

Date: Wednesday, 20 May 2015
Location: The Chamber, City Hall
Hearing: MOPAC Challenge - Intrusive Tactics

Start time: 10.30am
Finish time: 11.30am

Members:

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair)
Keith Prince (MOPAC Challenge Member)
Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member)
Jonathon Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member)
Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member)
Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend)
Helen Bailey (MOPAC Chief Operating Officer)
Rebecca Lawrence (MOPAC Director of Strategy)

Guests:

Metropolitan Police Service
Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner)
Alison Newcomb (Commander)
Richard Martin (Commander)
Mike Gallagher (Chief Superintendent)
Matthew Fox (Sergeant)

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Good morning everybody and welcome to the second MOPAC Challenge which is on Intrusive Tactics. It hopefully enables us to look at these very important policing tactics and at their performance; reassuring the public that they are being used proportionately.

Delighted that I am supported today by Duwayne Brooks, MOPAC's critical friend on stop and search; also my fellow advisors, who are here all the time so I will not name them all but they are here to ask you lots of very engaging questions.

What I suggest we do is we get straight into the presentation which Rebecca Lawrence from MOPAC will take us through and then we will comment on that; over to you, Rebecca.

Rebecca Lawrence (MOPAC Director of Strategy): Thank you. This is the second MOPAC Challenge we have held on Intrusive Tactics and we will cover four sets of tactics. First, stop and search, then Taser, then firearms and then covert policing. We will alternate between going through the dashboard and the slide pack. I will give a brief presentation on what both the dashboards and the slides say about each tactic. I will pause at the end of each tactic for a set of questions so we will make this as smooth as possible.

Here, you have in front of you, the dashboard on the use of stop and search within the Metropolitan Police Service. There is some quite interesting continuation of trends there. We see that the Metropolitan Police Service has continued to reduce the usage of stop and search. That is that chart in the top left hand corner. At the same time it has continued to increase the percentage of stops which result in an arrest. That is the rising blue line and we are nearly at 20% of stops resulting at an arrest. The overall reduction of stop and search is a 66% reduction since March 2012 so that is a very significant continued trend.

On the blue bar chart, in the top right, it shows a disproportionality of usage, this, as we know, is a key issue that the Metropolitan Police Service is focused on. It shows the Metropolitan Police Service, currently, are still stopping 47 subjects of black and ethnicity per 1,000 of population compared to 17 white subjects. If we change the slider over time, we see how that has actually reduced from previous years, so 12 months ago that was 73 to 29.

The dashboard also looks at the reasons for arrests, if you look at the orange bar charts in the bottom left hand corner. It shows that drugs are still the most frequent reason for stops at 54% and in Tower Hamlets, in particular, drug searches are 72% of the total. The map in the middle section shows stop outcomes and volumes per borough and the pie chart shows again the proportion of stop outcomes.

You will remember that the last time we met in December, we had quite a lot of questions and there was quite a desire, and quite rightly so, to move from this data into dashboards to see if we could drill down in any greater depth at some of the significant trends. That is what the slide pack now seeks to do.

We have asked the question, "Are there any particular differences in boroughs?" This slide shows one borough which has gone against the decreasing trend: Lambeth, since March 2013,

has seen a 14% increase, with a particular peak in May 2014. So when we come to questions this might be something to focus on.

The next two slides also look at the total number of arrests and we find that as the stops have decreased, although the percentage arrests have increased and we are nearly at 20% of stops leading to an arrest, the absolute number of arrests is starting to come down. You see that through the bar chart on that slide there, and if you go onto the next slide it shows that as a line graph, it is showing the absolute number of arrests remaining stable until around May 2014 and then coming down thereafter. What does that tell us about outcomes? From the data in itself you can read a limited amount into that. What you really need to do is understand in depth what is happening to the cohort of people stopped. This was the point raised at the last Challenge. What do we know about what happens next?

Since the last Challenge, the Metropolitan Police Service has tracked a cohort of stops; around 66% of the total stops; 8133 that led to an arrest have been matched to an outcome. If you move to the next slide, from the analysis of that cohort those are the outcomes we have found. We found 60% of those tracked arrests had a positive outcome, 41% led to an arrest for a reason that was unrelated to the original stop and of those that were 'other', another reason for the stop, 22% of those were charged or cautioned in custody for violent or threatening behaviour. So, again, when we come to the questions this may be something to focus on.

Finally, when it comes to stop and search, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) have been in and carried out an inspection of all forces. We recognised last time, when we met, that the quality of that encounter is really important and that training is very important too. HMIC made a number of recommendations there which are up on the slides about training in the Metropolitan Police Service.

If we turn to the next slide the HMIC also focused on the lack of data around searching under the Road Traffic Act. How fair other kinds of searches were where more than an outer jacket is removed. The slides there are our first cut of data on vehicle stops, and, in particular, on proportionality and volumes. We can compare vehicles stops in 2013/2014 to the following year and we see that they have reduced; that is the top bar chart. The red bars are all lower than the blue bars so vehicle stops have reduced. You see that the absolute total number of stops from vehicles is actually very, very similar for white and black but, of course, when you look at per 1,000 population we still have a disproportionality of vehicle stops against black ethnicity as opposed to white.

That is a very brisk canter through a range of data on stop and search.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Great, thank you very much. First of all, we have a number of guests but our principle guest; I am looking at Assistant Commissioner, Pat Gallan. I think it is your first MOPAC Challenge, in your new role, is it not?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Deputy Mayor, thank you.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Fantastic and you have just come back from holiday?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Indeed, yes thank you.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Let us ensure that this is an effective session and a great start to your tenure, so great to have you. Do you want to introduce the people that you have alongside you?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Yes, thank you. We have Alison Newcomb, who is a Commander from Territorial Policing. If I start at the end, we have Matthew Fox who is a sergeant from SC&O19 which is our firearms command. We also have Mike Gallagher who is a Chief Superintendent in terms of our firearms command and then we have Richard Martin who is Commander in covert policing.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Super, do you want to make any comments about the data? This is obviously some interesting figures, particularly on the absolute numbers of arrests going down, quite markedly in the last year. Some borough variability but broadly speaking a very positive picture on the reduction in the number of stop and search against a background of an increasing number of arrests. Do you want to make any comments on the data?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I will. Alison deal with it in detail but I think overall the Commissioner has been very committed to looking at the issue of disproportionality in relation to stop and search and we think we have made significant strides. One of the issues that we do want to just keep an eye on, in the background, as there has been the decrease within stop and search there has been somewhat of an increase in terms of gang related violence around London. So we want to make sure that we continue to be intelligence led in terms of our stop and search but that we are using it effectively in terms of what we are doing with regard to violence and young persons.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Great. Duwayne, do you want to kick off the questions? Thanks, Pat.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): Thank you. Good morning.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Good morning.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): Good morning, Alison. Can we just go back to the dashboard please, if you do not mind? So, top left, we have seen that there has been a huge reduction in the number of stops in London. Is that good for London?

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): I think that is really, really positive. One of the things that we have sought to do is not give officers and team targets in terms of the number of stops they carry out. We have not deliberately said to them the numbers that you do need to reduce but we have been really clear in terms of making sure that stops are intelligence led, that they are targeted, that they are legitimate.

We have really focused on how the stop is carried out. Firstly, it needs to be legal. There needs to be reasonable grounds for carrying out the stop. It is also critically important how the officer

interacts with the member of the public, in terms of confidence. As a result of that focus that we have had, the stops have reduced. I do think that is positive because I think what it says is our stops now are much more targeted and intelligence led and, obviously, much more focused in terms of trying to get some positive outcomes. So, I do think that is a good news story.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): Is this some new coherent strategy across London or is it something that the Metropolitan Police Service has decided to do, or has been doing previously?

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): This is something that the Commissioner had decided to do in 2012. When he launched the Stop It Campaign, which was very much about making sure officers knew and understood their powers. Making sure that the culture, within policing, in terms of how we implement stop and search was changed.

