



# **Metropolitan Police Authority**

Crime data recording scrutiny report

February 2008

FINAL REPORT

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## **Chair's Foreword**

Crime data recording can easily appear to be a highly technical and unnecessarily bureaucratic process. Crime and incident recording standards can be complex and may not make sense to police officers and staff, let alone to members of the public.

However, there are important reasons why the accurate recording of crime data is essential for the police and the public. Accurate recording is vital to issues of public confidence. At a time when overall levels of crime in London are declining, concerns about violent crime and the fear of crime persist. If the police are to show real evidence of addressing public concern there must be trust that the figures recorded are accurate. In addition, accurate recording is an important process that can help to drive intelligence, tasking and performance improvements in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). Furthermore, accurate data recording is essential to enable the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) to effectively hold the MPS to account.

This scrutiny set out to address some of the issues around data accuracy raised by the MPA, MPS and Audit Commission. It was planned as a rapid and action-oriented piece of work and we welcome the improvements in MPS processes that have occurred during the scrutiny.

We make recommendations, which we expect the MPS to action. The MPA will monitor the progress made through reports to the Planning, Performance and Review Committee. We would like to thank the MPA staff who undertook the bulk of the work and analysis for this scrutiny, and the MPS for their co-operation and contributions.

Karim Murji  
Scrutiny Chair

Richard Sumray  
Scrutiny Chair

## Introduction

*“Good quality information is one of the Metropolitan Police Service’s (MPS) most valuable resources and must be reliable and complete if we are to achieve an effective police service for London.”*

*“Our staff need to better understand the value of the information the MPS holds and their own role in ensuring it is of the highest quality possible.”*

*“Information quality objective outcome – to provide trusted information that is fit for purpose that enables and supports a modern and effective police service.”*

*(Policing London Strategy 2007-10)*

The Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) and Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) continue to be concerned about the accuracy of MPS crime recording. Following an approach by the MPS, the MPA decided to undertake a scrutiny. Terms of reference were agreed to assess:

- The compliance of crime recording processes with legislative, investigative and customer requirements.
- The extent to which crime data meets needs.
- The suitability of oversight and management of the processes.

The scrutiny commenced in September 2007 and utilised desk research, panel interviews, face-to-face interviews and questionnaires. In order to ensure a speedy turnaround for the report on this scrutiny it was agreed that the work would focus on key issues but would also identify potential future scrutiny work or performance related areas.

Work has already been carried out to address some of the crime recording and data accuracy problems raised by the MPA, MPS and Audit Commission. For example, a Data Accuracy Team (DAT) has been established which contributes considerably to the MPS’s ability to improve the quality of crime recording and offer independent advice; a Territorial Policing (TP) Crime Management Unit has been established; the Directorate of Information (DOI) work includes development of data quality metrics and exception reporting; and a Crime Recording Oversight Group (CROG) has been set up that reports to the MPS Performance Board on data quality issues.

The MPA is also pleased to note that, following the production of the initial draft report on the scrutiny, the MPS has already submitted a preliminary plan of action. This plan addresses many of the issues raised in the report and should be further developed to include timetables and resource implications to allow its progress to be monitored by the MPA.

## **Section one: Summary of key findings, conclusions and recommendations**

### **Findings**

#### Structures and supervision

- Supervision of crime records is sometimes inadequate and often falls to the Crime Management Unit (CMU) in the absence of another appropriate supervisor.
- Current line management arrangements of the Data Accuracy Team (DAT) may cause some conflicts of interests. Consideration should be given to more independent line management of both the DAT and the Force Crime Registrar (FCR).
- Interviewees felt that the work of the DAT and the FCR would benefit from a direct link into management board.
- Crime Recording Oversight Group (CROG) has become an executive, rather than advisory board removing decision-making responsibilities from the FCR. It was felt that the CROG would benefit from an independent chair.
- Interviewees questioned the appropriateness of current CMU line management arrangements. It was felt that centralised line management, or even physical relocation, would address this.
- Recent reductions in external auditing may result in a fall in data quality standards.
- The MPS internal audit capacity could be increased with the assistance of the MPA Internal Audit (IA) team, Audit Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC).
- Data quality should be considered throughout all audits and oversight of police performance, not just those specifically focused on data quality.

