

# **Written evidence received for the Budget and Performance Committee's investigation:**

## **Front-line policing**

### **Contents**

The Audit Commission	1
The Value for Money Unit, Home Office	4
The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts Innovation Unit	8
Professor FitzGerald, Visiting Professor of Criminology at the University of Kent	21
The Metropolitan Police Authority, Response to request for information	44

10 September 2010

William Roberts  
Budget and Performance Adviser  
London Assembly  
Greater London Authority  
The Queen's Walk  
London SE1 2AA

**Direct line** 0844 798 2148  
**Email** s-gernon-booth@audit-commission.gov.uk

Dear William,

Thank you for the invitation to comment on the proposal for the investigation into front-line policing.

We have summarised below some issues that we feel may be useful to you in scoping your investigation, drawing from the following sources:

- Key relevant points from the national study *Sustaining Value for Money in the Police Service*, and its associated data analysis tools
- Relevant points from the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) Inspection in November 2009.
- Our knowledge and experience of key issues more widely in policing and community safety.

### General Observations

It may be helpful to define clearly the term front-line; the types of staff this covers, including identification of the front-line activities that do and do not require warranted officers to perform. For example, understanding such issues has helped Surrey Police to make innovative use of mixed officer and civilian CID teams. The MPA inspection identified there are already some good examples of collaborative working to build on, such as the joint funding of PCSOs to increase uniformed presence.

The issue being investigated may be more complex than simply reviewing the number of front-line officers. There is not necessarily a direct correlation between how safe an area is and the number of front-line officers. To ensure that communities feel safer and indeed are safer, it's also important to examine what those officers are doing and what they are achieving.

In scoping the investigation, useful questions to consider may therefore be:

- Do we have a clear understanding of what we mean by the term front-line policing?

- Is our attention focused more widely than considering front-line capacity in terms of officer numbers, so the investigation also considers whether the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) is using this capacity effectively?

### **Key points from the national study *Sustaining Value for Money in the Police Service***

The national study found that there were significant variations in the ratio of police officers to staff in a number of areas. The study concluded that if all forces reduced their officer/staff mix to the lowest quartile, £270 million pounds could be saved nationally, and warranted officers could be freed-up for other duties. Where a force has a relatively low proportion of police staff as a percentage of the workforce, there may be scope to increase this, both saving money and releasing officers for front-line activities.

The study identified that the MPS had relatively low proportions of police staff in the following areas (all 2008/09 figures):

- **Staff working in CID** - The MPS had the third lowest proportion of police staff working in CID as a percentage of the CID workforce, at 1.3%. This compares with Most Similar Force (MSF) figures of 2.5% for West Midlands Police and 3.9% for Greater Manchester. The highest proportion was Surrey Police, at 37%.
- **Police staff involved in training** -The MPS has one of the lowest percentages of police staff involved in training, at 29.2%. This is similar to MSF Force West Midlands (28.8%) but lower than Greater Manchester (39.4%). In some forces, such as Warwickshire, the figure is as high as 79%.
- **Police staff working in criminal justice** - While the number of police staff working in criminal justice and custody was relatively high, at 41.1%, this was still significantly lower than Greater Manchester, where the figure was 57.3%.
- **Police overtime** - Besides workforce mix, productivity is also a key factor. The study identified the MPS had the highest percentage spend on overtime of any Force in 2008/09 at 6.7% (MSF figures for West Midlands were 5% and Greater Manchester 5.5%). Given this high percentage, it may be useful to include consideration of existing shift patterns and how effectively they support the increased visibility of front-line officers. From the MPA inspection, we understood that a review of staff overtime costs was underway. The outcome of this review may also provide useful input to the proposed investigation.

In scoping the investigation, useful questions to consider may therefore be:

- Given the issues highlighted in the national study, is the MPS working with the most effective mix of officers and staff?
- Is there enough focus on productivity and challenging the way the MPS uses its existing capacity?

## Wider Community Safety Perspective

Considering the issue more widely, it may be useful for the investigation to examine how the MPS is engaging with other agencies to deliver safer communities, and how the use of front-line resources is affected by this. For example, there is evidence of the MPS working effectively with Transport for London to improve uniformed presence on buses, trains, and at stations, which led to a 16% drop in crime on public transport.

There are examples nationally of how effective multi-agency working has delivered results, such as:

- West Midlands Police and Coventry City Council working together to tackle street prostitution and drug dealing near the city centre,
- Sussex Police and Brighton & Hove Council working to improve and make safer the night-time environment through using jointly staffed high visibility teams, and providing safe night-bus services.

These examples are not intended as case studies of best practice to adopt, as they may not be directly applicable to the MPS. They do, however, show that effective partnership work can boost the capacity and effectiveness of front-line policing and help deliver safer communities. The MPA inspection identified there is already a good understanding of the partnerships with which the MPA and MPS engage.

However, the significant cuts that are likely to follow from the current spending review could mean that some existing, or potential, joint funding streams may dry up. Significant cuts in partners' spending could lessen the ability of the front-line to deliver. It may therefore be useful to consider which front-line activities rely most heavily on joint funding.

In scoping the investigation, useful questions to consider may therefore be:

- Is the scope of the investigation considering the extent to which multi-agency approaches are affecting current front-line capacity and delivery?
- Is the MPS currently making the most effective use of multi-agency approaches to support front-line officers?
- What risks do the expected public spending cuts pose to the continuing effectiveness of multi-agency approaches? How can any significant risks be mitigated?

I hope that these comments and questions for consideration are helpful. Should you require any clarification, please contact Sharon Gernon-Booth, Associate Director of Community Safety & Policing on 0844 798 2148 or at [s-gernon-booth@audit-commission.gov.uk](mailto:s-gernon-booth@audit-commission.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Sullivan'.

Eugene Sullivan  
Chief Executive

**OPERATION QUEST: SERVICE TRANSFORMATION IN THE POLICE SERVICE**  
**Background paper by the Home Office for the London Assembly**

The principal aims of Operation QUEST have been:

- (i) to support police forces in achieving **significant improvements in performance, value for money and customer service** (securing recurrent cashable savings of **more than £90m pa** to date);
- (ii) to **prove and create belief** that, by drawing upon the knowledge and expertise of frontline staff, it is possible to achieve world class, cost-effective performance, and;
- (iii) to give frontline staff and their managers both formal skills – in data analysis, programme management, process mapping, and re-design – as well as skills they need, in effecting cultural and behavioural change, to make improvements happen and to make them stick.

2. Through supported work in 15 police forces, QUEST has captured the imagination of its target audience, senior police leaders and their staff across the Service, typically bringing strong performance improvement and return on investment of at least 7:1.

3. QUEST has helped the police service deliver lasting improvements in public outcomes and performance. By allowing officers and staff to work out how they can use their time and that of their colleagues to have the biggest impact, QUEST has harnessed the power of the frontline to deliver public sector reform locally.

4. The key deliverable from QUEST is sustainable improvements in capability and performance. In terms of lasting improvements, for example, Suffolk Constabulary has now sustained substantially better customer service for over 18 months, and Merseyside for 24 months. This improvement was even resilient when the Ipswich murders took place at the end of 2006. Sussex police officers have been applying the skills they learned to a range of policing activities: securing improvements simultaneously in custody waiting times, time to attend scenes and the quality of victim care. Similarly, Avon & Somerset Constabulary built its budgetary assumptions confidently upon recurrent net cash savings in crime investigation processes. Annex A provides a range of examples of the impact of this approach on operational policing performance.

5. QUEST shows officers and staff how to effect 'quiet revolutions' through a combination of rigour, discipline and emotional intelligence: it gives staff the analytical and change management

skills to scrutinise and transform working practices, whilst supporting senior managers in fostering an organisational culture in which working level staff are expected constantly to identify new ideas for improvement, and line managers are expected to embrace those ideas. This is the keystone to QUEST's success; it is built on the premise that local front line staff know what stands in the way of their organisations doing the best possible job.

6. QUEST, and *FrontRunner* – the Home Office's similar programme in the UK Border Agency – drew its inspiration from some of the most successful organisations in the UK and overseas. Those bodies, such as Ocado and Hewlett Packard, consistently out-performed the market and their competitors through a programme of Continuous Improvement based on systematic reform of nuts-and-bolts processes. QUEST's strong focus on internal cooperation, with its implied reversal of traditional hierarchy and unremitting focus on quantified analysis and implementation of what works, would be recognisable within the world's most productive companies, as would the 30%+ improvements in productivity that are commonplace.

7. QUEST has enabled police forces to deliver customer service quality rivalling the best of the private sector, and it gives police officers the self-belief that world class quality can be achieved through their own efforts. Officers and staff in 15 forces have demonstrated three types of striking results:

(i) better service for the public – for example:

- hugely improved responsiveness to public demands (e.g. Merseyside Police improved incident attendance by more than 20% in six months, in mid-2006, and has sustained that performance ever since);
- substantially improved public experience of the police (e.g. a member of the public in Lancashire who described the service as “*better than DHL*”); and
- much faster resolution of cases, both improving service quality and increasing the likelihood of successful arrest and prosecution (e.g. West Yorkshire Police reduced crime resolution time in Killingbeck from 47 days to 3).

(ii) increased police productivity and creation of extra capacity – for example:

- Sussex Police has projected £1.4m pa of police officer time savings through the streamlined approach to incident management that their officers designed;
- Wiltshire Police freed up 63,000 hours of police officer time (equivalent to 53 police officers) through improving day-to-day processes; and

- Norfolk Constabulary eliminated a backlog of intelligence reporting, achieving 121% increase in the rate of processing intelligence reports and 82% reduction in the time taken to allocate new crimes to be dealt with by police officers.
- (iii) enthusiastic police officer participation and improvement in morale – for example:
- a strong sense that officers and staff are freed up to focus on what matters (a response inspector in Bristol said, *“This is the best thing to happen for front line officers for as long as I can remember ... it gives us a huge opportunity to support victims and pursue offenders”*);
  - increasing self-belief that the Police Service can acquire and use this kind of approach to address all kinds of challenges (e.g. a Deputy Chief Constable said, *“I have witnessed QUEST delivering skills and knowledge transfer to our Officers. I am confident we are now equipped to be successful ... .”*); and
  - understanding how the Service can achieve these kinds of change (e.g. the Chief Constable of a large force said, *“One of the most profound outcomes ... has been the personal and professional development of the staff from the Force in delivering Quest. ... [The team has] been careful to understand and fit with our values and have been mentors to the representatives of the customer. I expect Quest to make a significant difference to our business processes but the real legacy is in the learning of the people who have been involved.”*).

**The policing environment in Greater Manchester is similar to that in London. Recent examples of Greater Manchester Police’s success include:**

- 28% improvement in timeliness of response to the public in Tameside
- More than 5,500 hours police officer time saved, by Jan 2010, through systematic crime reporting by telephone
- 123% improvement across Manchester in front line officers identifying vulnerable people effectively and taking safeguarding action
- Salford’s outstanding events queue falling from 93 incidents to a frictional 31
- Releasing more than 270 police officers for reallocation to date, whilst simultaneously increasing performance
- Salford BCU alone achieving annual savings worth £2.8m

8. Work is currently underway to support substantial productivity improvements in the Metropolitan Police counter-terrorism command (SO15) and the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), including to demonstrate universal applicability of Continuous Improvement approaches (the armed forces have enjoyed similar successes). A number of further territorial forces are now joining the work, including West Midlands Police.

