

Date: Thursday, 12 December 2013

Location: Chamber, City Hall

Hearing: MOPAC Challenge

Start time: 10.00am

Finish time: 11.30am

Members:

Stephen Greenhalgh, Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime

Faith Boardman, MOPAC Challenge Member

Jeremy Mayhew, MOPAC Challenge Member

Jonathan Glanz, MOPAC Challenge Member

Steve O'Connell, MOPAC Challenge Member

Linda Duncan, Chair of MOPAC/MPS Audit Committee

Helen Bailey, Chief Operating Officer, MOPAC

Guest Speakers

David Wood, Home Office Immigration Enforcement

Tony Easthaugh, Home Office Immigration Enforcement

Metropolitan Police Representatives

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley

Commander Steve Rodhouse

Commander Alison Newcomb

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Welcome to the, I think the last MOPAC Challenge of 2013, and it is on Foreign National Offenders. And we have a number of expert people here to inform us about the issue. I am delighted to welcome Tony Easthaugh and David Wood. David, you're Director of Operations at the Home Office Immigration and Enforcement...

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Director General+.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Director General.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): ... Director General is almost Home Secretary isn't that right?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well it's one more level back.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Well welcome, we're delighted to have you along. And Tony, of course I've met, in fact you're doing different things at different times, but in now it's definitely foreign national offending. Tony welcome.

Tony Easthaugh (Director of Operations, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): It is, I would describe, so I am actually Metropolitan Police Commander on secondment to the Home Office.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): On secondment to the Home Office, yes. Okay, delighted that you're here. And also to welcome Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley who – Mark, just to warn you – I think we need you to kick off to give us a strategic overview if you like. And then obviously, flanked by Commander Steve Rodhouse, and also Commander Alison Newcomb from Westminster to give us a flavour of some of the particular issues within the City of Westminster.

I would like to say a few things before we kick off the discussion this morning. I think London has always been an international place. It has always been somewhere where we've been invaded, conquered, but also very welcoming of different people coming to this great city from, literally from all over the world. And in recent years I have to say it's very much in the first rank of global cities, and no less global than somewhere like New York or Sydney or Beijing, I've never been to, I presume that's a, is that a global city, I don't know. Hong Kong's probably more of a global city. And you can see that in the classrooms and the schools that my children attend, you can see that as you walk the street that we're home to literally hundreds of different communities, probably 300 plus different languages and dialects, and a lot of people come to the city as a place of opportunities. As the Mayor says, "We welcome everyone", I think he says to the French, "Bienvenue à Londres", "Escape the terror of President Hollande, and escape the punitive taxation. Come to London. Come from all, come with your money from Dubai and Doha, and all these other places. Spend it here in London. Buy Scotland Yard from the Met", he says, you know cash. So, we welcome all that, wealth creation. London is a city of

opportunity, of social mobility. It's fair to say that both my parents were not naturally born Londoners; they moved to London because it provided them with a better life, and so we are welcoming.

We recognise also that from time to time some people visit as tourists, or they stay here as residents, and maybe they don't have such good motives, and I think today we want to know and understand the issues that you face in ensuring that we're not a soft touch to foreign criminals, and that we know how to deal with that appropriately, as quickly and as expeditiously as possible. I think that's very important that London feels secure. I mean the trigger for this discussion is very much that we need to feel that we're ready and aware that, certainly as the EU widens, which personally I support, to include nations like Bulgaria and Romania, that you're able to deal with any issues that may occur from that. But I think this is all about understanding the issues that we face and hearing from the experts and how you're responding to that. And so without further ado, Mark, what I would very much welcome, I know you've got a presentation here, is if you could set very much the context to London, I would be very grateful; over to you.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: And this presentation will take 15 minutes, and I'll set the context at the start of that using the first, the first two slides. I echo everything you say in your opening about sort of, the nature of London, exciting as a national city. And what we're talking about here effectively is the proportionate problem that comes with that excitement, that every population has its criminals, and the indigenous population certainly has it, and migratory populations have them as well, and this is simply a natural consequence of that that we have that to deal with.

The thing that's different in London and it's really struck us is the scale of it is, is very, very significant. In many parts of the country, the proportion of the county or city that is international by nature is much smaller than London. Here we have a much greater proportion, and that then plays out in a similar proportion of criminality. So if a quarter of, so a third of London is international then it's not surprising that it's in that proportion that we see criminality. So the number that we sort of keep coming back to is of the crime we deal with in London, 28% of the people we arrest are foreign nationals. I should emphasise of course that they are largely, and a vast, vast majority here legally with various different statuses; they might be students, they might be on, they might be here as tourists, they might be on various visas, they might be European migrants. So the vast, vast majority of it is completely, their presence here is lawful, but we're arresting 28% of our, of the people we arrest in the year; 72% are indigenous and 28% are foreign nationals. So it's proportionate.

The second point I make strategically about this, which is important in understanding the problem in our approach, is that it's about volume and it's about risk. So if you look at the total cohort of people going through our custody suites, of course the majority of people we arrest are for less serious offences, because the serious offences at the iceberg are a small proportion. The total volume is 28%, but when we look at our high harm cohorts of offenders, so if we look

at dangerous sex offenders we're aware of, if we look at our gang nominals, we've got sort of about 3,500 gang nominals on our gang matrix at the moment, and about a quarter of those last time I checked were Foreign National Offenders. And if you look at, if you then look at sort of organised crime, the organised crime groups that we map in London at the offenders associated with them, you get about 25% again. So in all of those areas, whichever cohort we come back to, whether you look at volume or risky individuals, you're broadly up in the territory of around the quarter to the a third, so it's a big issue.

I was going to mention what's our ambition here? So I think it's sensitive territory, and we need to be really clear what our ambition is. Our ambition is simply about an equal quality of justice for all. Now that sounds sort of very simple, but it's about our ability to deal with criminals wherever they're from. You should not get an easier or a tougher ride if you're a criminal from London or Leeds or from Poland or Pakistan. We ought to be equally effective at doing the criminality wherever that criminal comes from, indigenous or not. And we start from the basis we don't think we are, candidly. And the challenge is to level that up, and that's where we're trying to get to, and we'll talk through how we're making massive progress and there is much, much more to do. The reason I say quite bluntly we're not is that policing is heavily dependent on information and intelligence. And knowledge on indigenous criminals is very, very, significant, so we know when they've been arrested, we know what they've been convicted of, we may have other intelligence on them. That is shared across forces across the UK; the sharing systems aren't perfect, but they're very strong and there are national databases, and that works very effectively. Of course we also have biometrics, we have fingerprints and DNA from criminals who have been arrested or convicted. So again, if they leave a trace at the scene of a crime we're going to catch them. That's the advantage we have with the 72%. The 28% by definition, much of that information that would help us deal with them effectively is held in their home country, and it's only if people have been here a long time and developed a criminal history here if you like that we would have that sort of equalised, so there's a capability issue that we've got to try and close.

The other part about capability, I think the way we work in partnership, I think David and the Commissioner and I share a view that historically there probably wasn't a strong enough relationship between sort of UKBA as was and the Police Service, but we are determined to build a very, very strong and integrated sort of party and working relationship, and there's been massive progressive made.

So that's the context, you're coming to three things that we are doing, and Steve will talk through these, the details a bit more. So firstly, everybody you arrest you need to be equally good at working out who they are, and be equally effective at dealing with them, that's the first point. Then with your high harm most dangerous people, predatory sex offenders, dangerous gang offenders et cetera, you need to think very seriously about how you use concerted effort between Police and Immigration Enforcement in terms of how you can take them on as dangerous and difficult people. And thirdly, you need a strand of activity, continue trying to improve the capability to share that information and have that understanding, because that's

the thing that undermines our ability. So those are three things that we've been doing under Operation NEXUS. We started testing this approach last summer, we went sort of, started seriously going live the back end of 2012, and it's really rolling very effectively now, and we've got some fantastic results to share with you, but I think we will both say there's more we can do. You're trying to get two agencies who haven't worked together for a very long time to be really integrated; we've made a lot of progress but there's more to do.