#### Policy and processes

- Crime recording seems to be focused more towards meeting Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) than the needs of policing.
- The MPS need to prioritise the focus on data quality at a very basic level e.g. ensuring the correct address or house number is recorded.
- For many the purpose of crime recording was disproportionately focused on performance measurement rather than investigation and intelligence.
- Both Borough Operational Command Unit (BOCU) and central Senior Management Teams (SMT) need to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to data accuracy and quality.
- There was an overwhelming call from interviewees for both the Notifiable Offence List (NOL) and HOCRs to be reviewed.
- Interviewees highlighted the often problematic disparity between National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS), HOCRs and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) charging standards.
- The National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR) and National Incident Category List (NICL) codes should be implemented fully. A

significant proportion of police activity is not crime related and information around this is currently not being captured accurately.

- Local policies are often not verified with the FCR until 'found out'.

### Training and resources

- Concerns were highlighted around call handling targets focusing on time to answer calls rather than quality.
- Many interviewees felt that the quality and provision of training for officers and staff, particularly those in the CMU and Central Communications Command (CCC)<sup>1</sup>, was inadequate.
- Providing the same level of training for both officers and staff in CMUs was inappropriate. Staff require more training than officers in legal definitions and legislation.
- Training should be continual and for all levels but be developed in such a way that regular mass retraining is not required.
- Centralising crime recording functions may make training issues more manageable.

### System failure and conflicts

- Interviewees stated that there was some pressure applied to CMU staff within boroughs that affected the accuracy of crime recording. This was often related to pressure to achieve targets.
- Many MPS Information Technology (IT) systems are outdated and struggling to meet modern IT requirements. Examples of this include the current Computer Aided Despatch (CAD) system based on an airline baggage handling system and the resource intensive work required to allow MPS systems to communicate with each other at a basic level. The failure of MPS IT systems to fully integrate is not as a result of lack of work by MPS officers and staff but a consequence of outdated IT on which the systems rely. The IT shortfall should be fully identified, building on the work already carried out by DoI. Implementation of the required changes will be reliant on sufficient resource allocation for the IT improvement and for the corresponding changes to MPS business process. This should be addressed to allow the police to deal with the complexities of crime recording and investigation in London.
- Interviewees highlighted a number of consequences of inaccurate crime recording. For example, the inability to tackle crime fully without a complete picture of what is occurring, which might lead to compromised officer and public safety and the quality of service offered to victim.

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<sup>1</sup> The Central Communications Command (CCC) is a central unit that incorporates functions from the MPS's 32 Borough control rooms, emergency services, telephone operator centres, special events and incident support services. These services have been brought together in three purpose-built centres.

## Conclusions

All interviewees appeared to agree that there was no single solution to the issues raised by the scrutiny. There was general consensus that:

- The MPS should establish the costs against all of the benefits of improvements or changes to crime recording processes.
- Knowledge gaps in crime recording and responsibilities across the MPS should be addressed.
- The NOL and NCRS are confusing and needed to be reviewed.
- The MPA and MPS needed to establish and understand all of the purposes of crime recording, consider whether the current system and resources meets needs and make changes as required.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made by the scrutiny:

**Recommendation 1:** The MPA and MPS need to prioritise their focus on the improvement of basic data quality and ensure that officer and staff training adequately addresses the needs of the system. The need for data accuracy should not focus solely on compliance with external standards.

**Recommendation 2:** The DAT and the FCR's lines of accountability should be changed to ensure both greater independence and higher-level management input. CMU line management should be made independent of BOCU line management.

**Recommendation 3:** The MPS should fully implement NSIR and the NICL codes.

**Recommendation 4:** The MPA and MPS should work with the Home Office to facilitate a full review of the NOL and NCRS.

**Recommendation 5:** The supervision of crime recording processes should be strengthened and the CROG should be either independently chaired or report regularly to the MPA lead member for data quality.

**Recommendation 6:** A robust, risk-based crime recording audit system should be developed and maintained with appropriate resource support.

**Recommendation 7:** CCC targets and resource allocation should be reviewed to focus on quality of service provision.

**Recommendation 8:** The MPS should expedite the pilots into the centralisation of crime recording.

**Recommendation 9:** The MPS SMT should ensure that boroughs systematically inform the FCR of local policies before implementing them.

**Recommendation 10:** The MPS should conduct a review of Merlin<sup>2</sup> to ensure there are no offences on the system that should be recorded as a crime on the Crime Report Information System (CRIS).