9. There are very clear success criteria for this work, that we believe would be generalisable to almost any area of the public service:

**Standard Success Criteria for Continuous Improvement in Policing**

- Minimum £-denominated ROI by agreed elapsed time, judged by the following hallmarks:
  - ROI at the following target points (12 months – 1:1; 24 months – 4:1; 36 months – 7:1);
  - Benefits numbers to be robust, signed off by the Finance Director and able to withstand appropriate audit scrutiny;
- Measurable, positive impact on key operational policing outputs, within an ambit agreed by the chief officer team;
- Clarity about where savings are made and how they are used, in a way that would withstand audit scrutiny;
- Have a quantified understanding of the levels of staff engagement and assessment of how the programme has and will affect these, agreed with the chief officer team;
- Effective, explicit local senior sponsorship and Basic Command Unit leadership focused on desired behavioural norms and planned actions, where examples of measures might include:
  - Identifiable team of people, embedded in the front line, to support Continuous Improvement change;
  - Continuous improvement is built into the heart of the business planning and budgeting process;
  - Continuous improvement is reflected in the approach and offerings of the force's training function;
  - There is visible leadership, with a nominated chief officer lead; and
  - There is a reduction and elimination of external support.
- Tangible evidence of Continuous improvement, demonstrated in a resourced, self-reinforcing programme at the local level
  - Visible structure supporting the outcomes of the programme integrated into operational and resource management;
  - Continuous improvement increasingly contributes to our view of what good policing looks like;
  - Police employees and leaders act as enthusiastic public and peer advocates for the work and its success.

Value for Money & Productivity Unit

Home Office

020 7035 1756

13 September 2010



# Brief: Chicago's Citizen Law Enforcement Analysis and Reporting CLEAR

Author: Peter Baeck

Date: September 2010

**Chicago's Citizen Law Enforcement Analysis and Reporting (CLEAR) is one of the top ten examples of better public service outcomes for much lower cost uncovered by Innovation Unit and NESTA, in the report Radical Efficiency<sup>1</sup>.**

**As part of the *London Assembly Budget and Performance Committee's investigation into front line policing* NESTA and Innovation Unit have been asked to deliver an extended brief on CLEAR.**

## Introduction

In Chicago police officers are fighting crime with a badge, a gun and a handheld computer.

Throughout the 1990s, Chicago had been making impressive progress in fighting crime both through a policy of community engagement and by taking the first steps toward automating and digitizing the administrative part of policing. But the police force was still making insufficient progress citywide. Ultimately, the step change in effectiveness was driven by a difficult and important question – why is there still a dearth of detailed information about Chicago's crime networks and patterns after years of investment?

Faced with this question, Chicago Police Department's (CPD) Research and Development team worked with Oracle<sup>2</sup> to create Chicago CLEAR. It allows them to manage crime data better and get new information from CPD officers and the local community.

The success of CLEAR can be explained by its appreciation of the value of information. Digitizing and automating existing services and processes, and moving towards 'paperless policing' CLEAR enables CPD to manage existing information about crime better. At the same time these technological innovations support a dedicated effort to create a culture where the community, other city departments as well as police officers are engaged in constantly updating CLEAR with valuable crime related information.

By increasing the information available to police, CLEAR has made a significant contribution to the reduction of crime through preventative policing. Mapping community concerns and real-time crime scene information enables police officers to better understand where problems are likely to arise, so they can resolve the situation before it gets out of hand. Automating and digitizing services as a part of this process has simultaneously enabled CPD to reduce clerical staff and officer time spent on administration, and increase time spent on front line policing. In the first three year period of CLEAR, CPD estimates it has increased officer efficiency by 20 pct. and reduced crime by 16 pct.

---

<sup>1</sup> You can download the full report here: [http://www.nesta.org.uk/home/assets/features/radical\\_efficiency](http://www.nesta.org.uk/home/assets/features/radical_efficiency)

<sup>2</sup> Oracle is an international software and hardware systems company.

## **The CLEAR model – collecting and utilising information to reduce crime**

The following section describes three key elements of the CLEAR process. The data warehouse, the applications used to access the data warehouse, and the use of Personal Data Terminals (PDTs) to run the applications.

### **I. The Data Warehouse – Foundation of the system**

The CPD has built its own in-house data warehouse, where all data relevant to policing in Chicago is stored. The data warehouse is designed so that people can access large amounts of policing data. The wealth of data is exemplified by the huge number of arrest records in the system, which stood at 5.8 million in 2007. These can all be accessed in a matter of seconds.

### **II. Important applications – Easy access to information**

It is the wealth of information stored in the data warehouse that is the key to CPDs intelligence driven crime fighting. A set of CLEAR applications seek to increase the usability of the data stored in the warehouse so that it can be manipulated to meet CPDs different needs — from generating criminal records for detectives working on an unsolved case to gathering crime data from the community.

#### **a. Automated Arrest System – Streamlining the arrest process**

The Automated Arrest System (AAS) makes it possible for arresting officers to enter and process data taken from suspects while interviewing them. Customised laptops are bolted to interview room tables. Arresting officers input data into the laptops, which instantly links to any information about a suspects arrest history and criminal record, including the department's digital mugshot application and automated fingerprint identification system. The application enables arresting officers to collect 182 different types of data. An additional function allows guards to photograph arrestees as soon as they enter the lock up, and update the AAS with these uploaded images.

Before CLEAR, one arrest involved many different processes and paperwork. The AAS allows staff to enter data for all stages of the process on a single arrest form, meaning that the same arrest form can be used at every stage of an arrest, beginning with the arresting officer, to the lockup keeper, right through to the desk sergeant and watch commander.

#### **b. CLEARpath – Engaging the community in crime mapping**

CLEARpath is a tool used by CPD to empower and engage the community in crime solving. It enables members of a community to map concerns or knowledge about crime in their neighbourhood onto a virtual map on the CPD homepage. The map also gives users access to a database where they can search reported crime and graphs illustrating reported crime in their area.

The data entered by community members is added to the crime maps generated by CLEAR, increasing the amount of data available to officers and detectives, to use in their intelligence driven crime fighting.

**c. Automated Incident Reporting Application (AIRA) – Making investigations mobile**

Automated Incident Reporting Application (AIRA) makes it possible for officers on patrol to enter and complete case reports on their wireless internet networked PDTs, updating the data warehouse in real-time, while they are on the beat. AIRA can also be used from computers on the LAN network in CPD stations. Officers can also use AIRA to access information, for example incident reports, whilst they are at a crime scene or on patrol via their PDTs.

AIRA is the first-line information collection system and is the only application that must successfully interface with the city's portable computer-aided dispatch system (PCAD). By mapping incidents in AIRA and providing real-time crime scene information, CPD have a better understanding of where problems are likely to arise, and can dispatch resources to resolve the situation before it gets out of hand.

**d. eTrack – Digitizing evidence and managing information**

eTrack allows officers, detectives and other people working with crime scene evidence to capture data electronically. eTrack has automated the inventory and tracking of evidence and recovered property. This has significantly reduced paperwork. Capturing evidence and recovered property electronically alone replaces a five-part handwritten form, which was often plagued with human errors. Significantly, eTrack also makes evidence available to more than one person at a time.

**e. Personnel Suite – Managing human resources**

The Personnel Suite is an application used by five of the Department's units: Finance, Internal Affairs (IAD), Office of Professional Standards (OPS), Medical and Personnel. The application is an example of where CLEAR is not being used by CPD to solve crime, but to better manage human resources.

There are three main goals for the Personnel Suite:

- To maintain comprehensive personnel files and avoid redundant data entry.
- To make it possible for employees to manage their own personnel-related tasks, such as requesting days off, or managing time spent on tuition.
- To give managers a tool that provides rich personnel-related data, which provides insights that help them review performance and monitor behaviour.

### **III. Portable Data Terminals – Moving the officer from the desk to the street**

Portable Data Terminals (PDTs) are handheld computers that are used by Patrol Division officers when they are out on patrol or at a crime scene. They are also used by beat officers to share real-time data at community meetings to enter new information that emerges at the gatherings.

The development of the PDTs has been dependent on the success of two pieces CLEAR software: the city's automated dispatch system software, PCAD, and AIRA. In 2004 the PDTs were equipped with PCAD, which now interfaces with AIRA. With this software and application PDTs enable officers to complete case reports and access and contribute information from or to one of the many databases in CLEAR.

Development of the PDTs has passed through several iterations. Originally the PDTs were attached to patrol cars, but they have become mobile in response to officer feedback. The improved PDTs have longer battery life, built in modems and have been 'ruggedised' so that they are robust enough to take out on the beat.

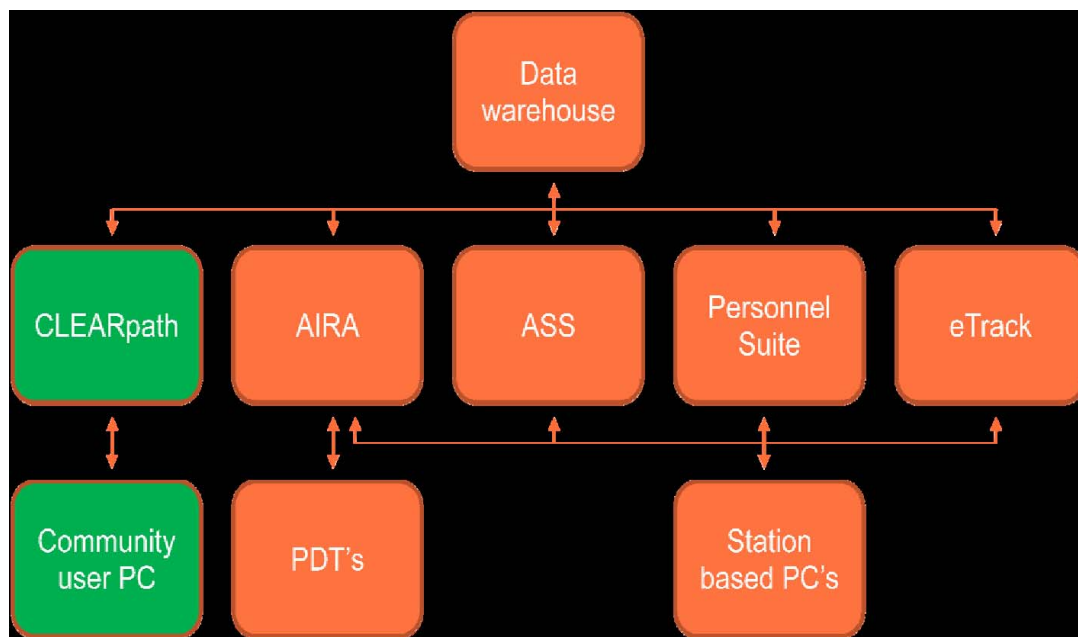


Figure I Data warehouse and application/ hardware relationships (Source: Innovation Unit)

*Figure 1 describes the two-way relationship between the 'data warehouse' server where all the CLEAR data is stored, the application software that allows users to both manipulate existing data and enter new data, and the three hardware 'locations' used to access the applications.*

The applications described above are the most prominent within CLEAR, but none are a finished product. They are tools that are constantly being improved and refined. There are always new applications being developed in response to demand or changes in legislation. The development process for applications is therefore an ongoing and critical element of CLEAR.