If I go back a decade or more it was considered really good street craft, for an officer, if they could go out on the street and turn somebody over ie put hands in their pockets and hopefully find something. We have moved away from that culture and, I think, rightly so, given the concerns that the public and others have expressed in relation to how we have operated stop and search. Now officers are very much taught, as I have described, which is making sure that you have reasonable grounds, making sure it is legitimate. If police officers are called to deal with some young people in a park who are perceived by a member of the public to be smoking cannabis and a police officer turns up and they can smell cannabis, they will not necessarily search all of those young people. If they can identify which one they think is responsible for it, that person is likely to be subject to a search. Whereas, ten years ago or more, the chances are all of them would have been searched. Our approach to this is just much more proportionate, much more intelligence led and really well thought through.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): I am glad you mentioned intelligence led and Stop It because that is borough-wide, London-wide.

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): Absolutely.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): We have seen in Lambeth that we have had an increase in stop and searches. Is that because you have moved away from intelligence led or is there a different reason for the increases in stop searches in Lambeth?

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): It is difficult to identify specifically what has happened in Lambeth but we can see from the chart, on slide 4, that as you say there was a steady increase up until May last year, when the stops started to decrease. What I will say, and it links back to what Assistant Commissioner (AC) Gallan mentioned in terms of gang crime, knife crime on the streets. There are clearly occasions within Lambeth as a borough where it is an appropriate tactic for us to be using stop and search to take knives off the street. We do know that knife crime and injuries to young people have reduced year-on-year in Lambeth and I would assert that as a result of the tactics that we have been using.

Just to give you some data around that, knife crime offences were recorded at over 1,000 in 2011/2012, in the Borough of Lambeth. Year-on-year a steady decline in those offences so that in 2014 we have 418. I think that is a real success and if we look at injury to victims under

25: 2011, 123 young people injured by knife crime in Lambeth; 2014/2015 that is down to 82. Again, I think that does demonstrate some success and what we can see in Lambeth is the tactic is being used, it does need to be used, it is targeted, it is intelligence led, we are taking knives off the street and consequently less young people are being injured as a result.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): So the increase in stops and search has reduced knife crime, basically. That is the point you are making?

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): That is the correlation I would make. There will be other tactics, undoubtedly, that have supported that decrease but primarily it will be around taking knives off the street.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): Thank you. Can we move on to slide 5, please? As you can see, on slide 5, the hit rate for stops has shown a dramatic increase but the overall number of arrests generated from stops has declined by about 12,500 on the previous year. Does the Metropolitan Police Service understand why that has happened?

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): Quite simply, in terms of the reduction in the number of arrests, that does correlate; and we saw that on chart 6. There is a strong correlation between a reduction in the number of stops and a reduction in the number of arrests. The numbers of arrests within London have reduced by 6 per cent overall for all crime. That undoubtedly will be for a number of reasons. It will be linked to the increase of new recruits that we have had, who obviously are learning their operational role; so that will have an impact.

Overall crime in London has reduced so therefore less offences and following you would expect therefore to be less arrests. Also the implementation of Code G of Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) which talks about the necessity to arrest; so not only will officers be thinking about do I have a power, is it lawful, is it proportionate, but they will be thinking about the necessity. Actually, if they do not need to arrest somebody, if they can deal with that offence through some other means, that may be an interview under caution then actually they will not arrest them and bring them in. So, there is a whole range of reasons why the arrest rate within London has reduced and that also correlates with stop and search.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): OK, but on that 80% of stops still do not result in an arrest.

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): That is correct.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): Something is wrong here, is it not?

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): In terms of the target that we have set, with the new approach around Stop It and what we are seeking to achieve, 20% is the figure that we set in terms of the arrests. We are maintaining that, so that is really positive. In terms of positive outcomes we are at 31% so that is of all stops. You have the arrest rate and then on top of that we have the positive outcomes which will include things like warnings given, penalty notices issued. So, 30% of all of those stops result in a positive outcome.

What we do know is, as a tactic, it works and particularly again if we talk about offences such as gang crime, knife crime and drug crime. Stop and search does work provided it is intelligence led and targeted and the officers carry out those searches in a professional way. It does work in terms of reducing crime and reducing offences.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): Thank you. Could we move on to slide 8, please? On this slide we have talked about tracked arrests and this is the figure over the last three months. Firstly, I would like to say thank you very much for producing these figures because I think it is really important that we see what happens after somebody is arrested and charged following being stopped and searched. 41% were arrested following an unrelated issue in stop and search. Have we looked at why that figure is so high?

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): I think there is some more work to do on that in terms of the analysis. That will relate to individuals that are arrested as a result of a stop and if the officer was looking for, for example, a bladed weapon but they find some drugs; they are arrested not for the reason that they were stopped but for some other reason. That will be included in that figure.

Some more analysis needs to be done to really drill down and understand that 41% in terms of what does that mean and is that a positive thing or not. I would argue: if they are looking for a knife but they find some drugs then that probably is positive, but I cannot say any more than that at this point.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): The last MOPAC Challenge you were not here. I accused the police of lazy policing because for me it is that fishing expedition. They pretend we are looking for drugs and then they find something else. Do you not think it is still lazy policing that is continuing now?

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): I do not think we have any evidence that that is the case. What I would again point to, in terms of our positive approach, is that the numbers of stops have reduced dramatically as we have already established. That will be partly because what you describe as a lazy interaction; those are no longer occurring. I cannot say that every single stop in London, given that we do over 180,000 a year, is as I have described necessarily with reasonable grounds but we do look at all of them.

We look at them with community members. All of that is really transparent and we do look at those officers that are routinely searching, so the high searching officers and we look at their data in detail in terms of disproportionality. Why are they stopping? What are their reasonable grounds? Are they getting positive outcomes? All of that is examined. So the likelihood of us having large numbers of lazy stops is far reduced than perhaps when we started this approach in 2012.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): You do accept that there has been some lazy policing over the past few years?

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): I believe that years ago we were stopping far too many people and that is why the Commissioner introduced Stop It. That is why we have put an awful lot of effort in terms of training, staff, helping them to understand what we want from

them, so intelligence led. We have given them training around behavioural detection. We have trained 20,000 officers in behavioural detection that they can identify whether an individual is acting suspiciously, whether they actually do need to stop them, whether that adds to their grounds. We have done an awful lot of work with supervisors in terms of conscious bias to try and reduce the disproportionality. We have done an awful lot to try and make sure that the stops that we carry out are legitimate because we are really conscious that this can affect and does affect public confidence in us.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Alison, broadly speaking there is a very positive narrative to stop and search.

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): Absolutely.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): We get that. We understand that. I think your answers setting Lambeth into context are not necessarily being overly concerned about an increase in stop and search if it results in greater public safety in Lambeth; providing the figures is reassuring. Lambeth is bucking the trend across London. We are seeing knife crime with injury is down dramatically in Lambeth but actually it is rising slightly in the rest of London, so down 14.4% opposed to a rise of 13.1%. I can understand the figures around serious youth violence, again dramatically down in Lambeth against a slight increase in the rest of London. When the tactic seems to be keeping people safe you can understand if it is used judiciously and intelligently. That is a positive thing for all Londoners.

However, what Duwayne is saying, and I think this is where we need some more thought, clearly the Commissioner wishes this to be intelligence led based on intelligence that someone is committing a certain sort of crime. Therefore, figures like the figures that we seeing for the first time of 41% of arrests not being for the reason for the original stop and search do not really provide the idea that there is a clear intelligence about someone committing a particular crime; it does look like more like a fishing expedition if 41% of the arrests are for something completely different. Of course, it is positive to catch criminals but the issue is to what extent is this an indication that someone is being stopped; because they may be a criminal as opposed to we have specific intelligence. That is the concern.

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): I do understand that concern and I think the fact that all of the boroughs have a community monitoring group, which is chaired by a community member, all of the stops and all of the stopping accounts will be viewed by that community group. Any officers that are found to be conducting searches that are not legitimate, that are not intelligence led, those issues are picked up locally and centrally. Steve Watson does chair the central board where all that information comes to that board and he can look at those individual officers. That has contributed to the decline in stop and search which I think is really positive.

In terms of why we have 41% arrested for a reason unrelated to original stop --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): I think you just need to look into it a bit more.

