which reflects the diversity present in UK society.
36. Currently, there are severe limitations which not only apply to employment for the ethnic minority communities, but to the UK film industry's labour force as a whole. For instance, although the UK subsidiaries of US majors are significant employers in the areas of theatrical and video distribution, they do not have significant production staff in the UK and, by and large, they do not make decisions concerning film investment. However, the UK based production executives of the US majors can influence employment on UK productions, particularly crewing and technical support.

37. Potential employees from ethnic minority backgrounds may have been inhibited from seeking employment in the UK film industry because of its apparently “closed” nature. Criticisms have been noted concerning the networks of power that exist within the industry, leading to the observation that it is composed of “insiders” who are predominantly white and male. Moreover, the overwhelmingly metropolitan nature of the industry excludes many potential (not only ethnic minority) candidates from across the UK.
38. There are difficulties concerning ethnic minority access to UK film production and development funds. In particular, criticisms have been directed at the role of white “gatekeepers” who greenlight and/or commission projects. These problems feed into the broader issues of inclusion for ethnic minorities working within the industry.
39. There is a widespread feeling among ethnic minorities that such gatekeepers and commissioners exhibit stereotypical attitudes which lead to exclusion. These attitudes typically suggest, for example, that Black and Asian filmmakers can only produce films whose content is “ethnically driven.” As a result, these filmmakers find that they are ghettoised.
40. The economics of the UK film industry, which compel films to appeal to the mass market audience, mean that ethnically driven projects are usually judged to be non-commercial.
41. An individual’s career development within film is invariably ad-hoc and fortuitous. For people on the creative side of the industry, such as actors, writers and directors, these difficulties are made more problematic for members of the ethnic minority communities, as their ability to perform is often judged, inappropriately, against the ethnicity of the subject matter.
42. For many members of the ethnic minority communities, the “unprofessional” nature of the film industry contrasts with the clear professional structures which exist in sectors such as law, accountancy and medicine, whereby both educational and professional qualifications provide a clear entry path into employment and career development.
43. The problems for candidates from the ethnic minorities are exacerbated by the particular economic disadvantages which they commonly experience. Put simply, many ethnic minority individuals who might otherwise be attracted to the film industry cannot afford the risks entailed.

## **KEY TARGETS**

44. In order to increase diversity, the Committee recommends a five year programme of linked initiatives to encourage ethnic minority employment in the UK film industry.
45. The programme is designed to achieve the target of employment of ethnic minorities within the UK film sector, in line with the published figures for the ethnic minority population of working age, within the area where production and business units are based.

## **FIVE YEAR PROGRAMME**

46. The Film Council should establish an Ethnic Minority Employment Action Group. This should be a cross-industry body and include representation from the public and the commercial film sectors, representatives of the US majors, broadcasters with film production and distribution divisions, trade associations, trade unions and guilds, the large independent film companies and Skillset. The Group will report annually on progress to the Department for Culture Media and Sport.
47. This Action Group will have responsibility for delivering the five year programme through the implementation of six key initiatives in the first year. At the end of the first year, it should review and monitor progress and agree further targets for the subsequent four years.
48. Action Points for the first year are to:
  - sensitise the industry
  - implement monitoring systems
  - develop training programmes
  - create an online employment database
  - develop a voluntary code
  - set targets

### **Sensitise the industry**

49. The Action Group should consider publicising its work and progress on a regular basis. In the short term, success will depend significantly on measures designed to sensitise decision-makers in the industry. Active and deliberate initiatives, at both regional and national level, are needed to raise awareness and “mainstream” diversity at senior level.
50. The Film Council should play a significant role in raising awareness and disseminating information on diversity issues through industry and public seminars.

These should be linked to the exchange of best employment practice and focus on increasing awareness of the creative talent that is available.

51. Careers advice and guidance should be targeted to help people from a diversity of educational and cultural backgrounds explore the possibilities of working in the film industry.
52. Awareness and sensitisation are greatly assisted by drawing attention to positive role models. The industry should increase its support for awards for achievement among ethnic minorities. In particular, BAFTA and BIFA should consider how they could contribute.
53. Awareness could be further enhanced were producers to familiarise themselves with the creative writing talent from the ethnic minority community. At the same time, they should encourage writers to reflect diversity in their scripts.

### **Implement monitoring systems**

54. The film industry should be encouraged to participate in the annual Employment Census administered by Skillset. The Census plays a major role in gathering and updating information related to employment patterns. In order to ensure consistency and comparability, the full 16 Office for National Statistics 'Census 2001' classifications should be used wherever practicable.
55. All publicly funded film organisations should be required to:
  - provide an annual audit of ethnic minority employment at all levels of their organisations
  - ensure that all development projects and productions, in receipt of public monies, provide statistics concerning ethnic minority employment
  - make compliance with diversity targets a requirement for projects receiving such monies.
56. The Action Group should encourage effective monitoring and tracking mechanisms for those completing film training schemes. This is key to ensuring that opportunity follows training. It is widely believed that ethnic minorities who have received training have not necessarily been provided with sufficient work opportunities to enable them to develop their skills and experience.
57. Skillset already operates post-training monitoring procedures in partnership with the training providers it invests in. This could provide a useful template for tracking the employment of ethnic minorities on completion of training schemes.
58. The freelance nature of the UK film industry creates considerable difficulties in gaining accurate information about the workforce. The collection and dissemination of information on the diversity of employment is vital to identify industry trends and

inform public policy. The Film Council's proposed Market Intelligence Unit, in partnership with Skillset, should be responsible for the collection, analysis and publication of labour market information relating to ethnic minority employment in the UK film industry.