## The CLEAR Process

### I. Developing Applications for CLEAR

The development of new CLEAR applications as well as the improvement of already launched applications, is a highly collaborative process. The applications are developed by the CLEAR team which is made up of members of the CPD R&D team, developers from Oracle and critically CPD officers that are trained as developers and bring their knowledge and insight of policing on Chicago's street to the development team.

It is important to note that none of the applications described above started out as the multi-functional complex applications they are today. They started out with a very narrow focus.

The first phase of eTrack, for example, was built to let you log evidence and inventory records electronically with barcode labelling. In the first phase it was not possible to log forensic evidence, gun details and upload digital photos or documents. These were all functions added in the following development phases of eTrack. This iterative process, along with a strong focus on prototyping and piloting before implementation is seen as key to the success of creating multi-functional applications, that can be easily implemented and upscaled.

*Have a tight scope to start with otherwise you will be inundated with enhancement requests and won't get off the ground. Jonathan Lewin, Commander, Information Services Division.*

In their evaluation of CLEAR, Northwestern University describe how there are five stages in developing a CLEAR application, Ideas and Conceptual Development, Joint Application Development (JAD) sessions, Design Build, Training, and Implementation. Each stage is a distinct part of the process and necessary for the launch of a successful application.

#### a. Ideas and Conceptual Development

Ideas for new CLEAR applications can come from a variety of different sources, both within CPD and outside the department. To date, the majority come through the CPD's R&D division and from officers. New applications or improvements to existing applications often come from officers, based on their experience on the street.

#### b. Joint Application Development (JAD) sessions

Once an idea for a new application has been generated a number of JAD sessions are initiated. The objective is to bring together all the potential users of the application for a series of development sessions. The users share their expertise about the environment the application must function in and contribute their knowledge of workflow and demands. These insights are picked up by key personnel in charge of gathering intelligence from the sessions.

Often it takes three to four JAD sessions, each lasting up to a full day to gather the relevant knowledge and insight. When the relevant unit management team has reviewed and agreed the outcomes of the JAD sessions the process then moves on to the design and build stage.



Figure 2 describes the five stages of the application development process.

### c. Design Build

In the design and build phase CPD will often bring in external vendors to deliver parts of the development of an application; although some applications are being designed entirely in-house by officers with programming experience. These in-house developers are a rotating team of frontline officers who “try to bring that street knowledge in to here” (Corey Wojtkiewicz, Police Officer, CPD) and make the system ever more fit for a dynamic policing environment. Once the initial version of the application has been developed it is pilot tested at different sites to detect any errors or missing functionalities. Applications are piloted in three phases, first with a few officers, say in two patrol cars, then with whole units and then districtwide. As the application is tested at each stage the functionality of an application is challenge and refined. Focus groups are held to capture feedback about flaws, errors or missing items which is continually fed back to developers.

To create awareness about an application and ensure buy-in from users the applications are marketed internally after the design process has been completed.

Jonathan Lewin, the commander currently leading the work, attributes the ultimate success of the project to one key factor: engagement, of both frontline staff and the local community in the design, development and goals of the final product. For example during the development of Clearpath “it took a multi-year development effort that involved three police districts, community organizations, youth groups, businesses, residents schools, to develop a set of functional requirements that the community would agree on”.

#### **d. Training**

Depending on how complex a new application is, a suitable level of training is delivered to CPD staff. The training varies from the very basic; where users can self train by reading instructions, watching a video shared on the CPD intranet, to more complex onsite training. The latter is often delivered by mentors who have been trained by application experts, and then deliver training to their respective units.

#### **e. Implementation**

Once the application reaches the implementation stage it should run smoothly, as all errors will have been identified and fixed at previous stages of the process. The challenge at this stage is, as Northwestern University describes it, to motivate users to use the application in their daily work. With successful applications the key to this engagement has been to ensure users understand how the new application can help them be more efficient and effective, and that support is made available in the beginning of the launch to overcome any initial barriers.

## **II. Changing staff and community culture**

At the core of the CLEAR project sits a strategy to engage CPD staff and the community. Without this engagement CLEAR would not be able to maintain relevance for users through continual feedback loops and improvements. The question was how to achieve this, a particular challenge in the context of a distrustful community and skeptical frontline officers following years of similar but unsuccessful projects. The challenge has both demanded a change in internal staff culture, and the way CPD engages with the community.

#### **a. Engaging staff actively in all stages of the development process**

In the shift towards a technology driven and ‘paperless’ police force, the biggest challenge for CPD has not been replacing pens with laptops and paper forms with applications, but to win over staff. Based on negative experiences with poor uptake of CLEARs predecessor CHRIS<sup>3</sup>, CPD made it a key priority to have staff on board right from the initial ideas stage, through to the implementation of the applications. By actively engaging staff in the initiation, design and implementation phases of the development process, CPD and Oracle ensured that applications were designed based on staff needs and expectations, and that staff felt an ownership over the applications. CPD believe these two factors have been key in the successful uptake of most CLEAR applications amongst staff.

Applying rigour and resource to the piloting phase also means that once applications are scaled up they have no or very few flaws, which has made it easier for staff to adapt. Surveys have shown that in cases where an application has been rolled out but has not been functional enough, for example because of flaws in the software, staff have rejected it, and have been reluctant to re-engage with the software after the errors have been fixed.

In addition to this CPD puts an emphasis on marketing new applications and providing sufficient training for them. The aim with this is to make users understand how new applications are not an additional layer of bureaucracy, but in fact automate processes, helping to reduce workloads and free up time.

---

<sup>3</sup> CHRIS was the initially CPD crime data base. It was designed without user input, which CPD believes is one of the primary reasons for its poor uptake.



Younger staff have generally been more positive about using CLEAR. This is due to higher levels of computer literacy and more appetite for change. Older staff are more resistant to change. CPD has provided extra training and mentoring from competent colleagues to less computer literate staff members, to gain their support. This continual engagement has led not only to a high-quality system – but greater demand.

*“Eventually people not only embraced it but expected more, and asked why can’t it do this, this and this. Once you put things out there, it’s like opening the floodgates, people not only expect it, they demand it.” Jonathan Lewin*

**b. Community engagement through CLEARpath**

A number of applications and functions in CLEAR are aimed at engaging external users from the community. There are two interconnected aims within the community engagement strategy. By sharing information, for example making crime statistics and incidents publicly available through CLEARpath and engaging with users at local community meetings, CPD seeks to both build up trust with and empower the community.

Community engagement has been part of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy since 1995, when monthly community meetings were held in each of Chicago’s 279 police beats. As the name suggests community engagement is a critical part of the CLEAR project. Throughout the design process of CLEAR there have been extensive periods of community consultation. The final iteration of the design process is CLEARpath — a website and application designed in collaboration with community leaders and is aimed at encouraging community members to work with their local officers to make Chicago a safer place.

CLEARpath is designed to gather information that increases problem-solving capacity; allows CPD to assess communities needs ; makes information sharing easier and more accessible; increases the amount of community intelligence at CPDs disposal; and, allows for accurate crime analysis, prediction and prevention. On the website there are a number of features available for community members, including:

- News Releases and Alerts Archive.
- CLEAR Map – communities can search CPD database of reported crime, yielding maps, graphs, and tables of reported crime.
- Crime Stoppers - a gallery of persons currently wanted, promoting citizens to share information to help CPD fight crime.
- Chicago Police Blog – a forum for commending officers and a space for community input.
- Cold Case Investigations – details unsolved Chicago homicides.

Community members can also sign up for e-mail notification of community safety alerts and beat meetings. Beat officers also interact with CLEARpath via the portable data terminal in their squad cars. Subscribers receive alerts via home or office web access, cell phones and other mobile data devices.

## **Costs, savings and impacts**

### **I. Costs**

The initial period of the CLEAR project (2001 – 2003) cost a total of 44 million USD. The main bulk of this money was secured through a partnership with Oracle who agreed to supply support worth 35 million USD, including assignment by Oracle of more than 20 software developers to work on the project, and 90,500 consulting hours for CLEAR project development. Oracle's reason for providing the funding for CLEAR was a wish to prove that technology could help increase accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in public sector organisations. Building on this it was agreed that CPD would own their version of CLEAR and Oracle would have the rights to the generic version. The last 9 million USD was secured by CPD through a grant from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

After the initiation period (2001 – 2003) CPD estimates that it has cost an additional 16 million USD to keep the program running in the period 2004 to 2010, making the yearly cost of the program approximately 2.29 million USD.

As previously described involvement of users from both in and outside of the CPD sits at the core of the CLEAR approach, both in terms of users logging data and requesting the development of new applications. The potential downside to this is that while it creates a high-quality system it also creates higher demands on the CPD, who are expected to meet the communities' high expectations. CPD estimates that the efficiencies generated by the system enable the force to keep up with this increasing demand from staff and the community.

### **II. Where are the savings and impact?**

By reducing paperwork and bureaucracy and speeding up information flows, CPD estimates that while numbers of police officers have remained constant pre- and post-CLEAR, they have effectively increased officer time on the street by 20 per cent, essentially turning every one officer of the past into 1.2 officers today. In addition to this the CLEARpath application has opened up a wealth of free crime related information from the community that was not previously accessible to the CPD.

CPD estimates that CLEAR has played a significant role in the overall reduction in crime of 16 pct. Chicago experienced during the first three years of CLEAR from 2001-2003.

In addition to this, the digitization and automating of processes within CPD enabled the department to reduce the number of clerical staff by 340 from 2,042 to 1,702 in the period 2001–2003. This is a reduction of 16.65 per cent. More recently the number of clerical staff has gone down to 771. This is not all due to CLEAR but it does represent a reduction in clerical staff of 62.25 per cent.

The impact of eTrack alone, as it is described below by Northwestern University is a good example of this.