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): Absolutely.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): That is something that we are seeing for the first time. Clearly, it would be nice to know what the underlying trends are; the reasons for that and what are we talking about. Is it something that you need to then take into account and act on or is it something that we should be broadly reassured by because it was not so different from the reason why you stopped? We do not have enough information here to be able to comment on that. You are not providing any more than what we can see; it would be useful to have a bit more.

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): No, that has not been broken down but we can certainly do that.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): I think you should do because I think the principle of using intelligence to stop search is the one that we all share and support. This is throwing that a little bit into question. Keith?

Keith Prince (MOPAC Challenge Member): Thank you. I was just going to ask really around the impact of stop and search. I think you partially answered it but how do you actually train your officers to understand the impact of stop and search on the wider community?

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): In the training that new recruits, newly promoted sergeants and inspectors receive. I have described the behavioural training that 20,000 of our operational officers have had. It does go into detail in terms of the impact on community members. It was not possible to put community members in on all of the local training given the number of sessions that each borough needed to run to get all of those 20,000 officers through. There is a video that is shown to the officers so that they can appreciate how an individual may feel, who is being stopped. It encourages the officers, obviously, to act in a professional way with empathy, to be polite. Officers are very well aware of the fact nowadays that there is every chance that a member of the public will be recording them on social media. I think that is a positive thing. We have pilots running for body worn video and that will be rolled out across the whole of the Metropolitan Police Service once those pilots have concluded. Again, I think that is really positive because their interactions then can be recorded, played back to them, community members can look at them and feedback can be given where necessary.

Keith Prince (MOPAC Challenge Member): Thank you. Do you mind if we have a look at slide 10, please. In the recent HMI report on stops there was a recommendation to extend the recording of stops to those stops made under S163RTA, where there is a requirement on a person to remove outer clothing. What steps is the Metropolitan Police Service taking to prepare for this extension in recording practice?

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): This relates to, as you say, 163 Road Traffic Act so where an officer stops a vehicle. If the vehicle is searched that would be included in the stop and search figures that we are already discussing. If, for example, the vehicle is stopped in order that the driver could be asked to put their seatbelt on or the tyres could be checked, then that is not recorded in the same way.

So, for all of those and there will be thousands and thousands of vehicles that are stopped on the roads we do need to introduce a system whereby we can record that interaction. We can

record the details in terms of ethnicity, the reason for the stop. As well as recording it we need to have a mechanism so that we can search the data and look at trends. That will require us to work with other forces because that is a national recommendation so we need to work with other forces in terms of implementing that but it will also require us to look at some IT changes to make that happen. The intention is to do that. We know that we record over 3 million Police National Computer (PNC) vehicle searches annually so we are talking about an awful lot of data here so we need to make sure the system is robust. We are now working with colleagues to make that happen.

Keith Prince (MOPAC Challenge Member): Can I just pull you back to the issue around the removal of one level of outer clothing? I believe there is a requirement for greater recording in that instance. Could you just tell us where you are with that?

Alison Newcomb (Commander, MPS): Yes, currently in the Metropolitan Police Service we do record those occasions where we require somebody to remove outer coat, jacket or gloves. It is recorded but again not in a way which it is searchable and we can draw some conclusions from the data. Again, there is more work to be done around that and we are looking at an IT solution to make that happen.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Just before we leave stop and search and move onto firearms, can we just go back to slide 6? This is just really for you to take on board. In the last year, the red line and the decline in the number of stop searches is extremely positive. What is extremely marked is the absolute number of arrests has declined very dramatically. So for the previous time we looked at this it was a background where the number of stop and searches was on the decline but broadly the number of people arrested and the positive outcomes in absolute numbers, were staying the same despite the decline in stop and search. I have a concern giving that across London we are seeing a slight increase in serious youth violence, knife crime with injury.

You have alluded to the fact that gang activity is something we do need to keep in check. My concern is actually whether a percentage increase in the arrest rate is the right thing to do in terms of ensuring that this is a tactic that is used proportionally, intelligently but importantly it is associated with a declining number of cases of serious youth violence and knife crime with injury. I am not sure that is the right way of looking at this. A percentage target, I think, is a bit crude and it is missing the point that in absolute terms the number of people arrested has dropped dramatically.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I would hesitate about having a target because we know that on occasions in the past that has had --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): I agree with you.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): -- unintentional outcomes. It would not be helpful to all of us.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): You are the ones that set the target around 20%. We did not set a target.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I appreciate that. What we are looking at, at the moment, is doing a complete refresh of our gang strategy because we accept that we do need to watch that and make sure that the increase turns into a decrease in this year, because there has been the increase. We will, in the next month or so, be refreshing that and looking at the numbers that we have got, particularly within the boroughs that have the highest instance of gang problems, which are those are the ones where we know that there has been in the increase in crime and looking at it in that way. Once we have refreshed that strategy, looking to make sure we have the personnel in the right place and that we are appropriately targeting those individuals out there. I think we should have a relook at this issue.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Thank you. I think we should move onto firearms.

Rebecca Lawrence (MOPAC Director of Strategy): Now, we will move onto the data on firearms. We will cover other issues on firearms at the end of the session when we look at body worn video but this is the data on firearms.

This is the updated dashboard on firearms activity. We see, again, this very dramatic funnel shape of a very large number of firearm deployments across London but incredibly and thankfully very low fatalities and firings with no fatalities since we last met. There had been one fatality in 2014 and none in 2013.

The map also shows borough call outs and variation of usage of firearms by boroughs. The highest borough call outs for firearms were recorded in Westminster, where we see 400 call outs followed, again, by Lambeth with 213 call outs. So that is the updated data that we have on firearms.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Thank you, Rebecca. Steve?

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): Yes, thank you very much. As Rebecca's commented on, it is pleasing that the numbers of shots fired and fatalities is very, very low over the last three years, including this year. I think that is clearly good news for Londoners. Just to sort of get underneath the figures, are you satisfied that this sort of data here gives us, in effect, a true picture of firearms across London now, Pat, would you say?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): This is in terms of deployments?

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): Deployment and also what Londoners would probably like to understand is clearly the underlying reasons for deployments. Why are units called out and deployed? What is the sort of intelligence that is required to actually press that button and deploy a unit; perhaps if you could talk about it.

Mike Gallagher (Chief Superintendent, MPS): Perhaps the starting point is to put this in context with the total number of '1' calls that come into the Metropolitan Police Service which is just shy of 500,000 in any one year. We have an armed response to those which require response by a firearms unit. That is assessed in each and every case. So every 999 call where there is a possibility of an armed deployment is assessed by a tactical firearms commander who

will make the decision of whether it is appropriate to deploy. The governance around the deployment is very, very stringent. Where that tactical fire arms commander makes that decision and we deploy it is because there is either a presence of a firearm or it is otherwise so dangerous that it requires that potential response; so really strong governance.

In terms of the broad deployment across London and the slide you see, we principally patrol in the areas where you would expect those boroughs that have the highest rate of gun and gang crime and criminality. So, that is our default patrol areas however we only respond to those calls in the way I described where it has been assessed that there is a need for firearms deployment.

The number of firearms deployment is reducing year-on-year. In 2010 we deployed to 6,000 firearms incidents and in 2014 that is down to 4,000 and part of the reason for that decline is the layer of governance which I have described which has been introduced since about 2012. In terms of the governance and the deployment and how we deploy it is very, very rigorously assessed and considered.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I believe there has been some recent publicity concerning the use of firearms officers on what could be called routine calls. Are you saying, in essence, that there is not such a thing as a routine call when a unit is deployed?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): We can look at it another way and I think you are talking about the Scottish cases where there has been that question mark. There could be occasions where a firearms officer would be deployed to an emergency call out, however as soon as it is realised that there is no need for them, we will then deploy local officers. What we would not want to do is never utilise a firearms officer because if it is a case of an emergency we will we want to get the officer that is closest to the scene to the member of the public to assist them.