So if we just move to the next slide, the last point I was going to make is the nature of the problem. The nature of the problem 50/50 it's European and non-European, and the top 10 countries by volume are again half European and half non-European. And we talked, we've put this data out publicly before, this happens to be recent month's arrest going through custody, but I could give you all sorts of time periods and you get very similar pictures. So you get five non-European countries, in Jamaica, Somalia, Nigeria, India and Pakistan, and you get five European countries, in Romania, Poland, Lithuania, Portugal and Ireland. And there's different factors behind all of those, but those are the top ten in terms of volume, but then of course they've all got very big populations in London so that's not necessarily that surprising. But then there's a lot of other countries as well, so...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Can you name the scale on the, is that 800 what?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: That's 800 arrests in the month of November.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So this is a month, this is a snapshot in a month.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: Yes, that's it, but I could give you a year's data or a quarter's data and you'd get a broadly similar, broader similar makeup.

So in terms of shaping the problem for understanding, it's half about Europe, half not about Europe, and ten countries represent half the problem, and again five from Europe, five not from Europe.

So Steve will come through now with, starting with what we're doing in custody, and then working through the other areas I discussed. Steve.

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Morning everyone. Before I start, I probably ought to explain why it's me sat here rather than any other member of the Metropolitan Police. I have the portfolio within Specialist Crime for Organised Crime, and that includes the responsibility for our NEXUS Team, which is our response around Foreign National Offenders, or co-ordinates our response around Foreign National Offenders I should say. I've also recently taken on the national policing lead for Foreign National Offenders.

If I start by talking around the custody strand of our work, the first of our three that I'll talk through today. As Mark has said, custody is the start point for an effective response to foreign

national criminality. It is our opportunity to identify someone as a foreign national, to really understand the immigration status and lock down their identity, ideally with some documentation, because as Tony regularly reminds me, having effective documentation of someone's nationality is absolutely critical to our tactical menu if you like.

It is also an opportunity for us to really understand their criminal history, the intelligence is held of them and for us to act accordingly. And Mark's talked about the importance of information. And for me this stage is really crystallized by examples that over the last year we've identified through checks with overseas forces whilst people have been in custody sort of over 60 sex offenders who, unless we had done those checks in custody we would not have known about their previous convictions, and we would not have been able to act in the way we have, which is to manage them as we would do a sex offender who committed those offences in the UK. So just to crystallise the real importance of custody as an opportunity to identify people and their background. And it is our real opportunity to work very closely with Home Office Immigration to use the full sort of tactical range of options. So we have a very close working relationship with Home Office Immigration, they are embedded in a number of our custody suites, and we have now I think increasingly slick processes to identify and refer foreign nationals to Tony and David's team to allow them to consider the immigration case. And particularly, we're talking about people at this point who are not lawfully in the country, whether it can be consideration made as to whether they can be removed immediately.

So since October 2012, we have removed jointly over 1,200 individuals who were not lawfully in the country, and who were identified as foreign nationals through their journey through custody. We've developed a shared performance regime, which of course looks at the outcomes such as the number of people removed, but also increasingly gives us some Borough variations on performance to allow us to understand where the need is greatest in London, and how effective we are in those areas. And also gives us some information on the, sort the precursor activity that we need to take, so how effective are we making sure the rights searches are done with overseas forces, how effective are we at searching people's premises; we have a power under legislation to allow us to search premises to identify identity documents, which as I said, are really important for us.

So for us it's a crucial part of business, and is embedded now as part of the local policing model within territorial policing, and increasingly in the custody regime as well, so that the staff involved in that part of the business really understand what they need to do. And there was training that's been rolled out to allow staff to fully understand the opportunities that they may have once they've identified a foreign national.

If we just flick over to the next slide just to give a bit of colour to this. It talks about an example, and I could have been, selected this from many, but this is a sort of individual who we would routinely arrest for criminal matters, and then through our work in custody, working with the Home Office, identify them as a illegal entrant to the UK, no right to remain. And regardless of whether they are convicted for this offence, they will be leaving the country either

after any prison sentence, or indeed if, for whatever reason they're not convicted prior to. And this is about another option for us to maintain public safety.

I'm conscious of time, so skipping over to the next strand of our activity is around the cohort of people who we described as high harm, but typically they are drawn from our cohorts of gang members, sex offenders, organised criminals, people of that nature. And any, any scan of that list of people will show between 15% and 20% of those are foreign nationals. That doesn't mean to say that they are unlawfully in the country, it will mean, so in all likelihood have some sort of immigration status, but generally an immigration status that can be challenged. They are our most harmful. And what we've done through Operation NEXUS and close working with the Home Office is to establish the principal through immigration courts that people can be removed from the country even if they do not have convictions that would see them removed through convictions alone. So the provision of Police intelligence can make a compelling case to justify the removal of someone from a country. So we have established a group of Detectives who provide, who do detailed checks on those individuals and provide that information to the Home Office, we work together, we're physically co-located at places as well, to allow the building of cases to go forward in front of immigration proceedings to try and remove those people who pose a significant threat.

We now submit 50 cases per week to the Home Office. That will rise by the end of this month to 75, and then to 100 by the end of March. Now these are complex difficult cases, they are not all removable, but, and there is rightly a high threshold for removal and David and Tony will talk about some of the barriers no doubt. To our mind not every country is suitable for removing people from the UK to. There are some challenges around the corporation of some of those countries that we would seek to repatriate people to, and there are some human right considerations that need to be taken into account. But our responsibility from the Met is to identify these people who are most harmful, build the compelling intelligence case around individuals cases, sometimes dispelling some of those human rights claims, trying provide some informed comment on the level of threat someone posses, and indeed their domestic circumstances which might otherwise be a barrier to their removal.

So this slide is complex and it might be one to look at in your own time, but effectively what it shows is that we've referred over 1,200 people to the Home Office, and 41% of those are either removed or detained or will be considered for such after their prison sentence. There's 46% of those, of the remainder are still under consideration. And of course as I say, there are a group of people who it isn't appropriate for one reason or another to remove, but it's still a really important tactic. It's not high volume...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Sorry, just in terms of, look, I think that's a great slide, just finish the process. So 1,200 have been referred...

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Yes.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): ... and how many have been removed?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Well of those, you see 41%, so trying to work out all the numbers. If you see you've got 25% of those are either deported or detained in immigration or have got reporting convictions. So yes, sort of 300 or so. But you've got another 16% that are monitored, because they are in detention for their criminality, so that's 144 in that situation. So the numbers are in the coloured section of the slide.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So what happens to the other ones?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Well some of them are still in the system, so they're being considered, because these cases go backwards and forwards to immigration proceedings on a, sometimes weekly basis, and they are long and complex, and there are some entrenched debates to be had around some of them for a range of reasons.

Tony Easthaugh (Director of Operations, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Chairman, if it assists, the case working teams we take those on, as Steve has said the Immigration Law is very complicated. We have to put in those right checks and balances around it. So they are in the system, and they are being worked, but sometimes we can't remove them within the speed that sometimes we would wish; we've got to go through the whole process. So that's, just because they haven't been shown on the slide, doesn't mean to say that they're not being actively worked.

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Perhaps if we move on, there's a couple of case studies just to show the nature of some of those people who are subject to this type of work. So we have a, the Sierra Leonean individual, predatory sex offender, uses knives for robbery, targets women, linked to a number of a cases, and we were able to provide information that allowed us to challenge his human rights appeal. I don't know the basis of his precise circumstances, but typically we were able to provide information to rebut the assertion for instance somebody is, maybe they've got children in this country and they are, you know the children are dependant on them, we can sometimes provide intelligence to show that they haven't seen their children for 10/15 years as an example.

And there are a number of cases like that. Because we have intelligence, that is not necessarily evidence, but if it is judged to be suitably compelling, it can contribute towards and effective removal from the country. And once somebody has been deported in these circumstances, as it says there, there's no right to return for at least ten years.

The next slide is a very similar case, but you can see the degree of seriousness that we're dealing with, people involved in very serious criminality, we were able to use Police intelligence to overcome someone's Human Rights Act claim to remain in the country.

I said there were three strands, very briefly looking at the last, those are the two processes I talked about are just that, there are processes, but for us to be really effective in achieving the objective that Mark outlined, we need to improve our processes for sharing information, obtaining information, sharing it with partners, and using technology to the best, best degree. So as it says there, information is key to effective policing, so do we know as much about foreign nationals as a UK suspect?

If somebody gets arrested in the UK, one of the first things we will do is a check on the Police National Computer; we'll want to find out about their previous convictions. Now for a foreign national that's not quite so easy. We need to make direct requests to a particular country to understand what convictions someone may have in a country, and with freedom of movement across borders, clearly that's challenging. We might predict where someone might have a criminal record, but of course someone may have a criminal record in Romania, Poland, Bulgaria, France and Germany. So one of our challenges is getting that previous conviction data.

