

Internal Audit Directorate

IS Strategy and Planning

Final report



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

Working together for a safer London

MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No.		Page
<u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u>		
1.	INTRODUCTION	3
2.	OBJECTIVES	3
3.	AUDIT OPINION	3-2
4.	SCOPE	4
5.	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	4
<u>MAIN FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS</u>		
6.	CORPORATE INFORMATION SYSTEMS STRATEGY	3-4
7.	DEVELOPING & MONITORING LOCAL IS STRATEGIES	4
9.	COST EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF IS/IT SYSTEMS	4
ACTION PLAN		
	AGREED COURSE OF ACTION	5-7

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This audit was carried out as part of the 2005/06 Internal Audit Plan.
- 1.2. The Director of Information has established a set of Corporate IS strategies¹, which describe how the MPS will exploit information by deploying Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to support the aims and objectives of the system. The Information Systems Strategy itself sets out to support the seven core capabilities the MPS will require if it is to continue to provide a world leading operational police service over the next five years. It articulates how the existing systems will be developed to deliver the core capabilities.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The overall objective was to review and evaluate the system of controls established by management to provide an effective IS/IT Strategy to support the operational policing and business management, to report findings and conclusions and, where appropriate, to make recommendations for improvement. In particular we reviewed the adequacy and effectiveness of controls to ensure that:
 - The strategy is closely interlinked with other strategies, which are either separately defined or included in the strategy itself.
 - Local IS strategies continue to develop, monitor and comply with the MPS Corporate IS strategy.
 - Systems identified are cost effective and can be enhanced to meet core capabilities and future organisational needs.

3. AUDIT OPINION

- 3.1 Our overall opinion is that the framework of control is adequate but a number of controls are not operating effectively.
- 3.2 The system to ensure that the Family of IS Strategies are closely interlinked is in place. The information strategy (top level document) itself is out of date following the Met Modernisation Programme and changes to corporate priorities. The current size and content is considered too lengthy for MPS Management purpose and approval.
- 3.3 Effective processes have been put in place to ensure local IS strategies continue to develop within their respective business groups and are monitored corporately to ensure that they comply with and are aligned to the MPS Corporate IS strategies. All new developments are put through a DoI gateway to ensure that they meet the technical specification/requirements and are in line with the IS Strategies.

¹ Family of Strategies - Information strategy; Information Management strategy; Business Process strategy; Information Systems strategy and the Technology Strategies.

MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.4 Procedures are in place to ensure individual projects identify costs and benefits before and during project/system lifecycle. The overall cost of achieving the strategy over the next five years has not been identified corporately. The Information Management Strategy has provided measures to meet core capabilities and future organisational needs.

4. SCOPE

- 4.1 This review focused largely on the Director of Information's Information Systems Strategy – A Fresh Approach. This review was carried out both jointly and alongside the Audit Commission's IT Strategy – policy integration and benefits review which concentrated on the mechanism to ensure that systems implementation and enhancements are translated into policing benefits. We did not review the development of IT systems and infrastructures.

5. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 We have made recommendations throughout the report aimed at introducing effective controls or improving those already in place. To mitigate those risks that, in our opinion, expose the system to a high risk of loss or where controls need to be improved before system objectives can be achieved, we recommend that:
- 5.2 The strategy is formulated around the key challenges, risks and issues to enable the MPS Management to approve it together with the risks associated in delivering its aims and objectives. **(Para 6.1 refers)**
- 5.3 An appropriate communication strategy is issued to ensure all internal/external stakeholders are fully briefed on the IS Vision and strategic aims and objectives along with key processes to ensure effective delivery of the strategy. **(Para 7.3 refers)**

