

## Undercover, with Rob Evans and Paul Lewis

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# Police chief appears to squirm over sex

Police seem to struggle to answer questions on the issue of undercover officers having sex or long-term relationships with activists

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**Rob Evans**

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More squirming from police chiefs today when the question of the long-term or sexual relationships between undercover officers and activists arose in public.

[Jenny Jones](#), the Green member the London assembly, raised what she called the "problematic" issue at the [committee overseeing the Metropolitan police](#).

At times, [Craig Mackey, the deputy commissioner of the Metropolitan Police](#), seemed to struggle for his words when he answered the questions.

He said an undercover officer would not be authorised to start a sexual relationship with an activist, but added the curious caveat "not ordinarily".

Challenged on that, he said : "You can't write a rule for every particular scenario". He claimed that the document which sets out what each undercover officer is authorised to do is not so detailed that it covered the subject.

Many may be surprised that something [which appears to have happened regularly](#) is not dealt with in the rules.

Mackey also said that undercover officers have to report any sexual relationship to their supervisor immediately.

Mackey also repeated the line from the now-departed [policing minister Nick Herbert](#), suggesting that undercover officers could have sex with an activist, since a complete ban would give the people they were infiltrating a way of testing whether they were working for the police.

"It is very hard to write a rule for" that, said Mackey.

Two other things - he claimed that it is the "expectation" of the police that undercover officers will not now engage in long-term relationships.

He said that the long-term [relationships from the past](#) which he called "well-documented" could not happen now, providing the handler was doing their job properly.

UPDATE

A clip of the exchange between Jenny Jones and Craig Mackey has been posted onto YouTube. You can [watch it here](#).

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