Contrary to some media reporting I think it was last week or earlier this week, we make tremendous use of ACRO, which is the route by which we obtain overseas conviction data. It is a real challenge for us though. What we would want to have is that conviction data within six hours of making a request; typically someone will remain in custody for around six hours. For EU nationals, the guidance is that we would return, or get those checks back within ten days, and they generally are back within ten days, but of course that's ten days where we don't have information that we would have around a UK criminal record. And for non-EU nationals, it can take in many cases months, and some cases if at all will we get that information back. So that is a challenge that we have in terms of understanding someone's previous convictions.

In terms of understanding the intelligence that a country might hold on someone, which is of course different from previous convictions, we have similar challenges, albeit there is light at the end of the tunnel because the UK will have access to the Schengen Information System Two (SIS II) next year, which will give us information about intelligence reports and warnings from across Europe. So a pan-Europe kind of PNC, but without access to previous conviction data. That will be very helpful to us.

One of the other things that we would see tremendous operational value in is being able to compare fingerprint and DNA marks present at crimes scenes across European databases.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Sorry Commander Rodhouse, did you say at the moment we don't have access to this database that's equivalent to the PNC is that right, but we will have soon?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: We can, but it is a much more manual and laborious route. After we are signed to SIS II and there is a big project to put that in place, then I'm very confident that the UK will have effective access during next year, it will be easier.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So when next year?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: I think October is the time. I may need to clarify that, but my sense is it's October, and that's part of a project that the Home Office are co-ordinating. It's a national project, and will be a step forward for us.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So effectively this intelligence exists to other member states within the EU already, is that right?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: There are, yes SIS is up and running, there are other computer systems.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So France would have access to it for instance?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: I believe they do.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): And Germany would have access to it?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: I believe so. I don't have (overspeaking)

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): What about, what about I don't know, Belgium, would they have access to it?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: This is like Trivial Pursuit at my family at Christmas, I'm afraid I don't know the answer to that one. But a large number of them...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): But we don't have access to something that exists because of, you have to sign up to something?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Yes.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay. Right, sorry, I just wanted to understand that.

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Okay. The other key point as I was saying, is around the use of forensic biometric data. There are undoubtedly fingerprint marks and DNA stains on UK crime scenes that have been left by people whose forensic profile is already held by a European Police Force. And if we had the ability to match our crime scene data across Europe, undoubtedly we would be able to match more people to offences. That is an operational need for us, and one that we would like to be able to exploit. There is a system that other states in Europe are signed up to, a convention, and I think from an operational perspective, and I know there are political considerations, from an operational perspective, that's something that we would see tremendous value in.

So at the moment what we do is try and identify the most productive relationships with European, non-European countries; you've seen our top ten list of foreign nationals offenders and where they come from, Romania and Poland are top of those lists. So we have formed bilateral arrangements with those countries to try and share in fast time some of the intelligence and data that we require. So we currently have Romanian and Polish Officers working in London as part of an EU funded project. We find that tremendously valuable, both from their ability to work on the street and advise our Officers and provide some local context, but also they give us a live-time access back into the intelligence systems within their own countries.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Just on the community engagement, I'm beginning to understand what I don't know about the structures of City Hall. I've never heard of the Mayor's London Strategic Migration Panel before. Obviously as Deputy Major for Policing and Crime one learns things every minute of every day. Is there a MOPAC representative on the Panel, because my Chief Operating Officer wasn't aware of its existence either?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: I don't know who sits on it from MOPAC's perspective actually.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Well I think we need to probably sort something out there, but how often does it meet?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: I don't know.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): You don't know?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: No.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Do you know what it does?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: I mean it's clearly much wider than just, just policing. One of my Superintendents, Stuart Dark(?), who leads on NEXUS has attended on a number of occasions. I can get the full details for you.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay, well I think we need to ensure there's some join up there, that we understand (overspeaking)

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Yes, absolutely. I mean I think that neatly lead us on actually to the next slide, which I won't spend too much time on. But we are very aware that this is a sensitive matter, and it's important that communities understand that Police action in this area is about tackling criminality and public safety rather than targeting emerging communities. And we've been quite careful in trying to phrase our media activity and our engagement with communities to make that point very clear. I guess it is for others to judge

how successful we've been on that, but from our perspective we think we've landed some of those messages, but it's a constant picture.

So just on to the penultimate slide for me, this is clearly a national issue. The challenge presented by Foreign National Offenders features large in the recently released Home Office Strategy on Organised Crime.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Is it a national issue, or is it an international issue, that is also a national issue and a London issue, and a street level issue, or an organised crime issue? I mean do we want, is it really right to frame it in that sort of -- I mean I don't, I love your presentation until that point, I understand very much of it now. But do we really want to, do we really think it's as simple as saying it's a national issue? I mean I'm here obviously with a panel of people concerned about London our great Capital City that funds the rest of the nation, but I'm very, but from what I understand what you're saying, given all the work you're doing with your colleagues within the Police Service in countries like Romania and Poland, and the need to think about non-EU states where there are issues, clearly there seems to be to be much more of an international issue...

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Absolutely...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): ... but it's the national issue that hits London.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: I think it is an international issue. I think it's a national consequence isn't it of increased global migration, brings to the fore this issue, and there is a tipping point. If global migration was much lower as it once was, if 5% of the population was international and 5% of Foreign National Offenders were, then you can sort of, people could almost be forgiven for saying, "Well we're not very good at 5% of our business, but we'll focus on the 95%", and that's probably sort of what happened by accident historically.

When you get places like London that are such fantastically vibrant and complex global cities, you have to be outstanding at all your business. You can't afford to be second rate at 28%, which then brings into sharp relief the need for international capabilities to share the information so that Police Forces can be effective. And if the -- I mean the point I was going to make Chair, the sort of, given the Mayor's ambition for London as a sort of welcoming global city, which we would all support, the consequence for the Metropolitan Police as the most interconnected, most effective global Police Force, that sort of, it follows as night follows day really doesn't it.

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: My only point in that, and I absolutely agree with everything that...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Sorry Mark, I don't always disagree with anything you say, I mean you serve London, but in order to serve London very effectively you've got to have those national and international links...

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: Agreed.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): ... in order to do that. That's how I would understand what you've said.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: And these capabilities, we are bridging the gap in capability deficits by coming up with projects between the Metropolitan Police and sort of say Eastern European countries. Actually there's national capabilities required here in terms of the economic climate.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Sorry, I keep butting in Commander Rodhouse, do you want to sort of finish off?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Absolutely. The only point I'd make looking at the last slide, which is around Westminster, which is where this kind of maybe crystallises into reality. The point you made just earlier that this is national, international, is it volume crime, is it organised crime, I think comes together in a microcosm within Westminster where of course there are challenges around people who have travelled to the UK from abroad, rough sleeping, begging, pick pocket crime, but also there's an organised element to that as well. And so what we're really outlining here in broad terms is a reinvigorated response to that around Westminster, where we combine traditional tactics around tackling organised crime, identifying money flows with on street enforcement with revised tactics around dealing with foreign nationals, which is where it comes together certainly in the New Year, and I know that Tony and David will talk through some of the changes in legislation that might allow us to be slightly more effective in dealing with that.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay. Well thank you for a very informative, helpful presentation that outlines the current position, the challenges that Metropolitan Police Service faces, the ambition to ensure that where you're an offender, where you're a foreign national offender you are able to provide the same policing response. And also having that snapshot of where we are and where you're trying to get to; that's been incredibly helpful.

And I think particularly good to have the Westminster case, now I know we're going to move on to that next, but I know my colleagues have some questions, and I'm going to look first to Jonathan or Jeremy, or am I getting the order wrong, but I think Jonathan if you, I mean you have to save some of your questions for Alison on next, but can we start with you?

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): Yes absolutely. Well first of all I think it's fair to say from the offset that I also represent West End Ward on the Westminster City Council,

so this is something which is really very acutely felt both by residents and businesses and visitors to the West End, so it's very, it's very high on my agenda as it is on that of Westminster.

Picking up on a couple of points, you talked about the powers that may be coming down the line which will enable us to work with colleagues in Europe and elsewhere to improve data flows. But just in relation to the existing powers that are available to the MPS, are you happy that those are being sufficiently used in order to target the high risk, high harm offenders?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: So, we are exploiting every data connection that we can do to a great degree. So we are doing, I think it's more than ten times more international criminal record checks that any other Force in the country for example. And there's that piece in the media recently which was a retired Officer who was more talking about history than he was about today. There is, there are still some cases where we're not as quick at doing that as we could do, but the numbers are massive. I mean the National Records Office place ACRO have had to take on a lot of extra staff as a consequence of that Operation NEXUS approach and we're trying to get on top of this, so we are doing that.