**Recommendation 11:** IT provision should be subject to further scrutiny. The MPS should ensure that its systems are allocated sufficient resources to meet both current needs and to address future needs.

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<sup>2</sup> Merlin is an MPS IT system designed to record information about children who come to the notice of the police.



## Section two: Main report

### Background

The MPA is responsible for ensuring that the MPS has sufficiently robust processes in place to guarantee the ongoing delivery of accurate crime recording. The Home Office has set standards for both crime and incident recording under the NCRS and the NSIR<sup>3</sup>. The HOCR and the NICL underpin these standards, detailing definitions and a common recording standard<sup>4</sup>. One of the MPA/MPS's seven strategic priorities in 2007/10 is for information and intelligence to be of the highest quality to enable the MPS to deliver the policing service that London needs.

The MPA and MPS continue to be concerned about the accuracy of crime recording and, following an approach from the MPS, the MPA decided to undertake a scrutiny of the processes and data accuracy of crime recording within the MPS. The scrutiny should be seen within the wider context of national recording standards, the push by many within the MPA and MPS to improve all forms of data accuracy across the organisation, concern over the perceived bureaucratisation of policing and the potential conflicts caused by the differing reasons for recording crime, investigation and detections.

### Terms of reference

The objectives of the scrutiny were:

- To ensure that MPS crime recording processes comply with legislative, investigative and customer requirements.
- To ensure crime recording data within the MPS is fit for purpose.
- To ensure that the MPS oversight processes and structure are sufficiently robust to assure the quality of crime data recording.

**To note – footnotes in italics refer to internal MPS documents not in the public domain.**

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<sup>3</sup> See appendix one for a summary of whether and when to record an incident or crime.

<sup>4</sup> Further details of HOCR can be found at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/countrules.html>  
Further details of the National Incident Category List (NICL) can be found at <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/neighbourhoodcrime/downloads/NSIRCountingRules2006-7.pdf>

## Methodology

The scrutiny commenced in September 2007 and adopted a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Details of work conducted as part of the scrutiny are outlined below:

- Terms of reference agreed at the MPA Co-ordination and Policing Committee (COP) on 27 September 2007.
- Background reading and production of an internal and external position paper.
- Face-to-face, semi structured interviews conducted with seven CMU managers/Designated Decision Makers (DDMs).
- Face-to-face, semi structured interviews conducted with 13 policy leads, including staff from the MPS DAT, Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and external partners.
- Panel interviews conducted with the Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner (Territorial Policing (TP)) and the Director of Strategy, Modernisation and Performance Directorate.
- Observational visit to Lambeth CCC.
- Structured email questionnaire sent to randomly selected CMU staff (24), Borough Crime Managers (12), Borough Commanders (12), Police Constables (24), Detective Constables (24) and CCC staff (18)<sup>5</sup>. This resulted in an overall response rate of 22%. There was a higher response rate from Borough Commanders and Borough Crime Managers.
- Additional work requested from the MPS.
- Interim report delivered in November 2007.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted under an agreement of confidentiality, though several interviewees stated that they were willing to give statements on the record if it would assist the scrutiny. Interviewees were open and helpful throughout the process.

Offers of support to assist with work on the scrutiny were made by MPA and MPS colleagues and external partners. We would like to thank all those who have contributed to the scrutiny.

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<sup>5</sup> Random selections were conducted using a random number generation formula on Microsoft Excel and correlating numbers generated with rows on an alphabetical officer/staff list provided by Met HR.

## Summary of key literature

Desk-based research was conducted to identify key relevant external documents. These included those published by the Home Office, HMIC and the Audit Commission. Initial scanning of these documents suggested that Audit Commission publications were most useful to summarise for the purposes of this background information gathering exercise<sup>6</sup>.

### **Audit Commission (May 2007) *Police data quality review – Metropolitan Police Authority Audit 2006/07* London: Audit Commission**

This paper presents the results of the Audit Commission review of data quality at the MPA. The purpose of the review was to determine whether the MPA had robust arrangements in place to secure the quality of key performance data and whether these arrangements were being applied in practice.

#### *Main report conclusions*

The improvements in crime data quality that were achieved the previous year were not maintained.