Mike Gallagher (Chief Superintendent, MPS): To give you some detail, the sorts of things we respond to: there might be an alarm call, suspect packages or calls for urgent assistance. Most recently, for an example, our officers were monitoring a local radio channel for a local borough where a suspect's identity, which was suspected of murder, was circulated. Our officers started a search and within six minutes they located him and arrested him for murder. So it is those sorts of things that require an immediate response by officers. It seems right and proper that if we are the closest unit that our officers respond; accepting that they do have firearms on them and we need to be careful about what they respond to.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I understand deployment. I'll be saying that any kind of given time across those areas that there is a high risk, through identifications with gangs etc, there are units out there moving around and on the road, as it were, just in case there is a call at any given time.

Mike Gallagher (Chief Superintendent, MPS): Yes, and providing a visible proactive presence in those boroughs.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): You would probably have noticed with the rise in the threat from terrorism that actually we have deployed more firearms officers in vehicles to areas where there has been a high Jewish community, so there has been that visible presence

that we have a firearms capacity there; also, in central London. We actually see it as hopefully bringing more confidence to people in London rather than decrease in confidence.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): That was a point I was going to make because if you get the narrative right, this will actually improve confidence in these heightened times and I think that is really helpful and Londoners will be pleased to know, around the figures, that the numbers are so low: deployment, shots fired and mercifully fatalities.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): That has actually been very helpful. If I understand this very stark pyramid, which was in the dashboard and which we have got up on the screen, effectively a lot of the deployments are used because you are able to help someone in immediate danger, respond to an emergency call and that is contained within the 2,500 odd deployments presumably. Then there are ones where you are deployed because you are a firearms response vehicle unit because you need that capability and those are far fewer. Is that a way of reading this chart and that is essentially the 500 deployments. Is that right?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): That is right. It is not very clear in the picture because you have the Emergency Response Vehicle (ERV) deployments where you would have the nearest unit being deployed to the scene, on occasions. You also have where we have our spontaneous instance which takes place where there is a case that is believed to be so dangerous that a firearms --

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): That is what I mean, so that is a sub-set of the total deployments.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): We have also then have pre-planned operations so our firearms units support our detective officers in some pre planned operations. There is also another sub-section in there where we have pre-planned operations.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Where you have actually planned to deploy -- ?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): We have planned and we have decided that we believe the threat is such that we should be utilising firearms officers in those occasions

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): If you do not mind me saying so, and this is probably why these are useful to have this, this is all about giving the public reassurance about the proportionality of the tactic. It seems to me, when someone is a police officer, they happen to have a firearm and they are going to act in a capacity where they are providing emergency response because they happen to be closest to the emergency, the fact they have a firearm is neither here or there. It is good that they are doing that; we get that. We need to understand and segment the pre-planned and the response to calls where you deem it so urgent you require a firearm and draw that out as clearly as possible from the overall number of deployments; to layer that a bit more so the public understand and track that. So, we can see is there a rise in any particular form of deployment. Is it broadly flat the number of pre-planned deployments using firearms or not?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Pre-planned has actually reduced.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): We do not see that on these figures. It would be useful to have that would it not? To have that tracked down and say we are not seeing an increase in use of firearms pre-planned tactics, they are going down. At the moment we do not have that.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): We actually have the figures in our pack, not in your pack.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): It would be useful to have the figures, Pat, because the figures in your pack are not the figures that we had so in a spirit of transparency we would love to have the figures.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Can I just say I would really want that transparency because I think it is really important for the confidence of London and also to understand what our firearms officers potentially deal with but also the day to day routine, as well, about what is happening and about why we utilise them.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): It is a very positive picture. I think that additional granularity would be very helpful, thank you. Shall we move onto Taser?

Rebecca Lawrence (MOPAC Director of Strategy): Yes, so we will move onto the Taser dashboard. Again, we have quite a considerable amount of data. We have the borough map there which shows you the volume of borough deployments and to just continue the Lambeth theme of this meeting, the highest number of borough deployments was recorded in Lambeth in 2014 with 107.

The dashboard then shows you what proportion of those resulted in a firing: 18.7% of those deployments resulted in a firing. The dashboard also shows you, in the top right hand corner, those blue bar charts the units from which those deployments were made. As we know Tasers were rolled out across territorial policing into Borough Operational Command Units (BOCU). If we take Lambeth it will show us that 28% of those deployments in Lambeth were by Territorial Support Group (TSG) rather than BOCU officers, which was above the Metropolitan Police Service average.

The dashboard allows you to read into the age of those people against whom there were deployments. For example, we can see that 55% of all Metropolitan Police Service deployments were against 19 to 35 year olds during the most recent period. It also allows us to look at ethnicity so 45% of deployments were against white subjects but when we move to the slide pack we will drill down into that further. Finally it allows a comparison across forces, so although the Metropolitan Police Service has a high number of deployments it has a relatively low proportion of firings. It is pleasing that there is a richness of information on Taser data there but again we thought it was important to do some further drill down and analysis.

If we move to the slide pack we have that drill down. Slide 13 looks at two things. It looks at the total number of deployments by boroughs. That is the green line. It also looks at the

proportions fired so the firing rates. You see in Hillingdon, for example, there is the highest firing rate that is at 37%. You see that Lambeth and Croydon there, for example, are high volume boroughs. They have firing rates above the Metropolitan Police Service average. The highest deployment borough of all which is Camden has a firing rate of just 4% so again there is quite a variation.

You will recall at the last Challenge we had quite a lot of discussion about the quality of the data and particularly the practice of recording deployments which are the number of Tasers deployed in a situation as opposed to the number of individuals against whom they deployed. By measuring it in that way you could get a distorted picture of what was actually going on. Since their last Challenge, there has been a lot of work on the data for which we are very grateful. We have a more granular view looking at the number of individual incidents and the people involved.

So that top map there, gives you the old style data as it were. The total number of deployments and the bottom map gives us actually the number of individuals. So, for example, if you look at Lewisham there were 82 deployments in 2014 but actually only against 53 individuals. I think, in doing this analysis there is a health warning. There were still some data quality issues around the recording. I hope the data for October 2015, in the next Challenge, will have improved by then.

If we look at the final slide that is using the data that thankfully the Metropolitan Police Service record and one of the first forces in the Country to do so. This is the kind of individuals and kind of situations against whom Tasers are deployed. As the dashboard shows on proportionality although Tasers are drawn disproportionality more on black and minority ethnic, the thing that seems to determine, as we saw last time in December, where the Taser is actually fired is the nature of the situation. Here we have the proportion of recorded firings and deployments against those recorded as emotionally or mentally distressed; 40% in total.

We have some geographic variations that both east and west actually come out as higher and above average against emotional and mental distress. Bromley has the highest proportion; Lambeth has the highest volume, which continues a theme.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Thank you, any comments before we go to questions on the Taser figures because there is more granularity than we have had before.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): To be fair to say it is still a work in progress because this is our first year of really getting into it. To see the proper comparisons we will need another year of data. The other thing is there has been a massive increase in the number of officers that have Taser available to them so I think we need to appreciate that. It is something we now deploy on boroughs. There are at least four Taser officers per shift out there, so with that increase we know that the figures are going to increase in terms of number of deployments but not necessarily in terms of firings. It is worth having that health warning within the figures that you see in front of you.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): The roll out in territorial policing is that each borough broadly has the same number of officers. Is that right?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): We have a minimum and we have increased it to very much in line with the increase in the security threat level going up, so every borough has at least four officers per shift that they can deploy with Tasers so that is available to them as a less lethal force that can be used in situations.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): It is a minimum as opposed to a maximum.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): It is a minimum so we know that there is a minimum of those officers that are going out on the street and that is there for the protection of the public but also the protection of other officers.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): The striking thing that I see now we have more individual data is seven boroughs out of 32 account for nearly 40% of the usage, which means a uniformed deployment, essentially, does not reflect the need for the tactic within particular boroughs far greater than some of the more outlying boroughs. Were you surprised at that seven boroughs account for nearly 40% of the Taser usage?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): The challenge we have at the moment or the challenge I have had is I do not think we have enough information to understand why certain boroughs have very high figures, for instance, Hillingdon. What is it that is going on in Hillingdon that requires it compared to other boroughs where you might have the expectation that it would be a higher number. Somewhere like Westminster which is further down the chart, however, it might be that the reason that there is less of that is because there are far more identifiable firearms officers in that borough than anywhere within London and that might be one of the reasons. We do not know, in my view, the reasons or rationale behind it at this stage.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I wanted to perhaps start talking about the training aspect as well because this is quite new. It has been 12 months in and I am pleased particularly we have the figures around the individuality. There is a disparity, which we have pointed out, amongst the actual boroughs in numbers but also in deployment and firing. Quite a broad disparity which we can see in the graph and what I wanted to understand is you said that it is based on a risk analysis of boroughs and they have to have a core minimum. A lot of this is around the BOCU and the Territorial Policing (TP) and people in neighbourhoods which I am interested in. How do the borough commanders or you identify the officers that will undertake the training?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): At the moment it is by an application process on borough. They have to be supported by their line manager to say that they are suitable and supported by the Operational Command Unit (OCU) commander for that particular BOCU or borough. They have to identify two areas of skills: decision making and operational effects before they can be assessed. The course that they go on is a pass/fail and they cannot have any outstanding complaints at the time of going on the course. That is the course at the moment.