We've also done some joint work, we're really grateful to the Home Office do to some more connectivity between systems between the Police and the Home Office. So for example, clearly sort of some people, many people are here on visas, they have to submit their fingerprints. If we've got fingerprints from crime scenes, rather than just comparing them to a Police database, we're now compare them to Home Office databases as well. And that's, so that's helped us identify some offenders that we otherwise wouldn't have done. So we're doing those as much as we can do.

There are some databases we also have to work through. The National Crime Agency holds them on behalf of the UK, and that's where Steve is referring to the next improvements where we'll have more ready access to those. So we're trying to exploit everything that's there, but we want more connectivity because it's, and it's about speed as well as the connectivity. If we arrest somebody for a sexual offence, and you know how determined we are to deal with those and prosecute as many people as possible, often someone's past criminality is relevant to it. If someone is saying, if we arrest somebody and they say, "It wasn't rape it was consent", it's helpful to know they've been convicted of rape before in other countries. If we don't discover that for weeks or months, then we've bailed that person pending further enquiries perhaps because the evidence didn't meet the threshold, and then weeks or months later you discover actually they've got a track record for similar offences elsewhere. So I mean just, those examples are really powerful, which show how...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Mark, I think what you're basically saying is that when you sign up to something, and I have to remind everyone it was Margaret Thatcher who signed the ability for the free movement of people, goods and services, what we didn't want to assume was that you could commit a crime anywhere within that area, and that crime, that criminal record doesn't follow with you in the same way that you as a doctor can have the right to practice in

different countries, and your General Medical Council Certificate might be valid in other member states. If you're a criminal and you've committed crime, surely that record needs to follow with you so we're aware of that at point of entry, and as you enter this... I mean that's really a fundamental part of the ability to get this to work isn't it?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: It's the ability for us to identify people, and the ability to enforce the law against them properly. It is absolutely essential.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): We didn't give a free movement of people to avoid their past, their criminal past within the EU did we?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: No. And there's a whole sort of stream of European treaties of recent years, we're part of lots of them. There's some things coming on stream soon. And the government is currently obviously looking at different political arrangements around Europe, and that's...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I'll steer you away from politics Mark.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: And I'm not going to...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I'll protect you, don't worry.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: ... it's nothing to do with the Police how, it's nothing to do with me how they negotiate that, that's none of my business frankly, but my point as a Police Officer is I need the capabilities that come from interconnectivity. How they get negotiated and arranged is not for the Police to say absolutely, but what we're trying to lay out here is we desperately need the capability so we can level up our approach internationally, and it's for other wiser heads to work out how to do that.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Jeremy, you've got a question at this point?

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): Yes. You referred right at the beginning Assistant Commissioner, to your objective of removing 2,000 FNOs, I'm not sure if I missed you telling us how you're doing in terms of that objective, but perhaps you could tell us even if it's a repeat, and more particular are there any particular barriers that are standing in your way of achieving it that we could help with?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: We are, we're going to get to the 2,000 or fall slightly short of it. It was an ambitious target at the start of the year that was based on some fairly sort of rough calculations on what we thought could be achievable. It was based both on we're increasing the number of resources we've got invested in Operation NEXUS, and you know the resource stretch at the Met at the moment, so we haven't always got that in as quickly as we wanted to. And it was also predicated on sort of Home Office colleagues to joining us in

that ambition around resource, and as joining them together. And like any complex organisational change there's been some stuttering, but we're going to get somewhere close to that 2,000, which for the first year is a good progress.

And of course our ambition is that that rises year on year because you are creating to some degree a pipeline. That fairly complex line that Steve showed you earlier with the high harm people at different parts of the process. So some had already left the country, some were in detention pending casework, some it wasn't appropriate to put in detention, but were having casework done on them in any event. So as we're referring, I think it's 100 a week now, we're getting close to putting 100 a week cases of high harm people into the pot, and Home Office colleagues are sifting through those, that sort of pipeline is sort of filling up if you like. So over the next couple of years, those numbers will start to rise.

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): I suppose I was inviting you, particularly in the presence of the people from the Home Office, to say if there's anything more that we can do to facilitate that. And if can I combine that with my second question, which will also be I think my last for the moment, which is you referred to extra resources. I believe that that includes some specialist investigators to focus on this?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: Yes.

Jeremy Mayhew (MOPAC Challenge Member): Can you tell us a little bit more about what they do, and how they work with Borough Commanders?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: Okay. So in terms of Home Office colleagues, first of all I'd say we couldn't have had more support and more enthusiasm from Dave and his team frankly for this. That's not to pretend that when you try and put two big organisations together you don't get some clunkiness, and it hasn't always worked properly, and some of that has certainly been down to us. But in terms of a shared determination ambition to transform the way we do business, that's been excellent. And we're constantly looking at our processes, and Dave and I have visited each other's sort of operational centres and things and tried to get under the, get under the detail of it. So that's been really positive.

On the sort of wider Home Office policy side, the sort of connectivity issues that we've been discussing, we've discussed with Ministers and Home Office Officials, and Ministers have been supportive and put together a team to look afresh at what can be done to help improve these capabilities and that works ongoing as a Senior Civil Servant today doing that piece of work.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Can you help us, I mean I accept it's ongoing; I mean like the Channel Tunnel was ongoing for a long time, any milestones in the process?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: So we laid out the operational challenges as we saw them, building on last year's learning. I had a conversation with Minister, which is

probably only a couple of months ago, I'd have to check the date, he set up his team which is really helpful, which has had one meeting, and the guy leading is beavering away. I think we're anticipating products soon in the New Year, but Dave will know better than I do on that.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay. Well I think we're going to move if we can from the strategic overview, how you're responding to the issues to the very local. So Commander Newcomb, we've got to recognise that you police the heart of London's economy. I mean if you're aware that the City of Westminster, driven by the West End, I think you raised over £1 billion, £1.4 billion...

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): Eight I think is the latest...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Is it now at £1.8 billion? £1.8 billion...

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): Larger than the rateable value of Wales.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): It's larger than the rateable value of Wales. So Wales, Wales produces less, it's, it does nothing compared to the City of Westminster, it's an absolute powerhouse of an economy. And the West End is the formula one, and you represent it don't you Jonathan, so you have a specific interest in this. But I think it's important to recognise that you come from Birmingham don't you Mark?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: I do yes, and I'm proud of it.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Yes, do you know what, do you know how much the City of Birmingham collects? The City of Joe Chamberlain, the second city of this country, do you know how much it collects? You don't do you? £370 million, right. £1.8 billion you're responsible... he comes from £300... and he comes to London because we know how important you are, so we want to hear from you Alison, what's going on in Westminster?

Commander Alison Newcomb, MPS: With that lead in. Really the point I wanted to make is, and Deputy Mayor you touched on it in your opening, in terms of the residents, the businesses and the people that visit West Minster. It's critically important to us that we manage not only Foreign National Offenders, but also the manifestations of rough sleeping, antisocial behaviour, begging, gaming et cetera, all of those street level crimes that really do affect the visibility of Westminster, but also how safe people feel when they come to visit, work, live in the area.

So it's really critical to us that we have effective working relationships with partners, and I'm pleased to say that we do, not just our Home Office colleagues that are here today, but also the local authority work really closely with us to try and manage that street level antisocial behaviour. So we run regular operations with various operational names, to tackle those hard-core hotspots where we have rough sleepers, not only from EU nationals, but indigenous individuals as well who are rough sleeping on our streets. So our operations aren't solely around

trying to target the EU nationals, they're much wider than that, but it is about dealing with the antisocial behaviour, begging et cetera.

So there are some hotspots that cause some real problems, so Westminster Bridge is an example of terms of...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Yes, we received loads of letters about the issues around Westminster Bridge at MOPAC.

Commander Alison Newcomb, MPS: And obviously I'm aware of those, and I too receive lots of letters of concern from individuals, members of the public who are obviously not happy about what goes on there. In response to that operationally we do a number of things. I work really closely with Lambeth Borough to run joint operations on the Bridge, both overt operations, so we have PCSOs that patrol the Bridge trying to deter individuals that want to game on that Bridge. But also covert operations, where in effect, and that sounds ever so high tech, but in effect it's Officers in plain clothes who approach those individuals, surround them so that the uniformed Officers can then go in and make the arrests without them escaping.