6. CORPORATE INFORMATION SYSTEMS STRATEGY

- 6.1 The "Family of IS strategies" require revising prior to their review date to encapsulate the aims and objectives of the Information Quality Strand of the Met Modernisation Programme. This said, the DoI are already undertaking an internal review of the documents and are open to contribution from various units. During our discussions with senior DoI staff we identified a shared view on how the MPS should deliver projects/systems highlighting that lessons have been learned and a need to provide suitable technology to improve data sharing and promote intelligence. There were however specific key challenges, risks and issues being voiced but these are not clearly conveyed within the documents. **We recommend that the strategy is formulated around the key challenges, risks and issues after surveying DoI/MPS Management to enable the MPS Management Board to approve the strategy together with its risks.**

MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.2 The Family of Strategies do not highlight the financial resource requirement at a corporate level to ensure effective monitoring and delivery over the next five years. Both funding and recruitment risk are seen as the major risks that may preclude the DoI from delivering the strategy within the set timeframe and budget. Recruitment risk emanates from attracting the right people at the right time and having a suitable structure in place to keep valuable personnel from moving on. DoI Management however believe that there is a risk in attempting to cost an entire Information Strategy when the actual business requirements for particular very large-scale complex systems have yet to be identified. Therefore the strategy itself cannot provide more information backed up by cost studies and evidential analysis to ensure the MPS Management can make an informative decision to commit sufficient financial and operational resources for effective deliverability during the next five years. We however accept management's proposal to attempt to cost those elements of the strategy where the detailed requirements are at an appropriate level of maturity. Taking this approach, it will be possible to show outline costs for the back office systems strategy, cost the Command and Control replacement strategy and the development of systems in support of the Intelligence Strategy.
- 6.3 There is no formal ownership over the Business Process Strategy. However all other strategies have met the publication scheme and therefore agreed and approved by appropriate committees and are available on the intranet, The responsibility for assignment of an owner for the business process strategy, in our opinion should rest with the MPS Management Board. **We recommend that an appropriate owner be assigned to the Business Process Strategy.**
- 6.4 The Strategy has not been reviewed against any international standards. There is more emphasis on National Information Sharing Standards (Bichard). The MPS shares data and information with international organisations and there is a risk that the MPS may not have considered all important issues. **We recommend that the MPS consider whether any appropriate International Standards should be taken into account when the strategy is modified.**

7. DEVELOPING & MONITORING LOCAL INFORMATION STRATEGIES

- 7.1 The Family of Strategies are developed top down, this exemplifies that they are DoI led and the Business Groups/System Owners are unable to influence the direction of the strategy. Business Development Office (BDO) Account Managers do not ensure that local IS/IT strategies have any influence upon or contribute to the Family of Strategies. **We recommend that contribution of BDO Account Managers, on local IS Strategies, is sought for consideration and inclusion, where appropriate, to the corporate IS Strategy.**

MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.2 There is currently a variation of skills, experience, and knowledge amongst the BDO Account Managers. This is largely due to the recent formation of this team and hence newly created roles and responsibilities. A key risk identified was that some members of this team were previously involved in dealing with the day to day IT support and low level issues, the new role requires a strategic direction. The Account Managers are geographically dispersed, remotely supervised and lack detailed knowledge of the corporate IS strategies. There is however a development programme in place to manage this risk. **We recommend that there is close supervision of this team to ensure that any variation in skills and knowledge is minimised and that they receive appropriate and timely briefing on the corporate IS Strategies.**
- 7.3 There is no communication strategy to ensure that DoI strategies are effectively communicated throughout the MPA/MPS. We found communication was within silos rather than across the DoI/MPS Business programmes. The communication plan should also centre on allowing information to flow to and from all parts of the organisation to promote learning and creating and strengthening links with other business groups. **We recommend issuing a communication strategy to ensure project/programme sponsors are made aware of the IS strategy across the MPS Business. There should be guidance on how Projects/Programmes should share risks/issues with other projects to ensure more consistent and effective delivery of the overall IS Strategy.**

8. COST EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF IS/IT SYSTEMS

- 8.1 There is a view that Police Information Technology Office (PITO) provides direction for the MPS to enter into projects without the MPS fully considering alternative cost effective solutions. Currently the Benefit Management Team ensures that all activities the IPG undertake, there is cost effectiveness and improved performance from that process. They prepare benefits realisation plan and coordinate the area of business responsible for change. **We recommend that the MPS review solutions other than those outlined by PITO to measure the business benefits in terms of savings and efficiency.**

