

**General:**

Coverage problems in general are reducing as Airwave and their suppliers improve their understanding of and response to police operational needs, and optimise the network accordingly. The MPS continue to put pressure on them where necessary through a fortnightly technical meeting and a corresponding Airwave Silver meeting. Problems reported by officers on the ground are roughly static, which probably reflects the combination of an improved situation and an increasing number of Boroughs using Airwave, currently 27, but will be all 32 London Boroughs by end September 2007.

**In-Building:**

The DoI are working with the MPS to identify buildings that would benefit from improved Airwave coverage. Once the scale of this is fully assessed a business case can be prepared for further funding in line with other MPS priorities. The process to identify, categorise and prioritise non-police buildings where capability is desirable based on operational need and officer safety is nearing completion. We will then consider how if at all capability can be delivered in those buildings. A similar process will consider capability in police-owned or controlled buildings. A recent visit to an international congress revealed similar problems in other European and other countries, with no obvious solutions.

**Capacity:**

The MPS forecasted capacity demand led to the design of the network to support it, and where temporary capacity is needed, it is installed at cost by the MPS. For example a temporary upgrade to support 5,000 police officers using the Notting Hill carnival talk-group is being planned. Outside of this carnival the capacity needed for the remainder of the year will be significantly less and the capacity reduced. The MPS is also imposing some restrictions on the non-essential use of talkgroups and the use of Airwave telephony in order to reduce the likelihood of officers finding an operationally critical talkgroup busy. A number of critical upgrades completing in September this year will also mitigate most of the current MPS concerns.

**Talk-groups:**

The MPS capacity requirements will always be subject to variation as our operational needs dictate. For example, the MPS has more officers and PSCO's than in 2002 when our original requirements were set. Strict adherence to talkgroup management policies will be essential to allow us to make the best use of the Airwave capacity available to us.

**Interzone:**

The Airwave service in London is provided through a number of zones. The interzone patching issue is a system design problem rather than a service fault that the MPS will need to manage until such time a technical solution is in place. In the interim the MPS

is placing restrictions on patching talkgroups together which represents a degradation in our ability to communicate between pan London units, local units and Central Communications Command during a critical incident. This is managed by a corporate risk assessment and agreed control measures.