So that's the kind of thing that we do, that we deal with locally on a daily basis. But twice a month we run larger operations where we're deploying a greater number of our staff, but also linking in with the operational staff from the other agencies, so that we can effectively try to the police this. Certainly our ambition is to reduce the number of rough sleepers and the amount of antisocial behaviour, and we've been reasonably successful I would argue in terms of antisocial behaviour orders. So since March 2012 we've got 15 post convictions ASBOs, so where an individual has been arrested for, for example, begging, we've taken them to court, we've managed to get a post-conviction ASBO. And we've got 25 standalone ASBOs, so they won't necessarily be linked with a direct offence, but we've got sufficient intelligence through those covert operations to identify that those individuals are regularly engaging in that activity, and the ASBO therefore is designed to prevent them coming to the area.

I have to say we've had some real success this year in terms of four exclusions for life from Westminster, so four individuals that have got ASBOs and they cannot come to the Borough at all because their activity is such that you know, it's caused such concern that we've been able to illustrate to the Magistrates that they need to be excluded for life.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): As a result of ASBOs?

Commander Alison Newcomb, MPS: Sorry?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So as a result of giving them AS... sorry, how does that you know?

Commander Alison Newcomb, MPS: Yes, the condition within the ASBO says that...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): As a condition of the ASBO?

Commander Alison Newcomb, MPS: For life you cannot come to, you cannot come to the City of Westminster.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Wow.

Commander Alison Newcomb, MPS: Which is really powerful. So we are trying to utilise every opportunity. But you will know that the main act that we use is the Vagrancy Act of 1824 in terms of...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So a very current legislation then.

Commander Alison Newcomb, MPS: Yes. So in terms of...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): That's before the Metropolitan Police Service was founded. 1824.

Commander Alison Newcomb, MPS: So in terms of trying to deal with rough sleepers...

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: We are very determined and very creative Chair.

Commander Alison Newcomb, MPS: Yes, we are. But you know, it does rely on my Officers knowing and understanding the legislation, but also using their discretion and knowing and understanding when it is appropriate to use it, so there is a fine balance in that. And I think at that, at this point that's probably all I would want to say.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: And can I add on back of this Chair for just 30 seconds, is that of course a lot of this isn't serious criminality that helps you, sort of gives you a Case Detective out the country. However, the piece of legislation that Steve was talking about you might, it might be worth the Home Office colleagues explaining it. Because the other criteria that's looked at sometimes is, as I understand it as a lay person, people exercising their treaty rights. So the whole purpose of free movement is about work and all the other benefits that you spoke about earlier. So if people use their free movement rights, well use their free movement, not to exercise their treaty rights, but for other purposes, then that potentially is a power that's useable, and Home Office colleagues are keen to use it increasingly and there's been some review of the rules, which will increase our impact on this in the New Year.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I know that Linda had a question on this, and I think it's about understanding that balance wasn't it, do you want to just ask that, that's quite a...?

Linda Duncan (Chair of MOPAC/MPS Audit Committee): Yes. In terms of exercising their treaty rights, it seems to me that we're dealing with different layers of individuals. So what we've seen on Westminster is the public face if you will, but what is the balance between that sort of criminality and the sort of organised crime criminality where you have victims as well linked in with the offenders? Do we have any sort of information or statistics on the balance.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): How much is pick pocket type, quality of life crime, small or theft based, theft person as opposed to very serious and organised criminality, what proportion...?

Linda Duncan (Chair of MOPAC/MPS Audit Committee): Because we see organised crime...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): What you look at in foreign national offending.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: What's vagrancy meets antisocial behaviour versus organised crime.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Yes, if you segmented the crime types, how much of it is in the vagrancy end, how much of it is in the... and what does the continuum look like?

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: It's difficult to put a precise figure on it, but if you look at the offences for which the foreign national is arrested, there is a, the bulk of people arrested for things like vagrancy, pick pocketing, aggressive begging and gaming are foreign nationals. But if you also look at the other, the other end of the scale to our maps of organised criminals, there are significant representations of organised crime groups that are linked to other European countries. So you will see some organised crime groups involved in trafficking of firearms, trafficking of drugs that absolutely have a foreign national footprint within the UK.

So I think, it may be slightly simplistic, but the best way of representing this is that foreign nationals have a footprint right from the street level gaming up to and including trafficking of firearms and people. So it runs, it pervades everything, which is why our approach has to tackle all areas of the criminality.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So in that sense, foreign national offending represents offending in general then...

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Yes indeed.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): ... so in the sense that you get everything from the street level right the way through to you know, I don't know the 21st century (overspeaking)

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: But they're not separate. You can't stream this out because you will street level crime that has an organized element, so the funding will go back.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Yes, no we'll pick that up. When I went to Hackney what was absolutely clear was interestingly the link between the street and what was going on at the street and organised criminality, and that interfaces very, I mean you'll understand it far better than I will, but I thought that what's struck me, which is not all that's there's a bit over here and there's a bit over there, there's sometimes a thread going through this.

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Absolutely. And there are examples, there's intelligence to show that there are people who travel between European cities to commit low level crime but are co-ordinated.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Yes, so international criminal minds that derive, okay.

Commander Steve Rodhouse, MPS: Absolutely.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Well, I mean that's the same way business is international, so I guess so crime will be international. Listen, Jonathan, over to you.

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): I'd just like to pick a point, obviously greatly welcome the success that's been had with ASBOs, and I've seen its affect in amongst things the off-street drugs market in Soho and other examples in Westminster, and indeed specifically as I said in the West End. But as I understand it, there's proposed changes to legislation which are upcoming shortly, which could affect the continuance of ASBOs as we know them and the ability of the Police to enforce them through a power of arrest. Is there a concern around that in relation to your ability to continue to give the necessary resource allocation to this if that process were to change?

Commander Alison Newcomb, MPS: Yes, that change in legislation won't directly affect the level of resource that we put to this. As I said, the Deputy Mayor and myself and the Commissioner receive lots of letters of complaints and concern around rough sleeping, begging and that street level activity. We will continue to police that as best we can.

Jonathan Glanz (MOPAC Challenge Member): But if the process itself becomes more time consuming and more expensive through different procedures, is that a concern that we should be aware of?

Commander Alison Newcomb, MPS: It is a concern. I think that for me the biggest concern around it is you know, I've spoken about ASBOs that we've got currently. If one of those individuals that's got an exclusion for life comes into Westminster we've have a power of arrest. In the future that may not apply, so that's a concern, but obviously we will police with the tools, the legislative tools that we're afforded.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: But I mean I think the piece of legislation that's changing in the Home Office is important to hear about as well because that gives us a neutral in terms of dealing with the sort of begging end of the spectrum if you like because of this not exercising treaty rights points.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Help if I outline that?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Actually it's over to you now because we've been waiting for you and we've taken too long, but we've tried to get a flavour and we definitely want to finish with you, so finishing with a bang. Not a literal bang, a metaphorical bang. David, over to you.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Let me just pick up on that first point then I'll go sort of global to local if I may very quickly with a strategic overview. But we have changed; the government have changed regulations about the treaty rights. So Europeans of course have freedom of movement across Europe, including coming into the UK, and yes, some Europeans come here and offend, and I think British people go over and offend in Spain and places like that.

But anyway, so there's freedom of movement for people to come to the UK, but they have to come here to exercise their treaty rights, as indeed we have. So you can't just come and live on the streets of Westminster for example, that's not what is allowed in Europe. You can come here to work, you can come here to study et cetera. So, if after three months you haven't exercised treaty rights, that's being the point that's been taken before, you can be removed from the UK for that reason. So we do have powers then to remove Europeans from the UK because they haven't exercised their treaty rights. We have done this all the time; we've done this regularly. The problem has been it's a bit of a revolving door because that doesn't stop those Europeans returning to the UK. So the government laid before Parliament regulations, changed the European Economic Area (EEA) Regulations on 6 December and laid that before Parliament, which now means that as from 2 January, when we remove people from the UK on the basis they've not exercised their treaty rights, they cannot return to the UK for the next 12 months. Unless at the border of the UK they can positively show they are intending to exercise a treaty right immediately, so that would mean having an offer of a college place or an offer of a job I guess. So that puts far more teeth to that power, and makes it far more meaningful. We also, in respect of foreign nationals...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Sorry can you just, just for my education, so what you're saying is you're trying to close that loophole where you remove someone because they haven't exercised their treaty rights within three months, they can't then come back again effectively.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): That's right.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): What does exercising your treaty rights mean?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): It means...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Imagine I'm from somewhere in Europe and I've come and I committed an offence and I haven't exercised my treaty rights, what do I, what have I not done?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well I think there's two separate things about an offence and not offence. I mean you don't have to commit any offence, and if you just don't exercise your treaty rights, so if you haven't come here to work, you haven't come here to study, you've come here for example, begging on the streets...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I see, so you aren't coming here to do something positive.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Yes, you're not contributing to British society. So you've got freedom of movement, but that's to exercise treaty rights.