*The impact of eTrack's first phase is substantial on many dimensions. From a sheer breadth standpoint, eTrack impacts every individual who might need to inventory evidence – essentially every sworn member of the department. In addition, electronic inventorying offers improvements in officer time-management, legibility and integrity of data, accuracy of disposition and courier accountability. As officers have become familiar with eTrack, they are able to quickly input inventories in less time than it took to fill out the old written form.*

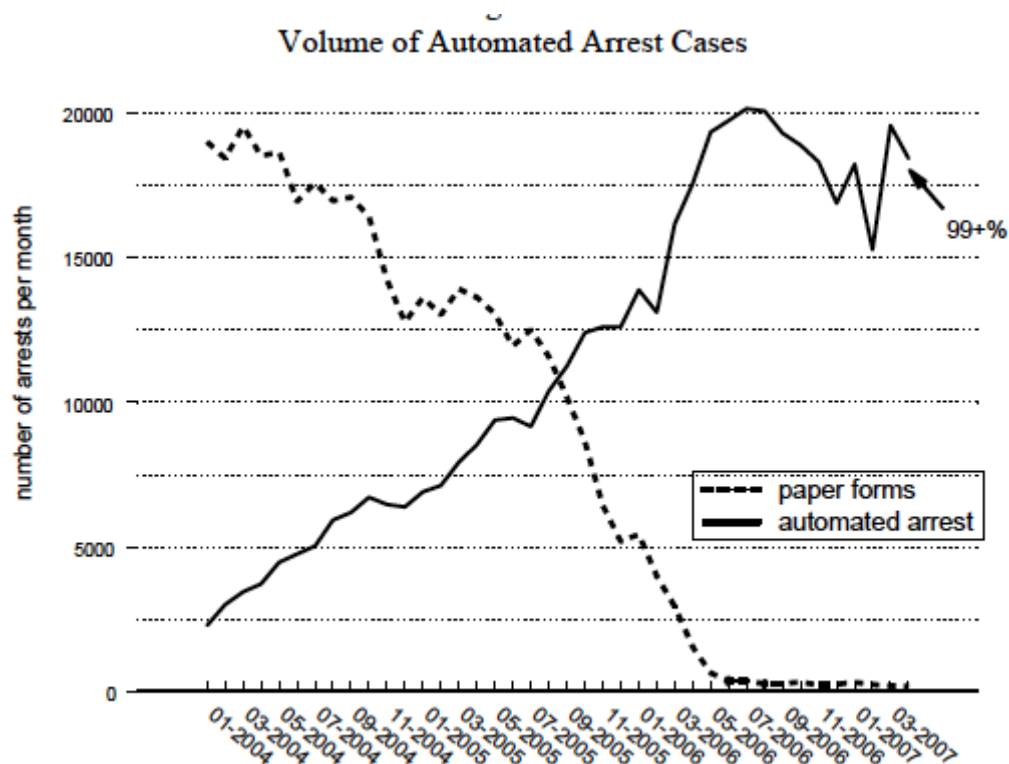
(CLEAR evaluation by Northwestern University on the impact of eTrack)

### III. Adoption and Impact of digitized and automated processes

CLEAR enables police officers to better manage information. This include monitoring gang movements, crime peaks and citizen concerns on the CLEARpath crime map and through this address crime in the city better.

#### a. Adoption

The quick adoption of new applications and workflows from all stakeholders has been a key contributor to the impact from CLEAR. The adoption of the Automated Arrest System is a perfect example of this. As Graph 1 from Northwestern University's evaluation of the uptake of CLEAR below shows from 2004-2006, CDP managed to completely shift from the use of paper based arrest forms to automated arrests through the Automated Arrest System.



Graph 1 Volume of automated arrests

#### **b. Impact**

Furthermore, the automation and digitalisation of processes has helped speed up a number of police administrative tasks, for example:

- Accessing mugshots now take four seconds, a process that before CLEAR could take as long as four days.
- The time it takes to log evidence and seized property has been reduced from three hours to one.
- The time it takes to access and check offender's details has been reduced from 30 minutes to one.

In general surveys of officers it has been shown that they feel that the program helped improve both the effectiveness and efficiency of their work.

*Ninety-two per cent of surveyed officers reported that automated systems allowed them to work more effectively; made their work easier; improved information quality; and increased computer literacy among police. Another positive sign is that more than 84 per cent of respondents – again across all age groups – believe that computer technology has led to improved information sharing among members of the CPD; has increased their effectiveness on the job; has improved police response to crime; and has improved police service to the public (CLEAR Evaluation by Northwestern University [4<sup>th</sup>] evaluation, page 38).*

### **IV. Impact of CLEARpath on the community and police**

In addition to this the partnerships with the community through CLEARpath have had a positive impact on both the community users lives as well as police, A survey carried out by the University of Illinois of police officers and community members on the impact of CLEARpath showed that:

- 92 per cent "felt that CLEARpath would help improve the relationship between the community and the police."
- 90 per cent "felt that it would give residents a greater voice in policing issues in their community."
- 90 per cent "felt that the site addressed one or more of the priorities identified by community residents."
- 84 per cent "felt that CLEARpath was likely to bring more resources to the community."
- 77.9 per cent "felt that the information provided in the website is useful to the community"
- 79.6 per cent felt that "the information provided in the website is useful to the police."

## Conclusion

Reducing crime, cutting costs, increasing officer time spent on the street while reducing administrative burdens, lessening the reliance on clerical staff; and community empowerment are amongst the most prominent of CLEARs achievements. Although the use of technology has been pivotal in reaching all of these milestones, none could have been reached without CPDs appreciation of true partnership working with users from within and outside the department. Together these two elements have played a major part in Chicago's 16 per cent reduction in violent crime over the period of CLEAR's introduction.

Staff engage with CLEAR and the development of applications because they know their suggestions and ideas will be listened to by the developers. Rigorous piloting is undertaken for all new applications, to ensure that all potential flaws and errors are fixed. This is based on the experience of real users, so that when applications are rolled out city-wide they are efficient and easy to use.

By understanding the value of knowledge latent in the community, previously not used intelligently, CPD has managed to build a wealth of crime related knowledge that would previously have been inaccessible. They have achieved this by allowing users to log, access and manipulate crime related information through a series of user-friendly applications. Community users want to engage with CLEAR because it is grounded in their interest, priorities and concerns. CPD does this by meeting community members in their environment and designing the CLEARpath application based on their needs. Through this process trust is built between the police and the community. The end result of this process is that community users engage, actively adding valuable information to the data warehouse.

It is the combination of the above that has been the key to CLEAR's success. By investing in efficiency gains through new technological solutions, and a high level of staff and user engagement in the process, both as co-designers and co-producers, CLEAR continues to go from strength to strength.

## **Notes for GLA inquiry into Front-line Policing in London**

### **Introduction: key questions**

Frontline policing (which I assume refers broadly to the visible presence of the police personnel) cannot be considered in isolation. A large amount of important and essential police work is *not* routinely visible to the public; and it is arguable that in London these less visible aspects of police work make very much greater demands on the service than anywhere else.

This paper, therefore, is concerned with frontline policing – but frontline policing in relation to these less visible forms of police work. As such, it sees as a central question for the inquiry on what basis the MPS *currently* decides the balance of resources between the two and whether that will remain an appropriate basis for resource allocation at a time of significant cuts to the force's budget. It focuses particularly on human resources since staff costs account for by far the largest part of the budget. However, it is also essential to note here that the productivity of both the visible and less/invisible parts of the service depends on an adequate infrastructure in terms of accommodation, clerical support and technology (including office and communication equipment). This effectively constitutes a third strand to police work which does not *directly* contribute to the output either of visible or less/invisible policing but which also needs to be taken into account when considering how best the MPS can manage the cuts it faces.

Frontline policing in London itself comprises a number of different strands. The two most obvious are represented by borough-based response teams and Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs); but other uniformed police who may also enhance police visibility include roving teams which move from borough to borough on demand (usually to deal with public order) and schools officers as well as the British Transport police.

The less/invisible work of the service covers a wide range of functions. In all forces this will include the preventative and detective work concerned with the more serious offences which directly affect only a tiny minority of the population at large (though, for that reason, their newsworthiness may have a profound impact on public perceptions), as well as assistance with prosecutions, including liaison with the CPS and court appearances. It will

cover serious and organized crime and the threat of terrorism, both of which may have an international as well as a national dimension. It may involve joint working with other forces and with specialist national and international policing agencies, as well as liaison and co-operation with other investigative and regulatory authorities. The demands on the MPS with regard to these less visible functions will be disproportionate even to its size for reasons which include the following.

- Many of the issues which require collaboration with other forces and agencies disproportionately affect London simply because it is a capital city of particular international importance.
- The MPS (in part due to its size) holds a level of expertise and access to technical resources which are often unavailable elsewhere.
- As a capital city it routinely has to serve a number of additional functions and responsibilities (most obviously royal and diplomatic protection) which other forces do not.

Striking an appropriate balance between all of these demands on the resources available has never been easy; and a key concern which emerged for me in the course of researching 'Policing for London' was not so much about the balance to be struck between the visible and invisible functions of the service. It related to

- how to ensure the right balance between the resources at the centre and those allocated to individual boroughs
- the basis on which decisions were made about the relative allocation of resources to different boroughs and
- how to safeguard the borough-level resources from undue demands from the centre in such a way as to give borough commanders better control over the strategic deployment of the resources available to them in order to improve and sustain the quality of service to their local residents.

The prospect of significant cuts in resources will require an informed debate about these issues; and the current GLA inquiry offers an important opportunity to force that debate. Based on the foregoing, key questions for the inquiry are likely to be:

- a) What is the optimal balance of resources *within* as well as between these broad strands of the work of the service (i.e. the visible and the less/invisible)?
- b) What is the optimal balance of resources between those available at the centre of the service and those available at borough level, with important supplementary questions around
  - o The basis on which resources are distributed *between* the 32 boroughs and
  - o The extent to which borough commanders (individually and in co-operation with their peers and BTP on cross-border issues) have the necessary control over the resources they are allocated?
- c) How to strengthen and improve the ways in which the invisible and visible strands of police work – both at the centre and on borough – complement each other and thereby produce efficiency savings while enhancing performance?
- d) How can the improvements at c) effectively be measured (i.e. in ways which avoid spurious statistical inferences but are based on robust indicators which will allow the necessary practical lessons to be learned about cause, effect and inter-relationships)?

Addressing these questions will also mean taking account of the service's capability to meet future demands; but that, in turn, will depend on the MPS providing the inquiry with a lot of hard, factual, detailed information about the current distribution of its resources and the basis on which this is decided. Very little of this detail is publicly available from the Home Office sources and from the MPS and MPA websites which I explored for the purposes of writing this paper. The overall picture which emerged about trends over recent years is covered in the next section which is followed by a section looking at the available evidence on the impact of the significant increase in personnel during that period. The paper concludes with an overview of the issues raised to this point, supplemented by an appendix



which summarises them under the headings which were used as a basis for discussion at the first session of the inquiry on 16 September.

## **An overview of recent trends**

### ***The increase in staff numbers***

There has been a huge expansion in police staff since I was researching Policing for London at the turn of the century. This expansion – as is obvious from general observation – has included a significantly enhanced visible police presence on foot; and this has undoubtedly gone a long way to meeting concerns identified at the time of that research. Around the turn of the century – with fewer resources but also in the name of efficiency<sup>4</sup> – the police patrolled largely in cars; and, to meet response time targets in London traffic, they were over-reliant on ‘blues and twos’. This had not only made the police inaccessible: in combination with the prevalence of what the public referred to as ‘yellow boards’ asking for information about incidents of serious crime it was actively fuelling fear of crime. Ironically, many officers we spoke to in the course of Policing for London were themselves only too well of aware of this and frustrated by it.