The most recent grading (2006/07 audit) for crime data was 'fair'. This had deteriorated from 'good' awarded in the previous year. User satisfaction data was graded 'good' in the 2006/07 audit.

The report concluded that:

- There was a variation in knowledge and application of the NCRS across the MPS.
- Crime data quality was not a consistent operational priority.
- The action plan agreed in 2006 had not been comprehensively implemented.
- However, arrangements for securing user satisfaction data were regarded as sound.

The audit report recognised the challenging background within the MPA/MPS, most notably the recent restructuring of the CCC. It was recognised that responsibility for data quality had been assigned at a senior level. However, senior staff did not have targets specifically addressing quality of data. Targets seemed to be more focused on quantitative crime related measures rather than data quality.

There was a wide range of policies addressing data quality issues across the MPS and evidence of non-compliant policies being implemented. Arrangements were in place to implement an overarching crime recording policy that will be supported by a number of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

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<sup>6</sup> Home Office and HMIC documents largely consisted of guidance for practitioners responsible for crime recording and baseline assessments of areas other than data quality. Although useful for reference purposes they were deemed unsuitable for the scrutiny report.

The MPS had provided a range of training opportunities to equip staff with required knowledge and skills. However, take up of training had been low. This resulted in varying levels of knowledge amongst frontline call handling staff.

The report recognised reporting arrangements to MPA committees around data quality issues, however, noted that the MPA needed to develop a more proactive approach in this area. There was little evidence of members defining Authority expectations around data quality. There was also no evidence of effective scrutiny of the action plan arising from last year's audit. Proposed BOCU self-audits would provide the MPA with an opportunity to become more involved in the oversight of data quality at local level.

The following crime types were compared to the previous year's performance: burglary, criminal damage, vehicle crime, violent crime and racial incidents. Although the same grades were achieved, a lower level of compliance was noted. This had a cumulative effect in reducing overall performance from 'good' to 'fair'. More notably, a significant decline in compliance levels was seen in relation to domestic violence and disturbances. These were graded as 'poor'.

Contributory factors to declining performance were recognised as: the implementation of the CCC<sup>7</sup> which resulted in significant staffing and organisational changes, and a deterioration in the standard of 'no criming' possibly due to varying levels of understanding and lack of knowledge of HOCR at BOCU level.

The Audit Commission recognised the MPS's role in identifying crime data quality issues that potentially had a national impact (Operation Hines), and changes in national recording policies were expected.

The Audit Commission report recommended that the MPS:

- Established a target(s) for data quality within the call handling and crime recording systems to support improvement.
- Reviewed and revised local BOCU crime recording policies to ensure compliance with relevant data quality standards (repeat of 2006 recommendation).
- Enhanced the call handling system to include the equivalent of the NCRS special message format (repeat of 2006 recommendation).
- Encouraged a 'feedback loop' between Integrated Borough Operations (IBOs) and CCC to develop a 'right first time' approach.
- Reviewed the proposed NSIR audit programme to incorporate a holistic audit of call handling quality issues to get maximum benefit from the audit process.
- Developed proposals to improve the quality of initial classification and 'no crime' decision-making.

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<sup>7</sup> See footnote one for further details.

- Reviewed how incidents passed to Safer Neighbourhoods teams are actioned and outcomes achieved to ensure that victim needs were met and relevant intelligence obtained.
- Required all call handling staff in the CCC and IBOs to undertake the National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT) remote training package.
- The MPA undertakes a proactive role in the oversight of NCRS at BOCU level.

**Audit Commission (August 2007) National Standard for Incident Recording – Metropolitan Police Authority Audit 2006-2007 London: Audit Commission**

The NSIR was introduced to develop accuracy and consistency around non-crime incident recording. This data impacted on a significant proportion of police activity, particularly Safer Neighbourhoods policing. NSIR data informs Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs), Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and contributes to Assessments of Policing and Community Safety (APACS).

The Audit Commission 'Way Forward' report published in 2003 found that nationally:

- There were no common recording practices in relation to non-crime/notifiable incidents.
- There was no common understanding of non-crime/notifiable offence incident types.
- The most common disclosure codes used were 'miscellaneous' or 'other'.
- Notifiable crime only accounted for approximately 20% of all incidents.

This Audit Commission report focused on the anti-social behaviour (ASB) component of the NSIR, as this was the most complex and high risk component impacting on accuracy of recording.