What we have to do is start analysing the data in terms of when it comes to the deployment of Taser because we have seven categories of when we record Taser use. Three of which are actually seen as a firing so we have to break those down in terms of what are the types of calls, where there has been a deployment. Is that proportionate? Then also look at the ones where there is firings again. Is that proportionate? One sense of reassurance I would like to give you is that every single deployment, whether or not the Taser has been fired or not is recorded so there is a detailed form that has to be put in and it is subject to scrutiny at the centre by the commander in charge of firearms, Dave Musker. So, every single one and that is nationally that that is looked at.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I know David Musker very well from my Croydon days. I am sure he will do a very good job around that.

This is something we wanted to talk about because looking at the differences, it is quite stark.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): It is very stark, yes.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): Deployment differences: and there are certain boroughs there that, as the Deputy Mayor pointed out, you perhaps would not suggest would be area or borough where you would see a high level. Is it something that is of concern and that you are looking at?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I would not want to say, at this stage, it is of concern but it certainly is of interest to find out what is behind that and looking into the details to find out if there is any correlation between why, for instance, Hillingdon has a high level. What are the types of calls? We just need to track it over time and see the comparisons over the year. The other interesting aspect is if you then put it on top of what is the crime rate in those areas; is that corresponding? Those figures at the moment do not necessarily go alongside with what would be the expectation you would expect to see.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): That is quite interesting. Again, it has been picked out earlier. There is a disconnection between the expectation of certain borough's crime figures and the level and percentage of the deployments and the times so that is something that you need to be looking at.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Yes, we are going to look at it.

Mike Gallagher (Chief Superintendent, MPS): The AC is absolutely right, we do not have the breadth of data to do that detailed analysis but have come with some initial thoughts.

If we look at the borough use of Taser, and particularly on the outer boroughs, we tend to see greater deployment and firing because they have had less resolution options in terms of other officers arriving because on outer boroughs it is smaller numbers.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): Like Bromley, for example. Bromley stands out which is not an area known for its high crime.

Mike Gallagher (Chief Superintendent, MPS): A lot of the outer boroughs, Kingston's for example, have quite a large night time economy, for example, and that may be a particular draw. Many of the other outer boroughs are in similar places.

We do see a greater deployment and usage within the centre but we have far more Taser trained officers because in addition to borough officers there would be the Territorial Support Group officers who are trained in Taser who will be deploying in those boroughs because of the nature of the crime issues. Also, as I said earlier, our firearms officers will also be deploying in those areas. In some of those inner boroughs where you see highlighted in red, we do have a greater availability of Taser as a tactical option. Either in terms of escalation because of the violence which has been presented to the officers or in terms of firearms deployment as a de-escalation option or a less lethal option?

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I will get on to the individual figures in a minute but Duwayne do you want to ... ?

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): Yes, I just wanted to ask a question about the deployment. We have seven different categories. I wanted to know if the angle-drive stun is still being used by the Metropolitan Police Service.

Mike Gallagher (Chief Superintendent, MPS): It is taught as part of the national training package because we deliver a national training package but it is very rarely used. In the main it is either a drive stun or a firing. We use the angle-stun if one of the barbs does not connect and it is to make the second connection effectively, but it is not something which is used very often. It is taught because we deliver a national course.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): I appreciate it is talked about on the training sessions but is it being used on the streets of London?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): It can be used. What might be helpful is if we actually get the figures for you about how often it has been used. There is three categories which we record as an actual usage. We have not split that down in these figures and I think it might be of some reassurance to have those figures out. The other reassurance I can give you is, when it comes to usage, the Metropolitan Police Service is one of the forces that uses Taser less than its comparative forces across the Country. We are very high in terms of number of deployments. We are the second highest force in the Country but in terms of the actual usage we are four in a comparison of six similar forces.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): Thank you.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): That is a good news story that against similar forces we are at a lower level of actual firings which I think needs to be noted and to give us some reassurance.

As commented earlier, it is good now that we are actually drilling down on individuals and you have done more work around looking at the individuals affected by Taser deployment. Both on the make-up of that individual, we will go onto that in a minute, and where those individual cases are across London. You have already picked up the kind of disparity around some areas.

It is interesting for me to understand about where there is numbers of deployment against numbers of individuals where you actually have the cases where the numbers of deployment are more than the numbers of individuals. I think I understand that, could you clarify why that is the case?

Mike Gallagher (Chief Superintendent, MPS): Very simply, if Matt and I both deploy, get out our Taser; that would count as two deployments and there may be only one subject which we are deploying against. Deployments, particularly if you think of TSG where four or five officers may have Taser and they deploy; it just inflates and amplifies those numbers. If we focus on the subjects it gives a far more informed data set to use for analysis.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): Your officers, Matt, would take a risk decision at that incident as to the number of Taser that need to be applied to said individual. Do you want to talk us through that?

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): Yes, certainly on borough. The officers will work in pairs. Taser officers will work in pairs so they will assess the same threat at the same time. So there may be one subject but hopefully they will both assess the same threat so therefore you will get two deployments. They will then communicate between themselves. One may put the Taser away and then maybe move in for handcuffing technique. If the threat disappears they will both put the Tasers away and deal with it by other means, by communication as such. So it is always a decision made by the officers working together.

Mike Gallagher (Chief Superintendent, MPS): Perhaps it is worth just adding in a firearms environment. Out of the three officers who would typically deploy, two will have firearms and the third will have the Taser to provide a less lethal option in each and every incident which we respond to in terms of a firearms deployment.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): The figures to me would suggest that every time there is an individual case where Taser is required, there will be two officers. So you kind of sense it would be double perhaps but that is not necessarily what we have here. What it suggests here is that clearly there is always going to be more deployments than individuals because that is the way it works.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): One of the things, as I understood from the last meeting, was that you were very keen to see in terms of the number of subjects because it is about the individual that it has impacted and effected on. At the same time, we have to record the deployments by individual officers because we also monitor that quite specifically.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): As I say, it is interesting to look at these individual boroughs. I mention Bromley, just because it stands out, is a high number of deployments and it is something for that BOCU with its leader to look at how does that work? Why is that and what are the reasons around that; but it could be because there is a town centre with a disproportionate number of issues.

Also, if we can move on to about the people who are being Tasered, which is something that I think we looked at last time and said, "Can we really drill down in it?" Thank you very much for giving us this information, particularly around the classification of individuals who officers

believe to be emotionally or mentally distressed. Clearly, this is something that we have to be thoughtful about and your officers particularly have to be thoughtful about. On our map here, it shows borough by borough, proportion of the total of individuals who have that classification or deployments? Is it deployments? Pat, broadly as an overall comment could you speak to that graph and what is your take on it?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): There are a couple of things for the officer that does the assessment in the first place to decide whether or not they think the person is suffering from emotional distress. If we start looking at the number of deployments, that is pretty high in terms of 532 times that we have had it. However, the number of individuals where it has been fired on is 116, so it is less. What is important is in the training. Officers are taught about that but it is something that we need to continue to monitor. It is in terms of when somebody is displaying those signs the officer is also thinking of officer safety and trying to find what is the best way to reduce the threat towards the individual and also themselves and that is why there has been the Taser deployment.