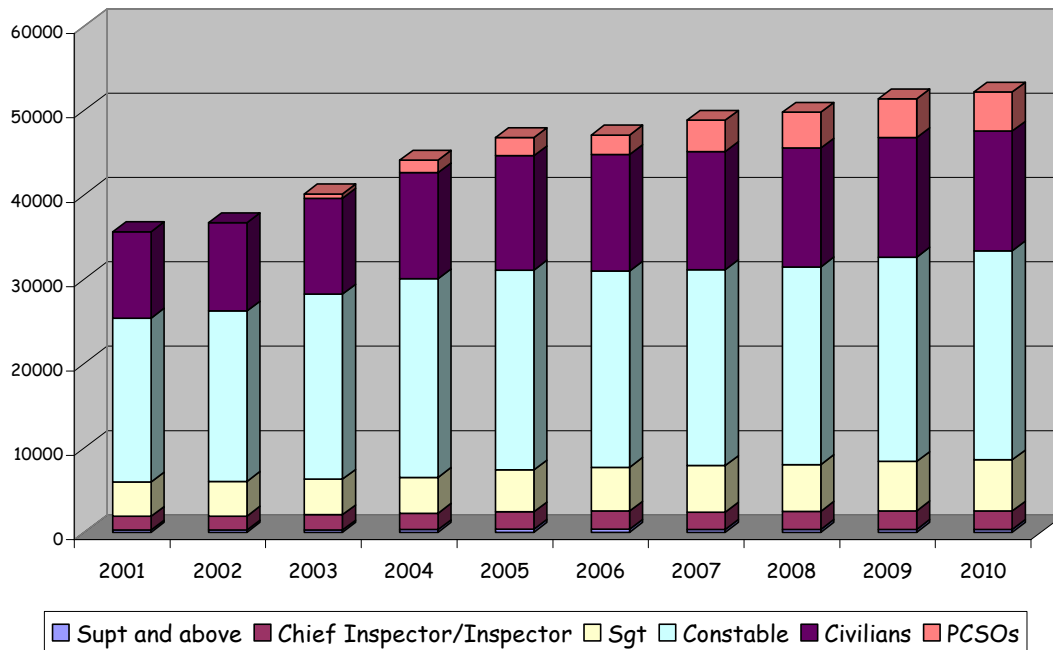
The increases in staff since that time, however, have not been confined to police officers, as Figure 1 illustrates.

---

<sup>4</sup> This was apparently validated by a Home Office researcher who calculated (with self-conscious cleverness) that a police officer on foot would come across a burglary in progress no more than once in ten years service.

**Figure 1**

**Growth in police officers and other staff**



In London, as elsewhere, there has been a huge expansion in the number of PCSOs since they were first introduced in 2003. Compared to other forces, though, it is the increase in overall *officer* numbers in the MPS between 2001 and 2010<sup>5</sup> which stands out. They rose by 31.5 per cent in the MPS over this period, which was more than twice the average increase of 15 per cent across all 43 forces. At the same time, although the increase in civilian staff in the MPS was higher still than that of officers (at 38.5 per cent), this was below average for the country at large which was 42.5 per cent. The inference that the MPS has been slower to civilianize than other forces tends to be borne out by Table 1 which shows that civilian staff in London account for a much smaller proportion of the total strength in England and Wales than do officers or PCSOs. In addition, the unit costs calculated by Dr Tim Brain show that the average cost of a police officer in London in 2008-9 was 19 per cent higher than in other forces; but the joint cost of civilians plus PCSOs was 35 per cent higher. Since PCSOs are cheaper than police officers, this means that, in addition to civilians being much less likely to be employed by the MPS than elsewhere, those who *are* employed are very much more expensive. From this it would seem that the increase in the number of civilians in the MPS in recent years has not primarily

<sup>5</sup> Strictly speaking these figures relate to the financial years 2000/01 and 2009/10.

been geared to taking over routine tasks to free up officers to spend more time on the streets. Rather many of the additional civilians appointed by the MPS have taken over the work of middle ranking and senior officers and/or they have been appointed to newly created posts at middle ranking and senior levels within the organization.

Table 1  
**MPS staff by type**  
**as % total strength England and Wales**  
**2010**

	<b>% of total</b>
PCSOs	27.5
Officers	23.2
Civilians	17.8
Population (estimate)	14

Despite this growth in civilian staff and PCSOs, as Figure 1 illustrates officers still account for the majority of police personnel in London; but, as Table 2 shows, the average increase in officer numbers has by no means been evenly distributed across the ranks. Growth was lowest for constables but highest among sergeants, with the former rising by just over a quarter over this period while the latter increased by nearly half.

Table 2  
**Number and change in staff by type**  
 2001-2010

	Supt and above	Chief Inspector/ Inspector	Sgt	Constable	Civilians	PCSOs	All
2001	251	1,622	4,080	19,422	10,240		35615
2002	260	1,654	4,100	20,210	10,459		36683
2003	261	1,802	4,214	21,954	11,358	513	40102
2004	304	1,948	4,237	23,548	12,595	1,463	44095
2005	359	2,058	4,962	23,694	13,561	2,147	46781
2006	360	2,138	5,187	23,263	13,836	2,315	47099
2007	329	2,066	5,516	23,217	14,016	3,694	48838
2008	339	2,141	5,560	23,421	14,085	4,247	49793
2009	334	2,206	5,855	24,215	14,177	4,594	51381
2010	340	2,170	6,069	24,788	<b>14,179</b>	<b>4,645</b>	52190.44
Net % change 2001-10	35.5	33.8	48.7	27.6	38.5	805.4 <sup>6</sup>	30.1

According to figures available from the Home Office from 2003 onwards, around 36 per cent of all officers are engaged in central services with the remainder (other than a small number at Heathrow airport) distributed across the boroughs; and that broad division appears to have remained constant over time. No further information is available from public sources about how those working centrally divide between departments or the extent to which they are engaged on work which may broadly be described as operational or strategic as opposed to administrative. Nor is there any breakdown of the functions of officers at borough level; so it is unclear what proportion are engaged in frontline posts and what proportion of those, in turn, are members of SNTs or engaged in other types of visible police work.

<sup>6</sup> The PCSO figure is based on a comparison with 2003.

The figures for March 2010 for officers and PCSOs are as shown in Table 3 which ranks the boroughs by officer numbers per (estimated) 100,000 population.

Table 3  
**Distribution of Officers and PCSOs**  
 March 2010

	<b>Officer numbers</b>	<b>PCSO numbers</b>	<b>Officers per 100,000 pop</b>
City of Westminster	1,656	391	671
Camden	889	124	393
Islington	719	117	382
Lambeth	1,042	198	370
Hackney	784	123	368
Tower Hamlets	829	131	365
Hammersmith & Fulham	600	116	356
Newham	826	156	341
Southwark	964	154	341
Kensington & Chelsea	579	164	338
Haringey	734	119	326
Greenwich	711	123	318
Brent	712	137	280
Lewisham	691	119	264
Barking & Dagenham	448	101	261
Waltham Forest	578	114	261
Hounslow	540	109	234
Ealing	728	179	233
Croydon	755	173	221
Wandsworth	619	126	218
Enfield	601	170	208
Kingston upon Thames	337	92	205
Hillingdon	526	114	204
Merton	396	105	195
Redbridge	502	116	190
Sutton	356	97	188
Bexley	406	114	181
Harrow	404	117	179
Richmond upon Thames	335	103	179
Barnet	596	178	176
Bromley	524	169	170
Havering	395	124	170
Heathrow	461	58	N/A
Central Services	12,126	115	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,367</b>	<b>4,645</b>	<b>436</b>

The ranking in Table 3 largely tends to reflect the level of recorded crime per thousand population in each borough. So Westminster is effectively in a league of its own since it has a relatively small resident population but a very high volume of crime affecting the large numbers of non-residents who visit and work there. However the fit with crime levels across other boroughs is by no means exact and some are known to have made representations about being under-resourced relative to others with comparable levels of crime.

The absence of detailed information on the breakdown by function of the various staff make it very difficult to tell whether or not the large increases in personnel over recent years have provided value for money. That is, even if they appeared to correspond with improvements in the MPS's performance, there would be no way of knowing where and how such improvements had been achieved – or, as necessary, to identify ongoing areas of weakness, including activities and functions which are unproductive and might therefore bear the first brunt of the cuts the MPS is facing with little or no deleterious effect on service delivery. However, the main indicators of improvement are themselves crude and the trends they appear to show are often uncertain, as illustrated below in relation to two commonly cited measures of success<sup>7</sup>

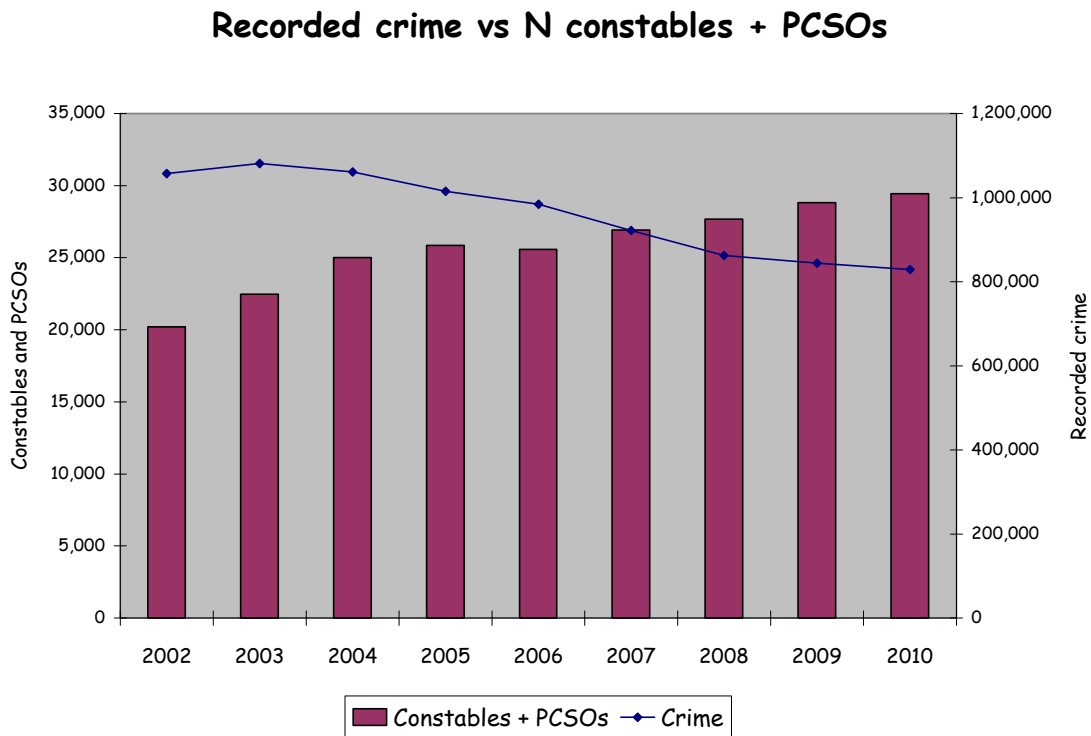
### *Levels of recorded crime*

At first sight, Figure 2 would appear to demonstrate a clear link between the increased number of police constables and PCSOs and a fall in recorded crime; and much was made from the outset of the 'success' of the roll out of neighbourhood policing in bringing crime down. However, the picture needs to be interpreted with considerable caution for three main reasons.