*Main findings*

The national average for compliance was 79%. The average for MPS compliance was 69%. NSIR data from eight MPS BOCUs were reviewed. Overall compliance ranged between 66% and 81%. Compliance was assessed using eleven reasons for failure<sup>8</sup>. The most significant difference between national average results and MPS results by reasons for failure was in the 'incorrect NSIR sub component category'. This reason for failure was given in 29% of national cases and 42% of MPS cases.

The MPS partially updated CAD codes in August 2006 to implement the ASB component of the NSIR. Until the command and control system is updated further the MPS will be unable to fully comply with NSIR requirements in

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<sup>8</sup> Insufficient information; onus on victims to report; lack of action to trace victim; lack of action to trace informant; evidence of assault/injury; evidence of damage; evidence of harassment; evidence of other crime; late amendment to record; incorrect NSIR sub component; incorrect NSIR component.

relation to minimum data requirements, NICL and the recommended use of incident qualifiers. Compliance with NSIR will improve accurate analysis capacity.

The Audit Commission found lower levels of compliance within more frequently used sub components: rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour, neighbour nuisance, abandoned vehicles and street drinking. Higher levels of compliance were found in some less frequently used sub components: prostitution, hoax calls and fireworks.

Non-compliance with NSIR was largely attributed to call handlers not defining incidents appropriately. There was also frequent use of the closure code 'cancel' which is not compliant with NSIR requirements.

The report acknowledged the large-scale recruitment of call handling staff for CCC centres and the challenges this had posed:

- Competing operational demands means that data quality had not been an initial training priority.
- Call handlers had limited awareness of the purpose of NSIR or how to access guidance.
- Take up of training opportunities had been low, sometimes because operational demands led to the cancellation of training days.

The Audit Commission also found little evidence of supervisory intervention in amending incident closure codes despite supervision in place at both CCC centres and IBOs. In addition, a large proportion of ASB incidents passed to Safer Neighbourhoods teams were then closed with little evidence of mechanisms in place to ensure that incidents are appropriately deployed and resolved.

Inaccurate recording of NSIR data will lessen the ability of police forces and partner agencies to use the data to full effect.

The Audit Commission report recommended:

- All call handling staff in the CCC and IBO should undertake the NCALT remote training package.
- On screen briefing prompts should be used for the most common areas of non-compliance.
- Supervisory activity should be focused on these areas for a specific period.

Many of the findings and conclusions in this scrutiny are consistent with those set out in the Audit Commission reports summarised above.

## Key findings

This section summarises the key findings from the face-to-face semi structured interviews and structured email questionnaires with various colleagues and wider stakeholders (see methodology section above for further details). Interview findings have been analysed and structured under four headings: structures and supervision; policy and processes; training and resources; and system failure and conflicts.

### Structures and supervision

#### *Supervision of crime records*

Boroughs have their own processes and practices around supervision of crime records. In some areas it is the responsibility of the team supervisor (usually a sergeant) to supervise all crime records added by officers during the tour of duty. Interviewees felt that this supervision of crime records was sometimes inadequate. There is often insufficient cover available when supervising sergeants are off-duty. In addition, many crime records are inputted at the end of a shift, which may result in rushed inputting and limited capacity of individual sergeants to fully supervise each record. Interviewees felt this raised issues around the logistics of the current crime recording process. Supervision of crime records often falls to the CMU in the absence of other appropriate supervision.

#### *Reporting arrangements*

The DAT is responsible for ensuring compliance against the NCRS and NSIR. The DAT deals with all requests to change classifications of crime, disputes between the MPS and other forces, and spends a limited amount of time auditing recorded crime<sup>9</sup>. The current DAT and Territorial Policing CMU (TPCMU) are well regarded by staff interviewed within BOCUs, largely due to the personalities within the teams and the integrity they apply to their work<sup>10</sup>.

It is important that the DAT line management arrangements do not cause a conflict of interest. The person responsible for the DAT and for the integrity of crime recording data accuracy should not, for example, be in a position where their performance bonus could be affected by decisions on crime recording made by the DAT. The line management and size of DAT and the resources available to them must be suitably robust to overcome any potential conflicts of interest within the MPS. The suggestion was made by some interviewees that the DAT and the FCR should be subject to more independent line management, possibly by the MPA. However, there were concerns that this may give an unintended impression that the MPA had limited confidence in the ability of the MPS to manage the data accuracy process. The MPA feels that rather than directly line manage the DAT and the FCR, it would be

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<sup>9</sup> See appendix two for further details of the MPS DAT structure, functions and intervention strategy.