So then we can, so the, so someone who is not exercising treaty rights, so we'll say just sleeping rough in Westminster is an example we've heard, they can be removed from the UK. We are looking at whether three months is necessary, whether someone who comes here and immediately starts sleeping on the streets, whether we can exercise those powers at that stage and exclude the person from coming back to the UK subject to that.

So as far as low level offending, we're also looking at policy changes there because deportation of Europeans is quite, it's more complicated because of these treaty rights, because of the freedom of movement in Europe than perhaps deporting people external to Europe. And what we have to show is a propensity to re-offend, and that has been interpreted in the past as serious offending, but there's two things now we're looking at very seriously we've now agreed that we can use convictions from foreign countries in order to justify deportation. So if there's no offending whatsoever in the UK, but we establish offending back in Poland or any other country, we can use that as a basis for deporting someone and exclude them from the UK for ten years at least.

And secondly, repetitive low level offending, and again, some of that offending might be back in their home country, and some may be here, we can use that as a basis for deportation. I mean all this is subject to challenge in courts as always, but that's, that's, so we're looking at the policies more liberally reflecting you know, changes in society and what's happening on the streets on London, and indeed elsewhere in the country. So they are positive changes.

The regulations also allow us to remove Europeans involved in sham marriage, which is a growing problem in the UK, and again stop them coming back for a year if that happens.

So that's in answer to that, and perhaps I'll just give you an overview of the sort of global to local. So certainly offending, whether it be in London or anywhere in the UK, is a major concern by foreign nationals, and we have a visa operation that operates across the world that seeks to obviously for most countries of the world, or any countries we believe there is a risk from, people have to apply for a visa in order to get into the UK. We have risk and, we have risk officers around the world who complete risk profiles, there's a lot of analysis that goes into who comes to the UK, so that's our first, that's our first protection if you like for the UK. Lots of people are excluding coming to the UK because they can't get a visa because we weed them out. So that's our first protection.

Europeans of course as I say, they have a freedom of movement, they can come into the UK, but we're doing more and more and more to ensure that the wrong Europeans can't get to the UK. We talked about European database of convictions, there is going to be more and more convictions from Europe going on the Police National Conviction Computer, they'll be for serious matters, and we'll have them on a warning index at the border. So if we establish convictions for the Europeans who have got serious convictions in their home country, that can be used as a basis to stop those Europeans entering the UK, so we will be doing more and more with that, which again is protecting the UK.

So we have the border, anyone who is coming through the border, whether they've got a visa or not, they still have to go through border controls and checks are made there against our warnings index...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Sorry, I'm just going to stop you because you're speaking very, very quickly and I'm...

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Sorry.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So quickly I can't take it all in. Sorry David, because I think that is really important. So what you're saying if I understand it is that let's say I'm, I'm not going to use what I'm thinking actually, let's say it's not me but someone who has committed a really serious offence from another country. They have a history of extreme violence let's say, and you're saying that history of extreme violence could essentially stop them from being allowed to enter into the United Kingdom at the point of entry?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Yes, most certainly. If we've put that on the warnings index, which is the key, that would then...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): On the what?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): There's a warnings index, so...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Say that, I can't hear...

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Warnings index.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Warnings index.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Yes. So that's a system that operates at the border. So when someone's passport is scanned, if they're on the warnings index, that, the Border Control Officer will be aware of that.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay, so that will flash up when you show your passport?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): In reality, yes.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So you'll get a ker-ping, and...

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): That sort of thing, yes. And...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): And they'll say, "Can you step to one side sir?"

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Correct, yes.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay. So that's probably better than waiting for them to commit a crime and being picked up in the custody suite.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): That's my point. So the best protection, in fact it's better if we don't issue the visa in the first place so they don't board the plane. And we have, we work with all airlines too to make sure they understand all our regulations across the world. So there's probably about 20,000 people each year we stop boarding our aircrafts across the world.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Yes, but a lot of people won't necessarily require a visa will they?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): That's right.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So this, including the two countries we're talking about from 1 January does that have, they won't have to have that?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): No, that's correct. So...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So is this already in place then, this ability to have a warnings index and a...?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Yes, the warnings index is totally in place, and we do have on that... the warnings index is connected to the Police National Computer first of all. So if on that...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): On the warnings index how, does that operate on the European version as well?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Yes, it's...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): But we don't have access to?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well no, it doesn't link to that, no, it can't link to that, but it's linked to UK systems. But it does mean that anyone coming through the border has to go through a warnings index. So we have those.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): But surely the point is the warnings index has to have the intelligence from the other countries and the access to the data from the other countries to be, to work doesn't it?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well if it had all that access no doubt it would work better; it hasn't got that access, so...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Well that's a bit of a weakness isn't it?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well it, you could say it's a weakness, but I mean it's a matter for different governments about what access they give and don't give for as much as what access we give other countries to our systems.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay, so what you're saying is it's not an issue for the Mayor of London who I work for, and it's not an issue for you as an official. But theoretically it would work better if the warnings index had all the available databases around individuals and their criminal records available at the point of entry, or before you issue the visa at an Embassy.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well I guess that's self-evident, the more intelligence you have from whatever source...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Yes I know, I'm just, and that may not be the case today, but we've got to try and work towards that ideally.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Yes, and certainly what I'm saying is what we're working towards is serious convictions from European states going on the Police National Computer...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Could you define that, because that would be helpful, what do we see as a serious conviction? Murder would be a serious conviction.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): It would be yes. Grievous bodily harm, serious sexual offences, the real high end rape as serious sexual offences, that type of offending might be linked to a particular period of imprisonment people have had. So, the plan will be working with different European space for that to be loaded on to the Police National Computer, and loaded on to our warnings index. So if a person with such a conviction as that was coming through the border, it would trigger the warnings index and there would be a discretion for a Border Officer to refuse admission to the UK on the basis that person presents as a threat to the UK, so that's possible.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): Can I just ask? I mean so, I do understand this, so what you're saying at the moment, clearly the other EU Police information isn't plugged in towards the index, that's a fact, directly, and what you're saying is, what would be reassuring is that if we knew that there is Police Officers somewhere in a bunker actively inputting into the warning index information from serious criminals from the EU. Is that happening?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): That's happening, yes.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): So physically down, putting them into the warnings index, because you're not plugged in directly, but you're physically putting them in, so that's a piece of work so that when that serious criminal comes, shows you the EU passport, the warnings index will bleep.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Indeed, yes, that's correct.

Tony Easthaugh (Director of Operations, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): If it may help Mr O'Connell, from, we've currently got 500 names from the MPS, which we are uploading now ahead of the New Year, and they are the most serious, most violent individuals who have already been removed from the country, or have interest to the MPS so that we can deal with those at the border.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): I'm not talking about those who have been removed.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): No, Tony, that I understand, and we accept that. But their people who have got their visa, they've come into the country, they've committed some kind of thing that has caused them to be detained, and they're now... and we're not talking about that. I'm talking about you know, I love in the 19th century someone called Robert Peel, and his whole ethos was around preventing crime, and I think this is where we want the... and you acknowledged that it's self-evidently right that we would want to prevent the opportunity for serious criminals coming into this country with whatever we can, and have the intelligence, the access. I mean you, there must be probably, you mentioned to me Mark didn't you, something called the, I can't remember what it was, the PRUM...

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: The PRUM Treaty, that's...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): PRUM Treaty, to do with biometrics or DNA and fingerprints, and. I mean have we signed up to that yet? Are we on that?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): No, we're not, and that's a matter being considered by government.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I know it's a matter for government, but I'm very precocious because I want to make sure that London is safe when it comes to access to all the tools that are at the disposals of Belgium, France, Germany, places like, I don't know. I don't know if the Scandinavian countries have access, I mean surely this is the kind of stuff that we need to have access to, to ensure that we can have an appropriate way of preventing crime happening in this country, and in our Capital City, and that we want to have the best, the best of people in this country and not be a soft touch for criminality.