We still need to have further information on this field to be able to understand exactly what is going on.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): There are some quite high percentages?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Very high percentages.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I am not going to keep picking up on this. I will talk about somebody else. There are some quite high percentages around. I know it is an officer's decision on the ground to make. Matt, you have somebody behaving in front of you in an aggressive manner; you are taking a risk analysis. What is your thought process when you go through this classification?

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): If you are faced with someone who is posing a threat, mental health covers a massive spectrum and we are asking them to record that huge spectrum. If we identify any mental health issues it has to be recorded on the form. The form is very in depth and it says, "Are there any aspects of their behaviour which hints towards mental health?" If someone has taken a knife then the chances are there is a mental health issue there which has forced them to pick up a knife and maybe acting in an aggressive manner which has forced us maybe to draw the Taser. Therefore, we are seeing a lot of mental health aspects in terms of their behaviour and that has to come into a risk assessment.

That said; our training is such that we will take on board what is front of us but our tactics have to be around safety. The safety of the subject, the safety of the public and also the safety of the officer, so we will take on board what we have seen but our tactics are to make sure that we can do the safest possible outcome.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I think the public will be reassured that safety of themselves, the public and officers and the individual is paramount.

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): Yes, but we are trying to get a better understanding of mental health.

Steve O’Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): Trying to understand whether that is a mental issue or equally under the influence of alcohol or drugs, which would be the town centre point, Matt, would it not?

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): Absolutely, and more often than not we are seeing drugs and alcohol will have an impact on the way the person thinks and may be not quite as rational and that can have an effect on their mental health so we are seeing more and more of that.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): It is also important to highlight that the assessment is done by the officer. It is not actually a medical assessment.

Steve O’Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I did get that.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): I am very keen that our officers actually put down what they think rather than me try and cover up those figures in any way. It might be helpful at the next meeting if we could show the actual forms that are completed with every single deployment so that people are aware of the in depth level of detail that goes into it every time one of these items are used and about the scrutiny and governance that takes place.

Steve O’Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I think that would be helpful because, as you say, this is just 12 months in deployment. We have travelled a journey already, now getting these individual figures and I think there is much more to learn around Taser deployment. Matt, it will help you in your job to understand the meanings of the whole process and that will be most helpful. Are there any other questions around there?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): It is great to have this additional information and certainly this is not about getting officers to change and record any differently; commenting on as they see it and those figures. Clearly one of the things we do not get from the way this has been presented today is the proportion of individuals that are violent. Certainly, the case for Taser as a tactic was a way of reducing the risk of injury to both the public and to police officers from people who were being violent. The reason for them being violent is an interesting fact but I think that is the figure that we need to be reminded of when we look at this otherwise we might be going down a garden path and we certainly do not want to get officers to change the way they record things.

I just leave it as a thought. This is a tactic where we do not want a postcode lottery in the way it is deployed and the figures across London are highly variable. It may be down to the way the figures are collected but I think you are right in saying we need to understand why Hillingdon has a firing rate that is so out of line with the rest of London. Other places have far lower deployments than the average and higher firing rates. That is the kind of thing that we need to just understand. It is a very different picture across London. It was really helpful to have this information and also to be reassured that the number of deployments and the proportion which you actually resort to firing a Taser are lower than similar forces. I think that is something that the public can be reassured about.

Shall we move now onto covert policing?

Rebecca Lawrence (MOPAC Director of Strategy): Undercover policing. The Metropolitan Police Service and MOPAC, as an oversight body, are the only such organisation to publish undercover policing data. Clearly we recognise the limits of what can be put in the public domain, so we are grateful for the data provided and the willingness to answer questions.

The data here shows the outcome of undercover operations and the kind of positive outcomes that can be produced in terms of cash seized, in terms of drug seized, in terms of firearms seized and stolen items recovered. It also shows a change in the proportion of arrests for those types of outcome over the year; changes which are probably to be expected. For example, you see that the proportion of arrests for offences for acquisitive crime increased from 17% to 26% during the last financial year, for which we have data. As you would expect with more arrests for acquisitive crime there have been more seizures in stolen property so 125 more items than the previous year.

We show, when comparing those two years, that there has been a shift in terms of drugs seized and cash seized: it was less in this year than the previous year, for which we have data. As I say, the dashboard shows a certain amount and I think the questioning could pull out some other trends.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): If we just look at the outcomes for those broad categories this is an important tactic and clearly almost if we look at the two years that we have data for, there is a decline this year relative to last year.

Richard Martin (Commander, MPS): On the full 12 months. Some of those from the previous year will be very specific operations that were long-term operations so you expect to see quite a lot of seizures as part of those operations. It depends on the level of operations that we are doing. If you looked at the first three months of this year compared to last year, then our seizures around cash, drugs, firearms, stolen items are actually up for the first three months.

It is a positive story and one of the conversations we have had before, and I know we had last time we were here, was around the number of operations we are doing this year compared to last. The sort of pattern at the moment that we are doing half of the operations we did the year before; is still there. I actually think that is positive. If you look at undercover policing you are looking at a very intrusive tactic.

You are looking at people's lives being affected; but the outcomes are the same if not more than when we did twice the number of operations. We are very, very focused on the right operations. We are making sure that we have an effective tasking process but also in the round, we have a very effective planning meeting now. When an operational team comes to us and wants to do a certain operation, we will look at the whole range of covert tactics that are available to us. Whereas before putting an undercover officer in might have been first choice, now we will look at the full range of operations and activity that we can do. A lot of operations that are conducted do not ordinarily need an undercover officers involved; we can do it in different ways which is quite positive.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): That is helpful because we went through the Q1 figures recently and those are significantly better than the

first quarter of last year. We need to sustain that throughout this year to buck that trend. Duwayne, you wanted to say something?

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): I see we have double the amount of firearm seizures? Can you just explain how you have done that?

Richard Martin (Commander, MPS): Yeah, we have had a specific operation around firearms which involved the seizure of quite a number of arms in one operation, if that makes sense. It was a specific targeted operation against the firearms dealer so we seized 4,500 rounds of ammunition; we seized quite a significant number of firearms. One of the things with the legislation over here and a tightening of gun laws is that it is still quite tricky for individuals and criminals to get hold of firearms. Where we have intelligence information that can lead us to somebody that is either converting replicas or blank firers, then we will target them absolutely. This is one of those sorts of examples.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): This is a good news story, so why is the Metropolitan Police Service not talking about it?

Richard Martin (Commander, MPS): There hangs the challenge around covert policing.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): That is the purpose of today.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): You can see we do tend to talk about it when it gets to court because the tactic will be revealed in court. At the end of a judicial process we do discuss it. Before then there might be issues about sub judice so we will not do it. Also if it an ongoing operation we also are not going to talk about it at that stage because we do not want to let other people know that we are using that tactic in the area. You are seeing the outcome and the commodities that are coming in and it is important that we report them. The time to celebrate is after the court case.

Richard Martin (Commander, MPS): There are real peripheral advantages too, so you see the tangible outcomes here of things that we have seized, people that we have arrested. One of the really great advantages of the undercover officers is the amount of intelligence that we generate as well so we get a real feel for who really is doing what, when they are doing it. We can rely on that as a good source because it is from officers themselves and that is positive.

The other that is really critical around undercover policing is that the value for money you get. Not just in arresting organised criminal networks, not in just seizing commodities. If you look at the majority of offences that go to court that involve undercover officers the defendants plead guilty at that first instance. The whole protracted criminal justice system that you may see in a not guilty plea is not there. If you looked at the overall cost and what a trial costs etc, what we are doing is we are getting guilty pleas very early. 'Justice delayed is justice denied', well it is not in this case. It is very specific, it is an early guilty plea and obviously we save the criminal justice system and all the other cases that are backing up because of ones that are there. We save that too, so it is a very, very effective tactic.

Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member): As you will know, there has been a fairly recent HMIC inspection of this whole area at the national level. How far do the changes that we have seen, in the data, reflect that?

Richard Martin (Commander, MPS): Most of the recommendations from the UK wide HMIC were really around things such as: tenure, training, all that kind of piece. We were ahead of the game in all of those categories. We have done an awful amount of work in the last two years so we now have much greater governance within the unit, we have an increased level of supervision on all operations, we have increased debriefing and briefing of officers before they deploy.