<sup>10</sup> The MPS DAT state that a number of officers and staff have raised issues of integrity with them as they felt they could not discuss them with their own line managers or SMT (Summary of DAT crime recording issues (29/08/07)).

effective for the lead MPA member for data accuracy to meet regularly with the FCR and key members of the DAT.

ACPO support for the FCR was seen as an important success factor for data accuracy within the force. A number of ACPO and policy lead interviewees' felt that performance around accuracy of crime recording should be management board led. A direct FCR/DAT link into management board was viewed as essential, but believed to be currently lacking in the MPS.

The CROG was formed to ensure consistent communication between the DAT and other business groups<sup>11</sup>. Interviewees highlighted concerns that the CROG has expanded its remit and removed decision-making responsibilities from the FCR. It was felt that the CROG had become an executive board, rather than an advisory board as initially intended. There were suggestions that the CROG should be independently chaired, possibly by the MPA. Alternatively, CROG could report directly to the MPA lead member for data accuracy<sup>12</sup>.

#### *Line management of CMUs*

Each borough has designated CMUs who are the focal point for the management and administration of reported crime. CMUs have an active role in assessing and improving the quality of the initial investigation and submitted CRIS reports<sup>13</sup>. They also monitor the standard of data entry and data quality, challenging poor performance where appropriate, and act as a liaison point between victims, witnesses and investigators.

Several interviewees questioned the appropriateness of the current CMU line management arrangements. It was thought that CMU line management should be centralised, removing the unit from the line management of those who rely on CMU decisions for their own performance assessment. The degree of centralisation proposed varied from line management only to physical relocation of the units. Some interviewees also felt that all crime-recording facilities should be centralised. However, the size and complexity of the MPS means that this could be problematic. Centralisation has worked well in some other forces, for example Kent Constabulary, where the unit is managed by the FCR with a large data integrity team. As a result, the constabulary does not need to undertake the in-depth crime recording training with front line officers that is necessary in the MPS.

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<sup>11</sup> See appendix three for further details of the CROG structure and functions.

<sup>12</sup> *The MPS DAT highlighted the opportunity to further involve the MPA in the oversight of crime recording in the internal paper, Independent performance oversight (undated). It was felt that the MPA would be a useful ally in improving data quality and would provide additional reassurance to the MPS if data quality were ever called into question.*

<sup>13</sup> *The MPS is dependent on the CRIS system for the majority of its crime data. CRIS data is used to drive day-to-day deployment of officers, longer term operational planning and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) activity. CRIS data feeds into management board meetings and the Home Office to illustrate performance and is an important feature in resource allocation. Accurate, high quality CRIS data is vital to effective MPS activity (NCRS risk assessment, internal MPS document, (07/10/04))*



Two possible methods of centralising CMUs are currently being piloted by the MPS. The results of these pilots will be reported to the MPA for consideration.

#### *Audit function*

Data accuracy is subject to both internal and external audit processes<sup>14</sup>. However, funding for external auditing has recently been greatly reduced and it is anticipated that this will have a considerable effect on the national audit programme. It is likely that auditing will continue on an ad hoc basis and that the MPS will be audited. There was concern from some interviewees that data quality standards may slip as a result of the reduced external audit programme.

Interviewees highlighted the need for a full and robust risk-based audit system and concern around the current system that informs forces in advance of how and when they will be audited, possibly skewing results. The MPS needs to consider how best to ensure that all relevant crimes are recorded appropriately as only those that are recorded can be audited.

Due to the limited audit capacity of the MPS, interviewees felt the DAT may benefit from the assistance of trained staff from within the MPA IA team - however management of the process should be maintained by the MPS<sup>15</sup>. Additional audit support could also be obtained from staff within the Audit Commission or HMIC, utilising skills on a 'mix and match' basis. This would give an element of independence to the audit process and more opportunity for the MPA to better hold senior officers to account for poor data accuracy.

Difficulties with auditing the current system were highlighted. One interviewee felt that the amount of time needed to justify subjective crime classification decisions in order to satisfy HOCRs may over-complicate the audit process.