59. All UK publicly funded film organisations should set an example in the recruitment, employment, training and career development of ethnic minorities within their own staff.

### **Develop training programmes**

60. There is an urgent need for a greater focus on funding and investment to encourage specific training initiatives with set targets for the ethnic minority community. The Committee welcomes the positive work on diversity which is taking place as an integral part of Skillset's work, including the administration of the Skills Investment Fund (SIF) which supports the good practice of FT2, Scottish Screen's new entrants training course and Cyfle.
61. All UK publicly funded film organisations should make ethnic minority access, training and career development a criterion for the allocation of funds to subsidiary bodies and client organisations.
62. The Action Group should encourage the professionalisation of the film sector and investigate the possibility of supporting MBA-style courses in film, covering business and investment management as well as the core skills of development, production and distribution. Such high-level validation of professional qualifications could act as an incentive for legal, financial and business administration professionals from ethnic minorities to enter the production finance sector of the industry.
63. All training and education institutions should review their training strategies to ensure that they encourage recruitment from the ethnic minority communities. They should provide on-going support for graduates to help their progression into the industry.
64. Concrete efforts should be made to secure bursaries and scholarships earmarked for ethnic minority students.
65. More provision needs to be made for networking and mentoring schemes.
66. All training organisations should monitor their own recruitment of staff with regard to equal opportunities for ethnic minorities. They should also ensure that a wide degree of information and publicity is aimed at potential students from diverse backgrounds and implement pro-active recruitment policies.
67. Reference should be made to the example of the Director's Guild of America (DGA) model in which trainees work on DGA recognised film productions. Within this context, the DGA has revised its selection process to target minority populations.

### **Create an online employment database**

68. Visibility has been a problem for the ethnic minority workforce as employers have lacked knowledge about the availability of ethnic minority workers in the film industry.
69. A directory should include the qualifications and credits for both new entrants and experienced workers and be the authoritative source for producers and booking agencies seeking to identify ethnic minority workers. It would be available on-line and possibly also in print form.
70. For such a database to prove effective, it will be necessary to provide clear guidelines on self-classification for those workers who wish to be included. To this end, the Committee refers to the ONS definitions of ethnic minorities.
71. Robust systems of validation for quality assurance and control will need to be developed to ensure that the database is a reliable source of information.
72. The Action Group might usefully draw on the experience and resources of "The Gathering" which is a network set up in 1999 with the aim of: "bringing together technical and production personnel with an ethnic background working within the media, film and TV Industry."
73. The Committee is aware that Skillset and the Cultural Diversity Network are developing databases to provide employers with the ability to access ethnic minority trainees and workers. Consideration should be given to integrating the film database with these to ensure it is located in the mainstream of the industry.

### **Develop a voluntary code**

74. Because of the fragmented nature of the film industry, the focus for action has to be on what is manageable and practical. Initiatives should seek co-operation and the exchange of best practice between the commercial and the public film sectors. The Action Group should develop and negotiate support for a voluntary code of best practice to be signed up to by UK film companies and organisations.
75. Companies should be invited to adopt a code to encourage diversity and statistical transparency in the employment of members of the ethnic minority communities. In the code they should be encouraged to:
  - set targets
  - monitor and collect employment statistics and participate in Skillset's annual Employment Census



- allocate responsibility to a senior executive for raising awareness within the company in order to meet targets
- companies with an involvement in script writing, development and casting should allocate responsibility to a senior executive for monitoring scripts and casting, with a view to how they might more adequately reflect a multicultural society and challenge stereotypes
- establish bursaries and scholarships.

76. The voluntary code should be supported by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Productions applying to qualify as “British” should be encouraged by the DCMS to complete monitoring forms, referring to diversity.

77. The Action Group should liaise with the human resources professionals employed by the UK subsidiaries of the US majors to develop a template for best practice, drawn from the experience of their parent companies. Models of good practice can provide a useful insight into how diversity targets are being achieved elsewhere, particularly in the area of “gatekeeping”.

78. The film divisions of the UK broadcasters should apply the same diversity goals and requirements to their film activities as they apply to their television production operations.

### **Set targets**

79. Companies should set their own targets to ensure diversity in film in the context of overall targets set by the Action Group.

80. Companies should collect employment statistics and participate in Skillset’s annual Employment Census. Establishing a system for the regular collection of employment information is a pre-requisite to setting and monitoring employment targets.

81. Companies should share expertise, resources and models of good practice to ensure that they respond to changing demographics in their production and employment practices.

## **TAKING FORWARD THE PROPOSALS**

82. Monitoring of the key targets and the five year programme is vital to ensure that real change takes place in the film industry. In this respect the Committee recommends that the Film Council Ethnic Minority Employment Action Group should report annually to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The Secretary of State should take the lead in monitoring the progress towards achieving the targets and

actions proposed in this report so that racial diversity, on and behind the screen, reflects today's multicultural Britain.

83. The consultation period for this report closes on **30<sup>th</sup> March 2001**. Responses will then be taken into account and a final report will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. We hope that, in the consultation period, leading producers, film companies, the Film Council and other interested parties will come forward with proposals for what they can support in terms of action plans and a voluntary code. We also wish to hear if any of our proposals are seen as over or under ambitious.
84. Responses to this report should be sent to the British Screen Advisory Council, 13 Manette Street, London, W1D 4AW. Tel: 020 7287 11 11, Fax: 020 7287 11 23 or Email: [bsac@bsacouncil.co.uk](mailto:bsac@bsacouncil.co.uk)  
The report will be available on line at [www.pact.co.uk](http://www.pact.co.uk) from 23 February 2001.

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