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): Sorry, can I just add to that. The point I make, and Tony's point was a good one, but you referred to people that had already come in, committed crime and gone away again. The point I'm making that is say a Belgium or France may have 200 high level bad guys or girls, never been in our country, but they are on the radar of the French or Belgium, repeat convictions. What I'm saying is, is there a process where that say 200 Belgium bad people are being input, are being input into our computer before they have even come into our country, so that if that one person comes into the county, straightaway, pow, picked up?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): And what I'm saying is, the plans going forward are for serious convictions in European countries to go on the Police National Computer, and then they'll go on the warnings index, so that...

Steve O'Connell (MOPAC Challenge Member): Right, yes, that's done.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): So that's planned to the future. We have, and Mark alluded to it, I have appointed a Senior Director of the Home Office who is co-ordinating all our efforts to prevent harm and risk from Foreign National Offenders in the UK, which includes upstream interventions, it includes work within Europe, it includes work on PRUM and other things. And that individual is pulling all of this together, looking at the gaps, looking at what can be done, and then we'll be taking policy ideas to Ministers and getting decisions from Ministers. So all this is on the radar...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): It's clearly a matter for the Home Secretary.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Sorry?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): It's a matter for the Home Secretary.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): It will be a matter for the Home Secretary, yes.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So is it possible to get sighted on the timelines for some of this?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well I don't think the timeline is entirely clear as yet because we've given that official about a month ago the role to do it. He's pulling it all together, he's put it in sort of you know, some structured sort of program.

So I've talked through overseas, through the border, in Europe, and then within the UK, we have wide enforcements of powers of course. So in terms of Foreign National Offenders across the country, we have traditionally, we have got criteria offending, which attracts automatic deportation from the UK. So if you receive a period of imprisonment of a year or more, or it's an offence involving drugs, violence or knives and less than a year in prison, you're automatically deported from the UK in the sense that legislation says that; it's still a process to go through. And each year we, this year we will deport from the UK people who have served prison sentences in the UK, about 5,000 Foreign National Offenders. So that's what we sort of do each year.

There's obviously a lot of other powers we've got, so just remove people from the UK for all sorts of other reasons who don't necessarily commit offences, they overstay their leave here, they perhaps enter the UK illegally, this sort of thing. And this year we're probably in total removed about 50,000 people from the UK for a variety of reasons.

There are enormous challenges to what we do, and that's been touched on, there's legal challenges, particularly Article 8, family rights challenges, and Article 3, the fear of persecution back in the home country. So we have an enormous budget to you know, in terms of...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): This is from the European Convention of Human Rights?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Yes.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): So, sorry, I just, so what is the Article 8, that basically says what under...?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well Article 8 says that people have got established family rights here. So it might be, I mean that's been used in all sorts of ways of course.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay. So someone who has committed a crime here but have family rights because they have a family here in the UK?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Yes, so someone, for your example, someone commits a crime, perhaps it's a crime that attracts automatic deportation they'll, so I sign the deportation order, that person, there's a deportation order signed, that person then will challenge that deportation order on the basis of their Article 8 rights and say they've got established family rights in the UK, and we, and the Tribunal will decide.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I'm struggling with this, because I have a, I mean I don't want to start using anecdote but I will in this case. I got home very late last night to meet my wife's sister who lives in France, teaches in French schools, and gave examples of French Law Enforcement who removed entire families. They've clearly established family rights outside of France, that's what she gave example. So it was sort of, there seem to be public consent for that. And yet surely that would have been challenged under, probably is challenged under Article 8. What gives them the right to be able to do that if there's a you know.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well the mere fact it's challenged doesn't mean they win of course. But there's degrees to this isn't there. If someone comes to the UK as a one year old for example and she is now 45 years of age...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Let me finish the anecdote. She taught in a school where the child was removed because of the fact her parents had been removed, but wouldn't that be challenged?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well it may or may not be. I mean we certainly remove families with adults who commit serious crimes of course.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay, so you have removed families?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Yes, we do. Yes, we do that.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay. But this is part of the challenge process?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): It is part, yes, and some appeal. The majority would appeal against the decision, but you know. And if someone came here as a 1 year old for example, they're 45 years of age now and just committed a crime and got 2 years imprisonment, then probably we would struggle to deport that person from the UK because that established family right would be in truth; they grew up in the UK, they've got their, you know they went through school, you know done everything in the UK, they'd be very difficult to deport. But there are degrees of course. So the longer someone's been here, the more entrenched their families are here...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay, I understand, I've got the... but it's just, sorry it's just because this is a new area for me.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Yes, sure. No, No...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Probably for many people in London we need to understand what the European Convention of Human Rights means on the ground. Article 3, fear of persecutions, are there anywhere where they've established an idea that there's a fear of persecution within what we would call broadly speaking Europe, let's take it from here to the Urals, I mean is there anywhere where you can fear persecution and someone successfully challenged on the basis of Article 3? I mean I can imagine, let's take Newham, I gather that there's the Portuguese Mafia, where they're from Angola, I mean where have we established that Article 3 is a runner?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well in truth of course there's nowhere in Europe that someone should fear persecution. Although the courts in the past have granted Article 3 rights to people from Greece for example because of certain events in Greece, but that's time limited, and you know we would not expect to see Article 3 claims to succeed in terms of European countries. But there are countries in the world where, if you're part of a particularly religious group or a particular sexuality or things like that, Article 3 can be successful.

So we do have those challenges. Plus there are currently 17 different appeals against removal and deportation from the UK. The Bill going through Parliament will reduce them down to four and make it easier for us.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): When does the Bill get assent, likely...?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): We don't know, probably June time next year. And so the Bill going through Parliament does simplify a lot of the immigration system and certainly the appeals process, and will make it easier for us to remove people from the UK.

It's been touched on, the documentary problem. We have to establish someone's identity and nationality in order to remove them to a country, because that country of course would insist on checking that before they allow them back to their country. A lot of the people here illegally destroy all documentation, are pretty non-compliant with us, and do everything they can to avoid being re-documented. So that can be quite a challenge to get some people documented to return to their home country, and as has been eluded to by Steve and Mark, the Met help us a lot of that, and Operation NEXUS is really critical to this, because establish the identity in the charge room of a foreign national really helps us later to remove them from the country. As does doing the ACRO checks and establishing other convictions in foreign countries makes that removal and deportation process subsequently far better. That didn't used to happen, the Met are leading on this now because it was really...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Look, the only person so far who is not a member, he's a Met, he's Met, he's Met, he's Met, is there anywhere...

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): I did 31 years in the Met.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I know. And you probably secretly are also the Met. But what I'd like to know is there any area, just because it's important, is there any area that the Met, I mean I've got a headline here, it was in the front page of The Times, it's hardly secret, but is there any area where you think the Met could do better? I mean just as an ex, someone who is not part of the Met. I'm sorry, it was this one here, but it was something to do with an ex-Met person, sort of not being negative Mark, but I mean what could they do better, because they are doing a lot that's great, but if you were to say there was one, just give us one area that you think they could do better?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well, I mean we're working very close to the Met on this. There are improvements we can both make.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Just one improvement. They've probably got ten that the Home Office could do better to be honest with you, so.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Right. If you're talking about, you're talking about foreign offending?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): In this area of course.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): In this area, yes. Well, I guess one area which, there's a couple of faces to this for the Met I suspect, but if all foreign nationals were directed to a smaller number of charging facilities geographically and strategically placed in London...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Say that again.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): If all Foreign National Offenders who were arrested were directed to a smaller number of charging facilities in London...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Charge facilities?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Charging facilities, custody suites.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Yes, yes, because I went round some of the smaller custody suites and often you get an interpreter, they've been waiting for the interpreter for like 17 hours, and the Detective is sort of sitting there idling around waiting. Do you mean that kind of thing?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well yes, but...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): And centralising...

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): ... but then, but then, I think if you're concentrating expertise it's easier to do that, so...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): That's interesting.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): ... so for instance, in the prison service, foreign nationals servicing prison sentences are persuading the National Offender Management System to have some prisons which are purely Foreign National Offenders, what does that do? That means we could put our resources in those prisons, it means the Prison Officers understand the issues about foreign nationals and the removal of them and what's required. And we, in terms of removing those people from the UK, we're far more successful in those prisons that we are in other prisons, so it's...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): It's a little bit, so you could almost imagine, I know there's custody and they've got to maintain the capacity for a smaller number of custody suites, in theory where you need to have the additional, the hubs that are required, whether it's language or other expertise or colleagues from the Home Office Immigration Team, you would create these kind of hubs to deal with, is that happening Mark?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: It's not happening at the moment. We have looked at it, we...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Mark, why is it not happening?