ACTION PLAN

CATEGORY OF RISK

Our recommendations in the Action Plan attached are categorised as follows:

- High** Recommendations which arise from major weaknesses in controls that expose the business to high risk of loss or exposure in terms of fraud, impropriety, poor value for money or failure to achieve MPS objectives. Remedial action should be taken urgently.
- Medium** Recommendations which, although not fundamental, relate to shortcomings in control which expose the individual systems to a high risk of exposure or loss.
- Low** Recommendations which, although not critical to the system, address areas where management would benefit from improved control.

FOLLOW UP

We will carry out a follow up review in six months time to ensure that all the accepted recommendations have been implemented and that there are no further areas of concern.

This system has been categorised as medium risk.

ACTION PLAN

Ref.	Recommendation	Risk	Agreed	Management Response	Responsibility	Target Date
6.1	Formulate the strategy around the key challenges, risks and issues to enable the MPS Management to approve the strategy and accept its risk.	H	YES	The current re-write of the family of strategies will take account of the need to more closely align with the challenges and risks as defined in the corporate strategy for the MPS.	Information and Information Management Strategy, Steve Farquharson – Group Director IMG. Systems Strategy, Richard Earland – Group Director IPG. Technology Strategy, Phil Scutchings – Group Director Technology.	September 2006
6.3	Assign an appropriate owner to the Business Process Strategy.	H	YES	It is for the business to determine in consultation with the DoI where ownership for the Business Process Strategy rests.	Management Board	December 2006
6.4	Consider whether any appropriate International Standards should be taken into account when the strategy is modified.	M	YES	It is reasonable that the strategy for the Metropolitan Police Service for Information Management and Systems should consider the role of International Standards. Consideration of the standards will take place with a view to assessing the extent to which it is reasonable for the strategy to reflect them at some future date. This is light of the	Information Management related – International Standards, Steve Farquharson – Group Director IMG. Information Systems Standards responsibility Richard Earland – Group	January 2007 January 2007

ACTION PLAN

Ref.	Recommendation	Risk	Agreed	Management Response	Responsibility	Target Date
				challenges in ensuring the strategy is compliant with both National, and cross-governmental department requirements to add an absolute need to ensure the MPS complies with International Standards and without at this stage knowing what those standards are.	Director IPG. Technology Standards – Phil Scutchings – Group Director Technology.	
7.1	Contribution of BDO Account Managers, on local IS Strategies, is sought for consideration and inclusion, where appropriate, to the corporate IS Strategies.	M	YES	The development of Relationship Managers and Account Managers in the Business Development Office will take account of the need for them to further enhance a Business Group and Operational Command unit view of strategy. This bottom-up approach to refining and refreshing the strategy will guide the process by which strategies are modified in coming years.	Richard Earland – Group Director IPG.	December 2006
7.2	There is close supervision of BDO Account Manager's to ensure that any variation in skills and knowledge are minimised and that they receive appropriate and timely briefing on the corporate IS Strategy.	M	YES	As above.	Richard Earland – Group Director IPG.	December 2006.
7.3	Issuing a communication strategy to ensure project/programme sponsors are made aware of the IS	H	YES	Further attempts to communicate the family of strategies throughout the organisation will enhance compliance with the strategic	Richard Earland – Group Director IPG.	October 2006

ACTION PLAN

Ref.	Recommendation	Risk	Agreed	Management Response	Responsibility	Target Date
	strategy across the MPS Business. There should be guidance on how Projects/Programmes should share risks/issues to other projects to ensure more consistent and effective delivery of the overall IS Strategy.			direction of travel.		
8.1	The MPS review solutions other than those outlined by PITO to measure the business benefits in terms of savings and efficiency.	M	YES	No management comment.	Richard Earland – Group Director IPG.	March 2007