---

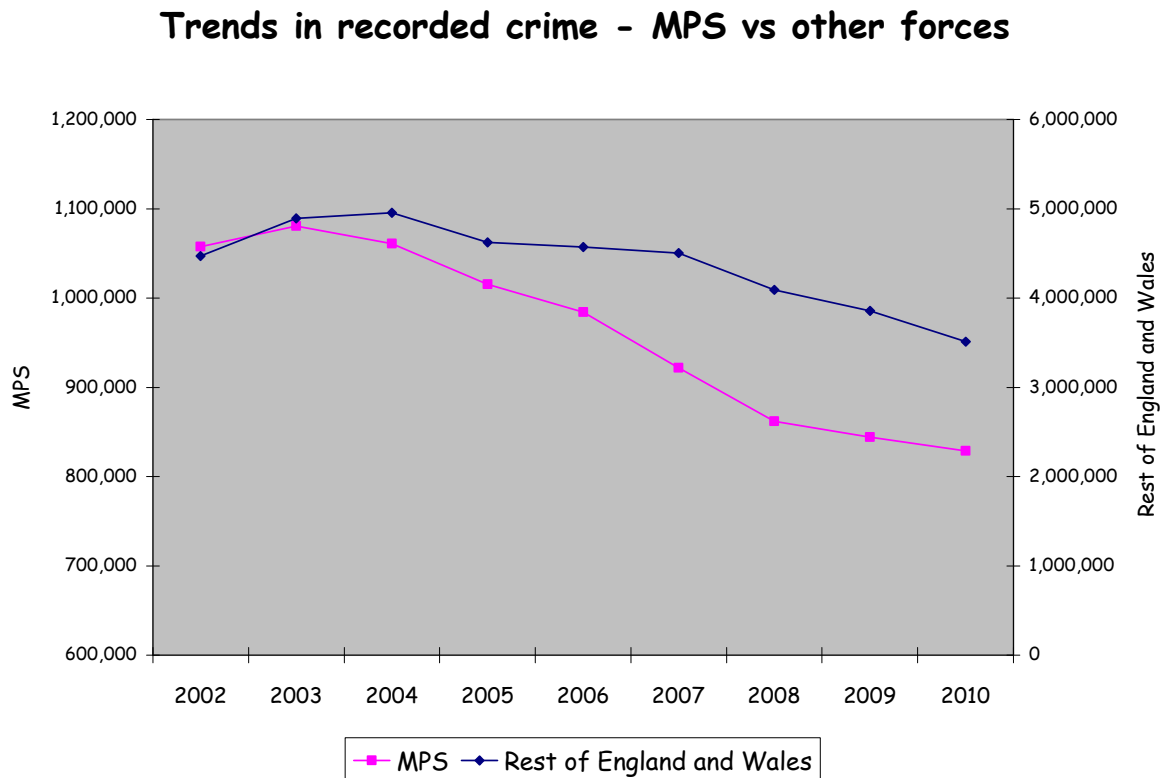
<sup>7</sup> This omits discussion of detection rates which also increased over the period, narrowing the gap between the MPS and the national average between 2003-4 and 2008-9. However, this narrowing has not been driven by the rate of increase in the proportion of offences in the MPS which result in a charge or summons. Rather, the MPS seems to continue to rely more heavily than average on cannabis warnings to keep up its 'sanction detection' rate.

Figure 2  
MPS



Firstly, the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in 2002-3 created a significant artificial spike in recorded crime. This was immediately followed by year-on-year falls as refinements to the NCRS were introduced by the Home Office (and as forces themselves started to exercise their own judgment about what they were required to record). There was some variation in the timing of the impact of the NCRS with some forces adopting it before the formal national roll-out and others slower than average to become fully compliant; but the overall pattern of an NCRS-related peak followed by a decline was common to all forces (see Figure 3). The MPS was one of the forces which appears to have been slightly ahead of the game in adopting the NCRS; but since 2007 it has registered smaller year-on-year falls in crime than other forces, with the figures virtually leveling out over the last two years.

Figure 3



Secondly, at the risk of repetition, even if the fall in crime was *in some way* related to the increase in police numbers, there is no evidence of the specific mechanisms at work. While Figure 2 has immediate impact, plotting the number of civilian staff against recorded crime produces a remarkably similar picture and this should serve as an important reminder that ‘correlation does not equal causality’.

Thirdly, it seems counter-intuitive that an increased police presence on the streets should *immediately* result in a fall in recorded crime. Rather one would expect an increase in crime reports – in particular of lower level offences - both because officers and PCSOs themselves would pick up incidents which would not otherwise have been reported and because (assuming that SNTs succeed in their goal of increasing police accessibility and winning public trust) people would report incidents to them which previously they would not have gone to the trouble of trying to phone in<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> The formal evaluations of the Chicago CAPS initiative do indeed claim success on the basis of falls in crime. However, they give separate results for a range of individual offence types rather than mapping figures for total crime. In a discussion on the BBC News Channel several years ago, the then head of Chicago CAPS confirmed to me that reported crime had indeed gone up when the scheme was initially introduced for the reasons cited above and that that was taken as a sign of success. Over time the trend



### *Public perceptions*

As elsewhere, information about public opinion of the police is measured in the MPS by surveys. In recent years there has been a proliferation of such surveys. Force level comparisons of 'confidence' ratings published by the Home Office have been based on the British Crime Survey; but other surveys within forces at BCU (or borough) level have often produced very different results; and forces (including the MPS) claim that the results of these BCU level surveys are more valid than the BCS in part because they are based on a much larger sample but also because they tease out the very wide range of opinion across different parts of the force area.

In addition, BCU or borough based surveys have now also been conducted on behalf of the Department for Communities and Local Government. These PLACE surveys set questions about people's views of the police in the context of much wider questions about, for example, the extent to which crime and anti-social behaviour are of concern to local residents relative to other local issues and how people rate local authority services. The fact that these PLACE surveys may produce different results again serves to illustrate the uncertainties which attach to *any* surveys. No matter what their size, their findings will only ever reflect the views of a tiny proportion of the local population and they are likely to vary according to a number of factors which are often inter-related including:

- the methodology used
- response rates
- the gender/ethnic/age/socio-economic make up of the samples they generate
- the locations in which they sample is undertaken and
- the immediate context at the time the survey is conducted.

All of these factors mean that different surveys in the same area which ask the same question about the police may produce very different results; but two related points are particularly important to note. One is that people's perceptions may not reflect any general, objective reality (for example about overall levels of crime, detection rates or the numbers of police on the streets). They tend to be formed on the basis of individuals' own

---

stabilized and it was possible to ascribe the subsequent fall to the success of the project, although he also acknowledged that they still had lessons to learn thirteen years on.

experience, what they hear from other people (including war stories and rumour) and, in particular, what is reported in the media. So the second point to consider here relates to the last of the bullet points above; for it may safely be assumed that even without any objective change in the provision and performance of the police locally, the response to survey questions may show a significant change in public perception depending on *when* the survey is undertaken. For example, the views of people interviewed before the G20 protests may have been markedly different from those of comparable respondents in the aftermath when there was large-scale, sustained and graphic media coverage of a police officer seemingly beating an innocent bystander who subsequently died.

The MPS conducts a household survey<sup>9</sup> of 20,000 people aged 16 and over each year, amounting to just over 600 in each borough generated over four quarters. For all of the reasons outlined above, it would be naïve to expect the public perceptions of the service as measured by the survey directly to correspond to the numbers of officer available. In addition, it must be borne in mind that, on average the sample will cover less than 0.3 per cent of borough residents; so the numbers are in any case much too small to capture the very wide internal diversity of many boroughs at ward level. Residents in the most affluent neighbourhoods are likely to have very different expectations of the service and very different experiences from those in the most deprived areas, meaning that responses to questions about the police may vary widely depending on the sampling points used. The obvious consequences may be that

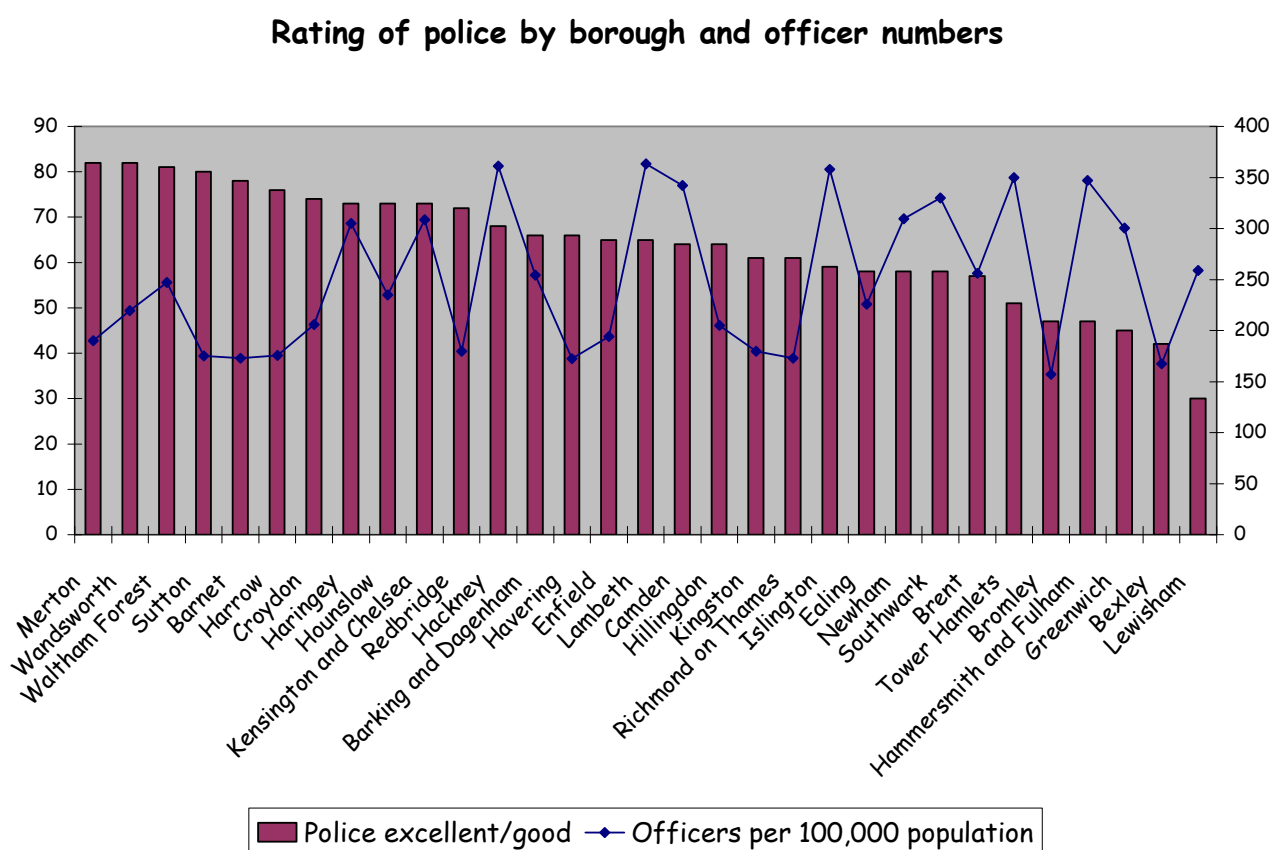
- the results for individual boroughs may appear to fluctuate considerably over time if the sampling points and/or composition of the samples change and
- comparisons between boroughs are likely to be unreliable unless the samples in each are directly comparable not only in terms of their socio-economic and demographic characteristics but also in terms of the types of neighbourhoods from which they were drawn.

