

Rt Hon Suella Braverman MP
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street,
London,
SW1P 4DF

Our ref: MOPAC250923-D4723

9 October 2023

Dear Home Secretary,

An inspection of how effective police forces are, in deploying firearms.

I write with regard to the thematic inspection report published by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) on 11th August 2023

The Mayor and I are committed to ensuring that the people of London are protected through the MPS provision of specialist firearms capability.

With regards to specific recommendations aimed at Police and Crime Commissioners:

Recommendation 2:

By 31 July 2024, chief constables should make sure there is access to both specialist strategic firearms commanders and specialist tactical firearms commanders, through a 24-hour rota covering their region.

In regards to specialist strategic firearms commanders the MPS already comply with this recommendation, having one available on call 24/7 across the London region. For specialist tactical firearms commanders there are a number trained, who are operational, but there is work ongoing to get sufficient numbers to run an on call system. MOPAC are engaged and will monitor.

Recommendation 3:

By 31 October 2023, all chief constables should make sure the armed response vehicle asset tracking equipment, as provided by Counter Terrorism Policing, is available and used in their forces. They should train relevant staff in its use.

The MPS comply with this recommendation through a system, which tracks the majority of their armed asset, with staff trained. They are in process of exploring expanding it to specialist areas, such as armed surveillance asset and Parliamentary and Diplomatic Protection.

Recommendation 5:

By 31 December 2023, all chief constables should make sure that all strategic and tactical firearms commanders have observed the firearms tactics and the use of specialist munitions they can authorise, before being operationally deployed.

This recommendation is in progress. At present the observation of tactics is encouraged, but it is not formally linked to achieving operational deployment. The MPS are currently considering how best to implement this recommendation, after seeking clarity on the scope of 'observed' from HMICFRS. Their initial plan would be to include this requirement into initial training for those newly qualifying and then into the two mandatory training days to capture those already trained and to refresh the learning. MOPAC will be kept up to date with progress.

Recommendation 6:

By 31 December 2023, chief constables should make sure that the annual accreditation process for strategic and tactical firearms commanders includes familiarisation with any new weapons systems and observation of any new tactics or specialist munitions the force has introduced or is planning to introduce.

The MPS annual accreditation process requires that the strategic and tactical firearms commanders attend two days of mandatory training. This training includes mandatory college of policing content and content determined by the MPS. This will include any new weapons systems and/or new tactics or specialist munitions. If any updates are needed in between training dates then the MPS training team will send out guidance and follow it up at the next training date.

Recommendation 8:

With immediate effect, each assistant chief constable regional firearms lead should attend all National Armed Policing Portfolio meetings. If they are unable to attend, they should make sure another assistant chief constable armed policing lead from a force in their region attends on their behalf.

The MPS already complies with this recommendation, as their Commander attends the meetings.

Recommendation 10:

With immediate effect, chief constables should improve senior officer oversight of their armouries, including an independent annual audit.

The MPS have undertaken this work and they continue to explore how to improve, using lessons learnt and the new College of Policing guidance.

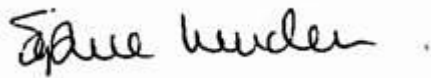
Recommendation 12:

With immediate effect, chief constables, through their armed policing governance structure, should make sure that all armed deployment records are stored and auditable.

The MPS review of this area has been completed with confirmation that all armed deployment records are stored and auditable.

In light of the very recent events in London regarding armed policing, we remain committed to working with the MPS to ensure that armed officers are available in the capital. I hope this provides a useful summary of how MOPAC and the MPS are actively working in collaboration to ensure that the MPS are effective in their firearms response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sophie Linden', followed by a period.

Sophie Linden
Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime