



**METROPOLITAN  
POLICE**

**TOTAL POLICING**

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I write in response to your letter dated 19th March 2015 in relation to the Police and Crime Committee's report: Tightening the net: The Metropolitan Police Service's response to online theft and Fraud.

I would firstly like to offer my sincere apologies for our delayed response but felt we wanted to be thorough and give some careful time and thought to your recommendations.

I would like to thank you and the London Assembly for exploring this important area and producing such a comprehensive and relevant report. I know the Specialist Crime and Operations and other officers who you met with as part of the process found the opportunity to discuss the issues invaluable, and I hope they were able to provide you with an insight into how our recent investment in FALCON is starting to deliver real improvements.

I read your report with interest and consider that all of the recommendations are tremendously helpful and cover areas where we too had identified the need for further attention. I especially agree that the scale of the challenge cannot be managed by specialists alone and that mainstreaming our capability will be a priority for us as we develop the service over the forthcoming months.

As requested I have detailed a response to each of the recommendations highlighted in your letter in the attached paper. However, I also wanted to take the opportunity to raise a further point with you.

Since the inception of FALCON we have become better able to analyse the scale and impact of online theft and fraud on the public and businesses. We would agree that there is significant under reporting in this area but, more worryingly in my view, is the amount of reports that are not disseminated to forces for action as this particularly impacts on the public's confidence and satisfaction in the MPS.

As you know the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) disseminate crimes for investigation on agreed criteria that does not necessarily locate an investigation in the force area where the victim lives. In addition the NFIB only disseminate a small proportion of the crimes reported to it. We have recently conducted some analysis of what this means for London victims and were surprised at the results.

In the 3 months Feb - May 2015 the NFIB recorded 10355 reports with a total loss of £85,977,368 where the victim was based within the MPS. In this period only 1331 reports with a London based victim were sent to forces for investigation (12.85%) and of these only 874 (8.44%) were sent to the MPS.

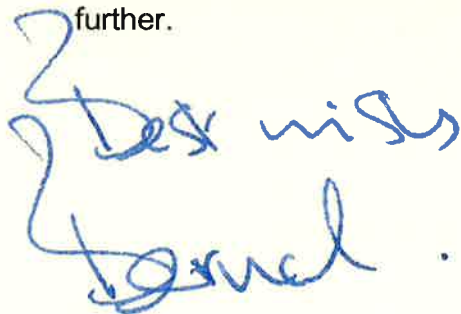
Over the same period the MPS received a total of 5964 disseminations from the NFIB. As such the proportion of investigations referred to the MPS where the victim was based in London was less than 15%.

The reason I highlight this is that if the current system for allocation of fraud reports within the UK is to remain then there needs to be recognition nationally by Police and Crime Commissioners that every force has a significant part to play in order that victims receive an effective service. With online crime being reported in a separate way to all other offences there is a danger that this hidden threat continues to receive less attention nationally than it rightly deserves. I would welcome your thoughts on this - I am of course working with ACPO colleagues and the Home Office to properly consider the implications of this and respond.

I am grateful to the London Assembly and undertake to provide a further update with respect to our progress at an appropriate future date.

Again my apologies for the late response and trust that you are reassured that this is by no means a reflection of the seriousness by which I or the organisation consider and value your report and recommendations and indeed our determination and commitment to tackle online theft and fraud.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office should you wish to discuss this matter further.



**Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe**  
**Commissioner**

MPS response to the specific recommendations from the Police Crime Committee's report: ***Tightening the net: The Metropolitan Police Service's response to online theft and Fraud:***

**Recommendation 6:** *To help the Met to avoid viewing cyber-crime in isolation, MOPAC should commit that its future strategies across all themes will directly address pertinent internet risks.*

The MPS recognises that crime is changing and moving ever increasingly online in whole or in part. The PCC report did, as have we, rightly focus on the biggest growth area; that of online fraud. However it is evident that crime of all types can be enabled by the internet. As such we are working with MOPAC to ensure that all aspects of our strategic delivery recognises, and addresses, the changing face of crime and the needs of crime investigators and those undertaking prevention activity to be competent and capable.