• \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>9</sup> Household surveys are more than usually expensive to conduct and what can reliably be extrapolated from their results is necessarily limited not only by the fact that they do not include people who are not living in households, such as the homeless and people living in hostels (such as students in halls of residence). It has also long been difficult to gain access to households in the highest crime areas. Large sections of the population will be omitted in areas with highly diverse populations such as London if the surveys do not cover non-English speakers. And my own analysis of the unweighted samples from a number of such surveys confirms that response rates tend to be much lower than average among young people as well as those living in poorer, high crime areas.

Thus the results currently published on the MPS website show the proportion of respondents agreeing that the police in their area did an ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ job ranged over the same period from 82 per cent in Merton to just 30 per cent in Lewisham. Nor do these differences appear in any systematic way to be related to the numbers of police officers on each borough, as Figure 4 illustrates<sup>10</sup>. Unless the standard of police performance really does vary as widely between boroughs (regardless of the resources available to them) as these results imply, their real significance may lie in highlighting the limitations of surveys. Faced with the need for significant savings this may itself raise important questions about the cost of such surveys and whether they represent value for money.

Figure 4



<sup>10</sup> Westminster is omitted from Figure 4 for reasons indicated above – i.e. that its allocation of police officers is exceptionally high because of its particular place in the capital whereas its resident population is much lower than average.

## Future challenges

While it faces the need to make significant economies, the MPS is also facing an increase in demand on at least two fronts.

Like all forces, it faces the prospect of a rise in crime related to the recession. The existing economic models broadly suggest that in times of recession crimes of violence tend to decrease but property crime goes up; and, since property crime accounts for the largest share of total crime, this means crime overall rises.

However, there is good reason to believe that the increase in demands on the police will not be as great in this recession as in the previous one for the simple reason that patterns of property crime have changed significantly since then. Advances in technology in particular mean that property crime is increasingly taking forms which are either not reported at all, or if they are reported, will not be reported to the police.

Credit card fraud, for example, was already soaring as the government and police were claiming credit for major reductions in domestic burglary and motor vehicle crime which had traditionally been the main types of property crime. Ironically, the major increases in credit card fraud have now begun to level off – not least with the introduction of chip and pin; but they effectively represent only the most measurable tip of an iceberg of new types of property crime. Much of this is perpetrated over the internet which, in the context of crime as in many other fields, has created new opportunities on a previously unprecedented scale. With the increase in online shopping, these have included a global expansion in the market for stolen and otherwise questionable goods which is one important but largely overlooked factor in the reason why property crime tends to rise in recession<sup>11</sup>.

Arguably these developments will pose major challenges in terms of detection work (i.e. they will involve less or invisible policing); and the MPS can rightly cite some major successes in breaking up activity of this type. Ironically, these may not be reflected in

• \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>11</sup> That is, offenders have never engaged in robbing, stealing or committing burglaries purely – or even primarily - to meet their own immediate personal needs but also to feed a market which expands at times of recession as increasing numbers of people are looking for bargains and offers which seem (and often are) too good to be true. The internet has provided major new opportunities for parting people from their money remotely, including through scams which the victims may be too ashamed to report, may not know who they should be reported to or, if they do report them (as with credit card fraud) are unlikely to report them to the police.

improvements in its detection rate, as traditionally measured, inasmuch as many (possibly most) of the individual offences perpetrated by those charged and prosecuted for this type of activity will not have been recorded by the police in the first place (see footnote 10).

The second of the two foreseeable sets of additional demand on the MPS in the near future is, however, significant and will fall very much more heavily on the MPS than any other force (most of which will be completely unaffected). That is the challenge of policing the 2012 Olympic games and a wide range of activities related to them, as described at the recent Police Foundation conference by Sir Ian Johnston and Robert Raine. Significantly, for purposes of this inquiry, Sir Ian noted:

How much of the policing capacity can we divert is one of our main challenges

Implicit in this (as recognized in one of his slides) was that, despite the additional demands of the Olympics, it would also be essential to maintain 'business as usual'. While there will be no easy solutions, this would seem to add urgency to the need to address the perennial question referred to in the opening section of this paper about how best to ensure stability and continuity in the resources available on borough to maintain and improve service delivery to local residents through an appropriate mix of visible and less/invisible police activity.

Two final points to note here are that:

- a) while there is no clear evidence that increasing police numbers necessarily corresponds to falls in crime<sup>12</sup>, there is some evidence to suggest that a sudden withdrawal of police from the streets does indeed tend to be associated with a rise in crime. [I can provide more detail if needed.] and
- b) public demands on the police – including with regard to many issues which are not strictly police business – are also bound to rise as other local services are cut back; for the police is always the default service to which the public refer concerns and complaints where they do not know who else to turn to or cannot reach them.

---

<sup>12</sup> In his recent book on the history of modern policing, Tim Brain highlights Margaret Thatcher's frustration on finding that recorded crime rose at an unprecedented rate despite her unprecedented investment in increasing police numbers.

## Conclusions

Despite the larger than average increases in officer numbers and (as Dr Brain's analyses of CIPFA data show) the much more generous funding of the MPS when compared on a like-for-like basis with other forces, it is difficult to discern any correspondingly greater improvement in its performance. The data publicly available for this purpose are frustratingly limited but they would, at least suggest that the MPS has much more inbuilt resilience than most other forces faced with similar levels of cuts to the resources they have grown used to in recent years.

Before the full details of the cuts it is facing are known, it will be important for the committee to establish a much clearer picture of where and how the MPS human resources are allocated and, in particular, how it has used the significant additional resources it has received in recent years. This picture should then provide the basis for the following two-stage approach.

- First, identify the scope for cutting out or very significantly reducing activity and posts which do not demonstrably contribute in the short and medium term to service delivery (in its many visible and less/invisible forms).
- Second, subject the totality of what remains to *independent* scrutiny with a view to achieving further economies by reducing bureaucracy in conjunction with major workforce re-engineering.

This latter is worth doing in its own right (that is, regardless of the prospect of major cuts in resources) if it is fair to assume that what currently exists has developed piecemeal, with its many disparate elements growing like Topsy during the recent boom years but at different rates and with insufficient reference to each other. A holistic approach is needed which would not only identify and reduce the resulting inefficiencies but also aim to improve co-ordination between relevant elements and thereby improve service delivery at the same time.

Marian FitzGerald  
Visiting Professor of Criminology  
18 September 2010

### **Sources used in this paper**

Home Office:

- Annual Crime Statistics
- Statistical bulletins on police strength at March each year
- Supplementary tables available online re:
  - BCU crime (including population estimates)
  - BCU officer and PCSO numbers

MPS website:

- Current Public Attitudes Survey results for each borough

## Appendix

*Possible implications of this paper  
for some of the topics addressed at the first meeting of the inquiry  
(16 September 2010)*

### Delivering the public's priorities for policing with reduced resources

- *The public's priorities for policing and how police and policy makers should act on the public's consistent desire to see more police on the streets*

The public demand for more police on the streets is perennial and potentially insatiable. It takes no account of the essential, serious but less/invisible police functions emphasized in this paper and which will similarly be threatened by cuts. It also appears to refer primarily to SNT-type policing rather than other types of visible police presence, including the essential role played by response teams when members of the public need specific, immediate assistance – as opposed to simply wanting the reassurance of 'see(ing) more police on the streets.

Faced with cuts

- a) The public needs to be aware of the hard choices to be made and given realistic expectations about their implications for the numbers of officers and PCSOs on the streets.
  - b) The inquiry needs to address how best to strike a balance between the numbers of officers available for this purpose and all of the other essential police functions which need to be maintained resourcing of each.
  - c) It also needs to look at the scope for compensate for any loss in numbers by enhancing backroom support to maximize officer time on the streets and to improve co-ordination between the work of the SNTs and other parts of the service to maximize productivity overall while reducing costs. (In particular it should safeguard SNTs from mission creep which subtly changes their function so that they unnecessarily take on response team functions at the expense of their core community focus)
- *Alternative approaches to front line policing - e.g. crime hotspots*

Officers are already deployed between boroughs in numbers which broadly reflect levels of crime, though there is almost certainly room to question some decisions about allocation. Within borough again one would expect higher concentrations of foot patrols in higher crime areas while ensuring some degree of coverage in *all* areas (albeit bearing in mind that response teams are likely to cover the whole of the area and engage as necessary in some cross-border work). It may be worth checking to what extent this happens and whether it does so on a consistent basis; but simply going back to allocating resources *only* where crime is highest in the name of efficiency will jeopardize the gains which have now been made by the major investment in SNTs. The irony should also be borne in mind that additional police numbers may make little difference to crime but sudden significant withdrawals of the police from the streets may result in a rise.



- *How feasible is it to find a credible measure of front line policing*

To date, there appears to have been a failure to use hard but meaningful *outcome* measures. In particular the opportunity was missed to ensure the impact of the introduction of Safer Neighbourhoods was independently evaluated. Rather, it is arguable that claims for its success have been over-reliant on questionable assumptions about a fall in crime and the results of surveys which are *de facto* limited and which have asked questions to which most respondents are unlikely to give informed answers.

Measures which might have indicated the added value of Safer Neighbourhoods could have included increases which could directly be attributed to SNTs in:

- Crime reports (which initially would have been expected to go *up* before they started to go down)
- Intelligence reports via SNTs which directly contributed to effective action by other parts of the service (including crime prevention as well as detections)
- The extent to which members of the public were willing to co-operate in investigations – from anonymous tip offs to willingness to give witness statements (as reflected not only in improved detections but also charge and successful prosecution).

Unfortunately it will now be more difficult to use such measures because of the absence of baseline ('before') data. However, the last two in particular may still be applicable and it is worth reiterating that more thought could usefully be given to generating these type of real-world outcome measures as opposed to remaining over-reliant on traditional output measures and statistical inferences which may spuriously ascribe causality to correlation.

- *How do you maintain confidence in policing at the time of budget cuts*

There is a real danger that confidence could be undermined by shroud-waving - even without any objective change in provision. Aside from the role of the media (and the public pronouncements by key figures which generate media headlines) frontline officers may have more influence than is often recognized. The attitudes they display in casual conversation with the public may make a lot of difference to wider perceptions; so much may depend on their morale and confidence in face of the cuts.

### The potential effects of financial savings on front line services

- *Implications of expected grant cuts on officer and civilian staff numbers*

The major increases in staff numbers in the MPS in recent years relative to other forces have not demonstrably produced greater value for money. The service also seems to have been slower to civilianize posts and, insofar as it has done so, this would not appear to have been as consciously geared as elsewhere to freeing up officers to spend more time on the streets.

This suggests there may be much greater resilience in the MPS than elsewhere - and much more scope for

- Reducing posts while

- Maintaining and improving performance.

That is, smarter working, protection of borough-based resources and improved co-ordination within and between the visible and invisible strands of the service might go a long way to protecting frontline services in London without detracting from other essential aspects of policing.

- *What is the likely split between officer/civilian reductions*

To make any rational decisions about where cuts should fall with minimal damage to service to public, the committee needs first to be more fully informed by the MPS about its current use of resources. That is, (leaving aside any practical difficulties about the scope for redundancies) before it can decide *in principle* on the optimal split between officers/ civilians, the committee needs to discover where the significant increases in personnel over the last 9 years have been deployed (including what additional posts, departments and units have been created as a result).