We have just been inspected by the Officer of Surveillance Commissioners and we had the best report we ever had in the history of the Metropolitan Police Service. They are very pleased with the governance arrangements, they are very pleased with the risk assessments that we do. They are very pleased with the authority levels, the intelligence case that generate that. Of course, to give confidence to communities there is a whole host of what I would call necessary bureaucracy, which is not something you hear very often, around the authority levels to deploy an undercover officer. There is a planning stage, the intelligence has to be current, it has to be relevant, and it has to be happening now and then it goes through a whole authority process which ends up with me. Any operation that runs up to the nine month stage is authorised by me. If it goes over there then it goes to the Assistant Commissioner. We have lifted our authority levels but we had already started doing that before the legislation changed so I think it is a good news story for the Metropolitan Police Service because we have been ahead of this all the way through.

Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member): That is good reassurance for Londoners. Are there any further things on the list that HMIC had, that you feel you still need to tackle?

Richard Martin (Commander, MPS): Not in relation to the recent report, no. I think we have already put into place the things we needed to do and we had done, as I said before, we are ahead of the game. There are certain elements that I still would like to take forward with the support of my boss. Now we have all undercover operations are deployed through me, I am the authorising officer for the Metropolitan Police Service. We have online undercover officers as well so these are people that have grown up over the years as online activity has increased; whether it is criminality or paedophilia or whatever else. What I would like to do is draw them into the centre as well so we have the same consistency, standards and governance around that piece. That is not to say it is bad at the moment but I think the more you bring it into the middle, the more that you make sure that everything is being done to the same standards, means we can give that greater confidence to communities going forward for everything that we are doing around this area.

Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member): There are some different issues around intrusion obviously with that particular type. What would you see the particular challenges?

Richard Martin (Commander, MPS): In relation to intrusion, it is the same authority level, so it is still around proportionality. It is still around necessity. We only deploy online for very specific operations and we cover a whole range of activities so it would not just involve stolen items, which it does, people selling stuff. It would involve paedophilia, it would involve child

sexual exploitation so we are still very well governed around it. What I am trying to do now is get us to be more creative. The teams that work are very creative. They always look in different ways that we can get ahead of criminality and obviously things I cannot talk about in open forum but there is some really good operations being developed now that allows us to target criminality online as well as offline.

Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member): I think it might be useful, Chair, if we saw some more figures on that particular aspect; the online surveillance in future because I am sure it is a growth area of concern.

Richard Martin (Commander, MPS): We could certainly do a general overview to tell you what proportion of our operations might be on there if that would be helpful. I am very keen to be as open and transparent as you can be but obviously with the caveat that we do not want to give people the opportunity to know what we are doing, as in the criminals.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): That is very positive. As you say the figures for this quarter, are you able to share that?

Richard Martin (Commander, MPS): Yes, I am.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): The figures for the first two categories: the cash seized and the drugs seized.

Richard Martin (Commander, MPS): Yeah, if you look, we did 1st January to March, so comparing last year to this year. If you looked at firearms last year in that period we had seized none, we have seized four this year. In relation to theft related offences: last year 40, this year 93. In relation to sexual offences: last year 38, this year 45; so that covers a whole range of sexual offences that we deployed into. We are slightly down on drugs, this is around arrests: last year we arrested 160 people for drugs, this year 92; but that reflects the fact that we will use different tactics to tackle drugs markets. In relation to tangible seizures last year: 49 firearms or component parts, this year 106 which includes 4,500 rounds of ammunition so that is ammunition not getting into the hands of people that should not have it or the firearm. In relation to theft related recoveries: we are about the same; we had a big operation last year which slightly skews the figures but we are there or thereabouts around theft which is around 200 items in that three-month period. Up on drugs: this time last year we seized 12 kilos of drugs, this year 16; in relation to money last year we seized approximately £188,000, this year £135,000. All of that is set against the backdrop that we are doing half the amount of deployments than we were last year.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): That is helpful and it is useful to have these six-monthly reviews to check that that is a continuing trend and reassuring the governance measures that you have in place and the moves to ensure that the same high standards applies to all forms of covert policing. We probably do need to have a better understanding; it would be helpful for the public, of the demand and nature of online covert policing. I think that is probably something for next time.

I think you want to show us some body worn video, is that right?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Yes, we do because I think it would be useful in a number of ways because we have rolling that out within SC&O19 Firearms Command; use of body worn videos. I think at first there was a probably a degree of hesitation from the officers but since the use of it in a couple of instance their confidence has grown. There are still some issues in terms of when the officers themselves get to see the material.

If you think about any incident where firearms are deployed the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) will investigate it and there is the issue about at what stage within that evidential chain the officers see it, also then at what stage is it released to the public. We see it as a way to increase confidence of the public because they then get to see what officers are actually doing but also in terms of officers it is evidence of what has happened, on the occasion, for them to rely on as well. I think it is probably appropriate, Matt, if you can show people what you are wearing and some of the issues about where you actually place it on your clothing.

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): I will put the body armour on just to give you a true reflection of how we wear the cameras. The small device you can see here is in fact the battery pack because obviously we are on duty for up to 12 hours so we need quite a light battery pack. This here upon the shoulder is the camera. That is fine for day-to-day policing, to do stop and search, vehicle stops or whatever but when we go into the firearms role we hold the firearms up, so all you are going to see then is my hands.

We looked at different mounting systems to make sure that we can capture the best evidence possible. The easiest one was a rather attractive headband we can wear around the back of our head, like that, and the camera can move from there straight to the top of my head. So there you can see exactly what I am seeing because obviously when we go into a situation we are looking all around us so that is a very useful tool. You cannot wear it for too long and obviously everyone's head is slightly different shapes and sizes. Now, obviously if we are going into a firearms situation there is a good chance that we are going to have to put on our hearing protection because if we are in an environment where firearms are going to be used there is a chance of us damaging our hearing. We may wear our ear protections and again we have a rather useful clip on the side of our ear defenders which the camera will quite simply clip onto and that will go on the side of our heads. Again, pick up what I am looking at.

Finally, if we go into a pre-planned operation or we have more time, I will of course put my ballistic helmet on and again you can see there is a fixture on the side of my helmet and that will go up there. Whatever environment I am going into I can manoeuvre my camera around to make sure we shoot the best evidence. Day-to-day policing, the shoulder mount is absolutely fine, it is perfect but I am sure you can understand, as soon as I put a jacket on, it is going to cover that camera up so you need to be thinking all the time, "Where is my camera? What are we looking at?" It has taken us a bit of time, if I am honest, to get used to it because we have to remember to turn it on.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Always helpful.

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): Absolutely, it is always on, the camera, it is always recording on a 30 second loop so no matter what happens after 30 seconds it rewrites itself. So if something was to happen spontaneously now, the camera would have picked it up. I then push

record it will remember the previous 30 seconds, so it will remember and it will show you what has happened.

We obviously work in pairs, or on the armed response vehicles, in threes. Someone will shout, "Camera on", and we will all turn our cameras on at the same time. As soon as we are deployed to a call, as within armed response vehicles we can be travelling across London. As soon as we are assigned to a call we will turn the cameras on so for that journey from one borough to the next, the cameras are rolling the whole time and recording. That will pick up all our decision making that is going on inside the car. The decision that is coming from the tactical firearms commander or an operational commander; all those decisions and those conversations between officers and decisions that have been made, threat assessments that are being made, will be picked up on the cameras. You will not see a great deal but you will hear our voices making those decisions and obviously then when we deploy you will see what we are seeing. It is not perfect but that is the whole point; we can help you mould this situation so eventually we have the best product available to provide the best evidence.

I will be honest, I was sceptical when this whole mounted camera came in last August and I was nervous; what are we doing this for? We have learned from it and I would not go out on patrol now without a camera.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): That is interesting.

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): I would not go out without it. The reasons are quite simply: it offers me a degree of protection, especially the firearms officers bearing in mind what I may have been deployed to do. It diffuses situations as soon as get out the first thing we will tell somebody this is being videoed. In the past, they all have videoed us, we are now videoing the situation. As soon as I tell somebody or a group of people, "We are videoing you", their behaviour changes, our behaviour changes and the interaction we are having is much, much better.