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): It's a no brainer isn't it?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: We think the logistics of it are quite challenging. Well it's a no brainer... If you've got a fighting prisoner, driving them extra distance across London is not a very easy thing to do. Secondly, you often don't know the nationality of someone at the point of arrest...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Hang on, if you've got someone in the back in a fighting, what do you mean a fighting prisoner?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: Well we arrest violent and difficult people.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I know, but aren't they manacled or something?

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: They are, but sort of if you start to say rather than a five or ten minute drive to the nearest custody suite, that then becomes an hour's drive across London.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Hang on a minute, I mean I have no background in policing, but there's a reconfiguration of the Health Service because, because you know they recognise another seven minutes to a custody suite that has everything you need to process a more difficult prisoner is -- I mean let's imagine you have a heart attack. It's no good going into an A&E that doesn't have cardiac surgery. If someone's been stabbed, if you don't have a first rate vascular surgeon, you know that's going to go and get you off the table, it's no good sending them through the door is it. So what you're saying to me is you don't have a facility to triage this to particular custody suites that will be more attuned to dealing with foreign national offending, I think that's wrong.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: There are other issues. We are looking at it, and we will continue to look at it, and I'll come back to you in due course on whether we think we can do it to any degree. But it is not as straightforward as that, because the comparison falls

down slightly, the only consideration for the person with the heart attack is where's the best place that's going to save their life...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Get them off the table, yes.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: Going to save their life. The considerations in terms of where you put a prisoner who you've just arrested on the streets, there are multiple factors, of which one of them would be having the best resource available to deal with them if we know at that stage already they're an international offender.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Mark, I would stop you there because you're exposing the limits of my knowledge, okay, so, and I refuse to be publicly humiliated. But obviously it's something you're thinking about, and we'll leave it at that.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: And the other thing that, I mean I thought Dave might say, that I think that we know we need to do more of, and I'm quite sort of candid about this, it's a new thing for us to be looking for people's documents to help the Immigration Service. So if a Police Officer arrests somebody for burglary, whether they search them there and then in the custody office, which of course they do, we'll probably do a domestic search, what's in their head, what they've been trained in for 20 years maybe, is "What am I going to find that's going to help me prove this burglary or maybe find other products of crime?" What we're now trying to say to Officer is, "And on top of that, if you find any documentation that helps identify them, it could be letters, documents, whatever, that's massively helpful", because a lot of people who know they're here are with dodgy status and is challengeable, they will try and select. So if you're, if you happen to be from Africa, there are some African countries which are in a sort of awful state, and therefore if you can claim to be from that country it's much harder for obvious good reasons to deport somebody to that country than it would be to other African countries. So they are playing those levers. If our Officers have more in their minds looking for documentation, we can help Dave and Tony and their team. We're doing a lot more than we ever used to, but we've got a long way to go on that as well.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Okay. Look Tony, I can't have this, because we've only got three minutes left, so. No, I'm only joking, we've got five full minutes to hear from you.

Tony Easthaugh (Director of Operations, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): I was just going to come in and support the comments, because actually in terms of how NEXUS looks now, if we went back 12 months ago it would look completely different. Six months ago it looked completely different because it's an evolving piece all the time. So when we talked about our custody suites... and actually we have a degree of culpability here because actually we need to get the best use of our staff in terms of the Immigration officers. So 12 months ago we were in 32 stations, then we came down to 24, now we're narrowing that down to 16, so there is an ambition to drive it down so that we have better people, or the right people in a smaller number of stations.

Can I just make on final point, because I know we've talked about the strategy, but actually there's a couple of bits, which I really want to just draw out from a local perspective. One is, you've mentioned Wales, actually Wales is one of our best performing teams because they've got really good partnerships, so I just thought I'd get... and we are a national organisation so I thought I'd just say that.

Secondly, the, when we talked about the targets, actually the run rate now is far stronger than it's ever been, so we've set a very ambitious target. We've had to change some of our processes and our systems, but now we are at that run rate which is going to give us, as we go forward into next year, stronger performance.

And finally, it's just that little bit I think which colleagues here on the table talked about the uniqueness of Westminster, and we recognise that because we've put in a specific team which deals wholly with Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, and the other side of the bridge of Southwark, so that we recognise that, and we work very closely with colleagues from the MPS almost on a daily basis, and certainly on large operations so that we can give support to the criminality issues and use our powers, which are quite narrow, but really deep. So I just wanted to give that sense of balance on a local picture again if that was okay.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Let me just finish by saying, it's been a really productive and good partnership with the Met, and as Mark rightly says, two very different organisations working together has got these challenges and we've worked through those, and it's working better and better and better. It can be better, but it's getting better and better, and I think it's been enormously successfully. So much so we're taking this right down the country. We think it's a magnificent model, it will work differently in different places because there's different types of challenges obviously, but it is a really good model. Other Police Forces can learn a lot from what the Met have done, and need to learn a lot from what they've done, it's been very successful.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): I agree. Where the Met goes, others tend to follow, but I appreciate you ending on that, a positive note. Now Faith has spent a long time working in government departments that don't function entirely well, as well as local authorities, so had their fair share of problems. She was the Chief Executive of Lambeth, so I think it's very important the last couple of questions come from Faith.

Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member): Yes, and my experience in working in Customs on drugs issues, amongst other things, showed me how important the international intelligence is, and we haven't got time to go into that today, but I think that I would certainly have some questions about how that works in practice, and how it might be improved, drawing on that Customs experience. Perhaps we could take that offline. My point for today though is, we've had a lot, which is encouraging, about the partnership between the Met and your good selves. But in most forms of crime there are other key partners normally at the table,

particularly local authorities, and also community leaders, and we haven't really heard either of those mentioned today, and I think it's an issue, there are issues perhaps for a discussion on other days, but how far are they involved, and could they do more to help, and could you do more with them?

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well different parts of the country, in Manchester for example, we've got a full partnership there working in a bit different way to NEXUS with the local authority really taking the lead with policing and with us and other agencies, with HMRC and various other agencies. We've got, we're trying a wholly different model out there for different purposes, which is you know...

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Can I suggest that, I've had lots of representations, again from the Westminster City Council about people exposing some really considered elements of housing fraud and housing benefit fraud that involve foreign nationals. I've had quite strong representations as just how organised it is. Equally, criminality in particular communities, I used to be the leader of Hammersmith and Fulham, we have a very entrenched Somali community for instance, and many of them very law abiding, great contributors obviously to Hammersmith, but occasionally you hear about criminal links from community leaders as well. I think Faith is on to something, that we do need to ensure that all the national agencies, London's Police Force, are very much connected to the intelligence picture on the ground, and I think we need to think about how...

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): And we do do a lot of that. We do a lot of that with London.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Yes, I know, you do that a lot with London. We're the Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime, that's MOPAC, and I think we can help that, and I think we need to find a way of how we can work with obviously the Home Office, with the Metropolitan Police Service...

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): And we welcome that.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): ... and to help enhance whatever you're doing, because I think we have very, very strong links to London local government obviously, the Mayor's Office. And I think there's room for improvement probably there.

Faith Boardman (MOPAC Challenge Member): We need everybody who can be at the table to be fully at the table with, and bring all the intelligence together.

David Wood (Director General, Home Office Immigration Enforcement): Well we welcome that, and we would obviously participate and co-operate with that. That would be really helpful to us, and I'm sure it would be to the police as well.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Good. Well listen, I think that, I always... people have been very rude about MOPAC Challenge, I'm not going to name anyone, but Baroness Jones doesn't like MOPAC Challenge. Jenny, if you're listening, this was an extremely good MOPAC Challenge because we leave having heard a lot of the challenges, and understanding of the response, the picture right the way from the international to the national picture, to the London picture to the local pictures, and with, some areas where we've got a lot more work to do, and particularly where MOPAC can help in the ambition to ensure that we don't, that we close the gap if you like Mark between ...

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: Absolutely.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): ... a policing response for all offenders, including Foreign National Offenders. So I want to thank you all for the time that you've spent here in City Hall, and I wish you all a very festive season, and keep cutting crime Mark...

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: Absolutely.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): ... is the message, and boosting confidence at the same time.

Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, MPS: I won't stop in for Christmas.

Stephen Greenhalgh (Chair): Thank you very much.