This should enable it to identify the scope for abolishing posts and functions which are

- not themselves productive in terms of service delivery (both visible and invisible) and which
- do not directly *support* service delivery (eg through clerical, IT and other technical support, crime pattern analysis etc)

Only once such slack has been cut from the system will it be appropriate to scrutinize the basis on which resources (and in particular the increased resources of the last few years) have hitherto been allocated to essential police business, starting with how this splits between visible and less/invisible work, the balance between the resources available for central the resources available services and those available to different boroughs.

This should, in turn, provide the basis for an informed discussion about

- Firstly, where the heaviest burden of the cuts should fall and which aspects of provision most urgently need protecting and
- Secondly, what scope there is to improve co-ordination between these different functions to maintain (and possibly improve) productivity so that essential (less visible) protective services are maintained while the public experiences little or no difference in the service they receive.
- *What areas should it be possible for the Met to find savings by improving productivity and cutting costs*

As above. From the information which is publicly available it is impossible to tell; but the committee is uniquely well placed to require the relevant information from the MPS.

- *What back-office activity could be slimmed down without affecting the front line*

At the risk of repeating the comments above, priority must be given to preserving backroom functions which directly support visible and invisible service delivery (eg through clerical, IT and other technical support, crime pattern analysis etc). Freeing up

resources within this by reducing bureaucracy will be an important part of this exercise. Anything else (i.e. anything which cannot be shown directly to support service delivery – including over the medium to long term) must then be seen as up for grabs.

- *How quickly can these savings be achieved and how can the Met learn from other services*

It is impossible to tell at this stage without the full information the committee needs to ask for from the MPS and what emerges from independent analysis of this by people with expertise in this field, including experience of other forces. Once the scope for cuts is identified with some precision in this way, savings can be calculated; but these will need to take into account any redundancy payments, the costs of transitional arrangements and the likely related timescales for implementation. Assuming the requisite information is provided by the MPS in a timely fashion, the committee should be better placed to draw sound conclusions around this question by end of inquiry.

#### Increasing officer time on front line activities

##### *A - Reducing non-operational activities of officers through reducing bureaucracy, new technology and changing shift patterns*

- *What can be done to increase officer time on front line duties*

A useful starting point would be a thorough-going approach to reducing bureaucracy based on the considerable work which has already been done to date on this issue but which does not appear to have been actioned to any great extent, still less systematically. In particular, Jan Berry's report published last November provides a practical framework for such an approach; yet it seems to be surprisingly little known within forces – perhaps because it was not promoted with any vigour by the previous government. Rather the government itself had been a major source of additional demands on the service; and a radical approach to increasing officer time on frontline duties might consist of

a) listing all the new requirements placed on the service by central government (and other relevant bodies such as HMIC and the Audit Commission) since 1997 and

b) getting officers themselves to identify

- Which of these are worth maintaining
- Which should be continued but streamlined and
- Which should be ditched completely.

- *Are there options for more closely aligning shift patterns with public demand*

Pass. But NB (as was highlighted by Bernard Hogan-Howe at the meeting on 16 September) shift patterns are likely to vary by borough and prescribing a standard one-size-fits-all model is not only likely to be deeply resented, it may not always be appropriate.

### *B - Redeploying officers to the front line*

See comments above. Faced with cuts across the board, it may be unrealistic to expect any increase in the numbers of officers available for frontline duties; and informed choices will, in any case, need to be made about their optimal allocation to different types of frontline duties in each borough.

The focus instead should be how to maximize the productivity of front line officers by

- reducing unnecessary demands which take them away from their core job (possibly by better use of civilian staff) and
- improving co-ordination between the different strands of the service.

# London Assembly's Budget and Performance Committee Front Line Policing Scrutiny - 7 December 2010

## Follow-up Queries – 14 January 2011

### 1. Update on the progress of Operation Herald

Project Herald started in 2008/09 with the aim to deliver savings of £298k in 2011/12 and then £5.49m from 2012/13 onwards. The project planned to recruit 900 Designated Detention Officers (DDOs) and 206 Nurses to allow a total reduction of 250 Police sergeants and 300 Police Constables working in custody.

The management of external recruitment in view of the budget position has meant the MPS have sought to manage displacement by recruiting internally to the DDO role. The projected position for the end of 2010/11 is 442 DDOs and 60 Nurses in the organisation. Herald is now part of a project which is designing the model of custody for the future as part of the TP Development Programme. Design work indicates that these changes will require less DDOs. The custody business case is being finalised and changes are planned for the 2011-14 business planning process.

### 2. Ongoing work to find efficiencies in non operational policing activities

The MPS Service Improvement Programme (SIP) has already delivered significant savings and will deliver further significant savings in the medium-term. Table 1 (see below) provides an analysis of the SIP savings planned in 2011/12 with details of the impact on staffing levels. Details of savings beyond 2011/12 are currently being worked on as part of the 2011-14 Budget & Business Plan.

**Table 1: SIP savings and impact on staffing numbers (2011/12)**

Project	2011/12 (£m)	Police Officers	Police Staff	PCSOs
		2011/12	2011/12	2011/12
Recruitment model modernisation	-8.2	-308		
Rationalisation of property estate	-8.5			
Property Services modernisation and contract rationalisation	-9.5			
Catering modernisation	-5.2		-100	
Training modernisation	-9.4	-91	-100	
Transport rationalisation	-5.0			
ICT efficiencies and contract rationalisation	-13.1		-93	
F & R modernisation and contract efficiencies	-0.9		-12	
Other strategic procurement	0.3			
Asset tracking	0.0			
Territorial Policing development programme	-26.2	-384	-358	-100
<b>Total Service Improvement</b>	<b>-85.7</b>	<b>-783</b>	<b>-663</b>	<b>-100</b>

### **3. Details of the MPS Front Line Policing Review**

In January 2010, Territorial Policing (TP) commissioned a number of reviews in order to identify opportunities to improve service delivery and develop more efficient and effective ways of working. The overarching framework to track and manage the interdependencies and risks is the TP Development Programme.

The TP Development Programme is not just a cost saving exercise, but a strategic improvement programme. It aims to deliver financial and performance improvements through a radical redesign of basic policing, with a focus on implementation and benefit realisation. The borough is the primary model of policing delivery, and the Safer Neighbourhood approach remains a priority. The programme was established on the following vision, objectives and principles:

#### **TP Development Programme Vision:**

The TP Development Programme vision is to develop and implement a more cost effective model for policing that will deliver excellent local services for people, who live, work in and visit London. The programme has been established to support the delivery of the strategic objectives for the MPS including confidence, safety and value for money. In order to deliver these outcomes the programme has prioritised benefits both to the people of London and the MPS against which its success will be judged, these include improved policing services, increased efficiency and effectiveness and reduced overall cost of TP delivery.

#### **Principles**

The TP Development principles include:

- All decisions should be evidence led, and capable of withstanding internal and external scrutiny.
- All opportunities for driving down costs should be explored (but maintaining or improving performance must be a significant factor when reviewing available options).
- The Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) should be used to identify any potential adverse impact on our staff and on our communities. If adverse impact is found through the EIA, the programme will take appropriate action.
- A robust programme management approach must be applied all phases of the programme.
- Ongoing communication with partnership agencies and opportunities for joint problem solving should be explored wherever possible.
- Staff should receive ongoing communications about the changes that affect them.
- Consultation with trade unions and staff associations is vital to the success of the programme.

Options for change have to deliver the strategic outcomes for policing London; confidence, safety and improvement and are evaluated against the 5 P's (Presence, Performance, Productivity, Professionalism and Pride) framework. Each of the reviews was informed by the following design principles:

- Matching resource to demand.
- Understanding the costs.
- Most efficient scale (back office and support functions)
- Co-operation across OCU and Business Group boundaries.
- Best use of capital funding.
- Accountability.
- Empowerment and Risk.
- Waste and duplication.

The TP development projects in the detailed design stage are:

- Integrated Borough Operation (IBO)
- Total Resource Centres (new way of delivering duties management)
- Front Counters
- Response (deployment of response resources)
- Safer Neighbourhoods
- Crime Recording and Investigation Bureau (CRIB)
- Custody / Detention (matching resources to demand)
- Intelligence and Performance (implementation of most efficient and effective delivery model for the MPS).
- Territorial Policing HQ
- Customer Service

The design work is ongoing and will be completed by March 2011 prior to the projects going live. Two papers have been provided to the MPA strategic and operational policing committee, in September 2010 and January 2011. These contain further details and can be found on the MPA website at the following links

<http://www.mpa.gov.uk/committees/sop/2010/100916/14/>

<http://www.mpa.gov.uk/committees/sop/2011/0113/07/>

#### **4. Officers on recuperative and restrictive duty and long-term sick leave**

As at 31 December 2010 there were 980 officers on recuperative duties and 72% of these were working full hours. As at 31 December 2010 there were 1906 officers on restricted duties.

The number of police officers on long-term sick (this is classified as 28 days or more) as at 31 December 2010 was 545.

#### **5. Staff number analysis by OPM code**

Please see report (accessed via link below) which went to the MPA SOP Committee on 11 November 2010. The report outlines how OPM data is used to monitor the effective use of resources, including all staff and business groups.

<http://www.mpa.gov.uk/committees/sop/2010/101111/12/#h1000>

#### **6. Average number of hours worked by police officers and special constables**

The average number of hours worked for both police officers and special constables is as follows:

	<b>Total number of officers</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>	<b>Approximate hours per week per officer/MSc</b>
Police Officers	32,732	1,374,744	42
Special Constables	4,289	73,770	4.3

It should be noted that special constables primarily work during the MPS peak demand periods, i.e. weekends, and provide a flexible resource.

## London Assembly Scrutiny of Frontline Policing - Further information

7 February 2011

### 1. Update on the progress of Operation Herald - Number of officers that have been redeployed as a result of Herald?

By the end of 2010-11, 300 officer posts will have been removed from the TP Deployment Plan with the remainder coming out of the Deployment Plan in 2011-12. The reduction in officers in 2011-12 will be reviewed as part of the rationalisation of custody facilities which forms part of the TP Development Programme.

### 2. Details of ongoing work to find efficiencies in non operational policing activities - The savings for 2010/11 (i.e. the same table but for 2010/11 rather than 2011/12).

		Police Officers	Police Staff	PCSOs
Project	2010/11 (£m)	2010/11	2010/11	2010/11
Integrated Prosecution Teams	-4.3	-30	-10	
Operation Reclaim	-2.0	0	0	0
Forensics	-11.0		-12	
Property Services Modernisation & Contract Rationalisation	-5.4		-65	
Rationalisation of the Property Estate	-3.0			
Other Strategic Procurement	-9.4			
Transport Rationalisation	-1.4			
Catering Modernisation	-1.0		-35	
Transforming HR	-9.8		-330	
Training Modernisation	-4.3	-57	-10	
Improving Police Information	-0.7			
ICT Efficiencies and Contract Rationalisation	-2.7			
<b>Total Service Improvement</b>	<b>-55.0</b>	<b>-87</b>	<b>-462</b>	<b>0</b>