We are finding that complaints are down, the use of force is down because we are not having the conversation we had before; things are diffused. As a result we are also achieving best evidence and we are capturing more than we can ever write in a statement and that is very important in terms of the evidential process we go through the judicial process.

Finally, it has improved confidence. People see it; they will identify the camera saying, "What is that?" "It's a camera", "Why have you got a camera?" We go into detail of why we are wearing cameras and they are like, "It is brilliant". I do a lot of community events, people talk about the body worn videos and people are very happy that we are wearing them. Any question about the camera and how it works and how it operates?

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): I just want to make certain that it works in all circumstances where you might be deployed. Does it work as well at night as it does during the day?

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): Yes, absolutely. We did a lot of research before they gave us the cameras. We looked at high definition, standard definition, different types of angles because it will pick up a certain degree of angle; it is not going to pick up everything. The wider

your angle the less definition you are going to have. We have standard definition as opposed to high definition because we found it works better at night time and we can then store more. The moment you have high definition we were storing an awful lot of video footage which takes up a lot of capacity. Standard definition is very good. I have used it on jobs at night time and it has been very, very effective. It will pick what is being said and what you are seeing.

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): Are there any problems with exceptionally bright light?

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): Again, it is not perfect, no camera work is perfect unless you go to a TV studio and get one of those cameras but it is offering us very good sights.

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): In terms of your experience of it being of evidential quality?

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): Yes, very good. You can pick up what people are saying. If it was in this room now and lots of people are talking. It does not just focus on what you are saying; it will pick up all the conversation. Again, it is not the best microphone but it will pick up what is being said. It will certainly pick up my voice and what you are saying to me.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): We cannot hear what you are saying because you are not behind the microphone.

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): Sorry, I will sit back down.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): We are benefitting from it. Any other questions, points? Duwayne, what do you think?

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): You have gone out on a shift so that after every shift you then log that data back in?

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): We have terminals back at each police station, now. What we do is we will unclip the battery pack, put that back on charge and we will put the camera back in and that automatically will get uploaded to a computer software package. Obviously you have uploading software and they have invested money and it is uploaded fairly quickly.

I will then go back upstairs, I will log onto my system, I will log on to the camera software and I have all the incidents that I have been to that day. Now, you could find on a busy shift you have six, seven clips and that might be vehicle stops, stop and searches, en route to a firearms call. We will then go through and we will tag them so we will give them a title so it might be, 'Stop and search in Hackney', for example. I will put my name on it; I will put exactly where I was when that happened. If we think it is going evidential purpose we will then save that so we can then pass that onto the CPS, for example, or anyone who is investigating that incident.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): You have control, so you can watch what you previously recorded?

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): Once it has gone onto the system, we can then watch it. If it goes into a post-incident procedure where we have had to take a shot, for example, then the IPCC will take over the investigation and we will not then look at it. It becomes evidence of that incident and we will look at it after we have written our statement.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): That post-incident procedure, who then takes control of your pack?

Matthew Fox (Sergeant, MPS): The IPCC.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): The IPCC. There are two things if you think of an incident. There are two lots of people that are deployed: there is the IPCC plus our professional standards department. Usually the Directorate of Professional Standards (DPS) is there first and they take possession of it. The officers have to give their account of what has actually happened before they are ever able to see the video shooting of what has happened.

On many occasions, and we have had it in the last incident, the officers still have not seen what the video shows because it is up to the IPCC at what stage within the investigation they show the officers. That goes back to when you use a firearm, it is the officer's individual responsibility and they have to say it is what their belief was. Of course, sometimes what your belief of what has happened might be different from what the camera is seeing and that is why it is really important that the officer gives their first account in a statement form or in interview as to what they believed happened before they ever see the footage so that they do not change their story because of what they have seen.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Thank you. As we are drawing to a close for this session, do you want to show us the video clip, Pat?

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Yes, we have a couple of video clips which would be useful for you to see.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Good, thank you.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): Are they controversial?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Well, we will see.

Richard Martin (Commander, MPS): They are both done in the training environment so they are manufactured in that sense but it shows you the quality.

(Video number 1 is played to all MOPAC Challenge participants)

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): This is training at Gravesend is it?

(Video number 2 is played to all MOPAC Challenge participants)

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Those are whole training videos.

Mike Gallagher (Chief Superintendent, MPS): Maybe just to a couple of points. Obviously, you have just seen the footage from one of the cameras. Each officer would have the cameras in play and they would be operating so you would have a much wider view of what is happening so that would take place.

In terms of the downloading, it is automatically stored for 31 days so regardless of whether the officers have tagged. If there was a subsequent complaint two days later, three days later, even if the officer has not tagged it, it is maintained for a minimum of 31 days in any event.

If the officer feels that encounter is going to lead to a complaint or any form of follow-up whether it is evidential or otherwise, they tag it and it is then retained for as long as is actually required. That is in parallel to the PACE described in relation to the post-incident procedure where there are very, very strict rules.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): How does the individual ensure that it is kept? What would be the reporting process? How would I ask for that footage to be saved?

Mike Gallagher (Chief Superintendent, MPS): If it is an incident that we think is going to have any evidential requirement, we would tag that automatically. In other event, all of those are retained automatically so that download process downloads absolutely everything.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): What I am saying that as an individual --

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): As a member of the public, do you mean?

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): Yes.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): One of the issues is that it would depend by which process you asked us for it, at the moment. We would like to be as open with our recordings as possible. If it is a complaint, obviously, that will be getting investigated at some stage. It will be looked at. If there is no judicial process within it, it would be quite appropriate for you to see it. If there is a judicial process it would be part of the evidential chain and we need to consider, as any witness would, when would be an appropriate time to show you the video.

Duwayne Brooks (MOPAC Critical Friend): The question is: how do I ensure that it gets saved because it is only 31 days, it is only one month. It may take me two or three weeks to recover from something. Let say I have had an encounter that was quite distressing for me, so it takes me two or three weeks to recover from that. Then I go and report that to a solicitor, that may be more than a month.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): The difficulty we have is we keep it for 31 days at the moment. One of the issues is about the amount of storage that is required and the costs that go with it. We have had to look at what is proportionate because it is not just about our firearms officers; it is all of our officers across London that has the equipment. We think about a month is a reasonable period to store it.

We are quite happy for it to be public that it is within a month. I would hope if there is an incident that has happened to you that you would, within a month, come forward and actually make a complaint or say, "I'm not happy about this situation". The longer the time goes on the less able that perhaps the individual will have the recall about what has happened but also the officer to go back and say what actually happened in terms of that incident, confrontation or whatever that has left a member of the public unhappy.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Drawing this to a conclusion, I think it is fair to say that is one of the reasons why we have gone through the world's largest pilot of this technology because we did want to make sure that there are very clear protocols around when these are switched on and switched off and how the information is downloaded and stored. I am delighted to get a front line officer -- I am normally surrounded by all these police chiefs -- a Sergeant, to have a real front line cop that has to make decisions. Say what you just said and say you really do not want to go out on patrol anymore without body worn video, because that is precisely the feedback when I went down with the then Assistant Commissioner Simon Byrne to the Isle of Wight and talked to our front line officers there. It is a hugely beneficial technology, as you said and described, as a way of calming things down, reducing the risk of violence occurring simply because you switch it on and say, "You're on video". Having that amplified by you has been very powerful and we do need to make the right steps now to see about how we can roll this technology in the right way so this is something that more officers can have access to. It is very positive to hear that from you and very useful to see those clips.

Overall I think, extremely reassuring, Pat, to hear from all of you that these intrusive tactics, are being used. They are being used largely in a way that is benefitting the public of London and to cover each of those, throw up some questions where we might want to have some more information, throwing the spotlight of transparency on these tactics is a way of building confidence and the reassurance of the wider London public in what you are doing. Thank you for taking us through that today and look forward to going through this again in six months' time.

Pat Gallan (Assistant Commissioner, MPS): Thank you very much.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)(Chair): Thank you.