**Recommendation 7:** *Before the Met expands the FALCON command to phase three, it should assess whether it would be more beneficial to operate with a higher proportion of expert civilian staff relative to warranted officers.*

FALCON has embarked on a Police Staff Investigator programme to explore our ability to recruit and train non-warranted staff, enabling them to work alongside detectives to combat cyber crime. Currently 9 staff members are undertaking the programme and this will be used to influence any future development of the department.

**Recommendation 9:** *The Met should identify a senior ranking officer (ACPO level), to be responsible for mainstreaming cyber-crime across the whole of the force.*

I have appointed Commander Duncan Ball to be the ACPO lead for mainstreaming cyber crime across the whole force.

**Recommendation 10:** *In August 2015, once the FALCON command has been operating for a year, the Met should extend FALCON's buddying system outside of the command. For example, police officers and staff based in borough teams could be buddied with those based in FALCON's Volume Fraud Teams.*

The FALCON hubs have already established informal support to borough teams as the FALCON staff share their learning and expertise with their colleagues. Once the fourth FALCON hub opens later this month all boroughs will have a formalised support mechanism in place, with each FALCON hub supporting 8 Borough Operational Command Units. This will include 'investigation surgeries'

where advice on specific enquiries outside of FALCON's remit can be sought plus regular input to staff training days in addition to the 24/7 advice and assistance telephone that the unit provides. In addition the central FALCON teams have been providing briefings to the Mets Central Command Complex who manage our incoming emergency calls and enquiries from the public to ensure members of the public get the correct response when they contact us.

Another area where we have brought previously specialist work closer to the front line is in the area of digital forensic support. We are introducing a new digital forensics operating model with the aim of rapidly delivering data from seized devices to investigating officers across all crime types more quickly. The new operating model provides three levels of service; (1) self service digital forensic kiosks for use by investigating officers; (2) eight pan-London borough based digital forensic hubs staffed by technicians and (3) central laboratory to be based at the new forensic site on Lambeth Road. The investment in this model, which includes the recruitment of 65 new staff, is offset by a reduction in outsourcing costs.

The implementation of the new model, which commenced in April 2014, is on schedule and is due to complete in March 2016. To date there are 19 self service kiosks and a procurement exercise is in train to deliver a further 47, with associated training for officers over the coming months. Four of the eight digital forensic hubs have been opened (Charing Cross, Edmonton, Ilford and Croydon) and the further four to open before the end of the calendar year.

**Recommendation 11:** *The Met should set a deadline for when it wants all staff with public contact and/or investigative duties to have undertaken the cyber-crime e-learning programme. It should also assess whether it needs to extend Mainstream Cyber-Crime training to officers and staff outside of the FALCON command and, if so, by when.*

We absolutely recognise that the ability to respond to and investigate crime needs to be mainstreamed across the force and not the realm of only specialist departments. In October last year we made the four College of Policing cyber crime e-learning packages mandatory for all officers and staff up to and including Chief Inspector rank. To date each package has been undertaken by an average 17,700 officers / staff. We expect that all staff that have contact with the public and / or investigative duties to have undertaken this training by the end of this year.

With respect to providing an enhanced level of training to officers and staff outside of FALCON we are reviewing all of our training programmes including initial recruit training, detective training and supervisor training and where

appropriate are building in a cyber element. We have started with all trainee detectives and the Mainstreaming Cyber Crime training is an integral part of their development. The current course as configured is 5 days long and with other competing training demands on our staff (for example the roll out of body worn cameras) it is not possible to train all staff to this level. We are committed to integrating the necessary cyber elements of this training across our existing and future training provision where it is feasible to do so. We will also continue to work with the College of Policing to develop training material in this area.