It was felt that data quality should be considered throughout all audits and oversight of police performance, not just those focusing specifically on data. For instance, it was suggested that the current Crime Control Strategy Meetings (CCSM) should take data quality into account when reviewing the overall performance picture of each borough. One interviewee particularly emphasised the importance of data quality as part of the overall audit process. Interviewees questioned how the MPS could effectively police London without access to a full and accurate picture of crime.

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<sup>14</sup> See appendix four for further details.

<sup>15</sup> This was also suggested in an internal MPS paper (*Independent performance oversight (undated)*).

## Policy and processes

### *The purpose of crime recording*

Staff and officers interviewed from across the organisation recognised the importance of accurate data on crime. A key concern highlighted by many of them was that crime recording was focused more towards meeting HOCs than the needs of policing. The requirement to record virtually all reported crime means that time is often spent trying to verify whether a crime actually happened. It was also felt that the recording standards often inappropriately relied on circumstantial evidence in establishing the classification of a crime e.g. guidance states that damage to the point of entry of a building should be recorded as attempted burglary. The current system requires officers to spend more time administrating than investigating.

The MPS needs to focus on data, information and intelligence at a very basic level e.g. is the right address or house number recorded? As one interviewee stated, data accuracy, "is not just an NCRS issue...NCRS itself never arrested anybody. However, good quality data can lead to successful arrests". One senior officer interviewed questioned the resources required to be fully compliant with the NCRS and whether this would be an effective use of resources against the benefit to the public. He felt that the MPS needed good quality data rather than, "compliance for compliance sake".

Interviewees referred to a need to re-establish the purpose of data recording. The three aims of crime recording, investigation, intelligence and performance measurement need to be balanced. There was a general feeling that there was a disproportionate emphasis on the latter. The MPA understands this position and the frustrations of frontline officers around what they perceive to be unnecessary bureaucracy to comply with crime recording standards<sup>16</sup>. It is important that the balance is redressed so both officers and staff can see the benefits of accurate data in terms of improved investigations and intelligence.

The MPS need to 'sell' data accuracy and integrity to the officer on the street. More accurate information will mean that they are better equipped to tackle crime and 'get results'. CMU staff need to be acknowledged as the borough source of crime recording expertise and their decisions supported by both BOCU and central SMT. SMTs need to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to accurate crime recording by ensuring that any officer found to be dishonest around crime recording is dealt with openly<sup>17</sup>. In addition, individual staff and officers need to take personal responsibility for data accuracy and completeness of crime records. There is currently no systematic self-cleansing of data when errors are spotted and although the MPS usually do get the decisions right there can be limited evidence to justify decision making.

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<sup>16</sup> Some police force areas are piloting the use of shorter, more concise forms focused on key information needs. The MPS should monitor the result of the pilot to identify potential benefits.

<sup>17</sup> A *Crime Integrity Team (CIT) risk identification paper (undated)* highlighted how the lack of sanctions for those failing to meet data quality standards may result in little incentive to improve data quality.

### *National policies*

There was an overwhelming call from interviewees for both the NOL and HOCRs to be reviewed to ensure that they reflect the reality of crime and are meaningful to both the police and the public. It was believed that there were too many crime categories and that reducing and simplifying these would lead to less scope for interpretation, more transparency and would reduce the time and resources necessary to ensure that the system meets government standards.

Interviewees also felt that the current time frames for confirming crimes (up to 72 hours) did not allow for adequate investigation to be conducted, particularly in more serious or complex cases. They suggested extending the time scale for confirmation to avoid rushed classifications that may direct the investigation inappropriately.

A particular concern highlighted by interviewees was the disparity between NCRS, HOCR and CPS standards. This caused considerable confusion and frustration, particularly for frontline officers. The DAT are often criticised for challenging BOCU decisions because they apply the HOCR as intended. A more appropriate response to this would be to challenge the Home Office, rather than the DAT, particularly around reviewing the content of the NOL and the possibility of better alignment of HOCR to CPS charging standards.

It was felt that the MPA and MPS should work together to ensure that the Home Office understands and accepts the need for the changes highlighted above. It was acknowledged that any proposed changes would need to be properly explained to the public to avoid it being seen as manipulation of crime figures.

There may be different concerns highlighted as the forthcoming APACS rolls out in 2008 e.g. a focus on physically violent offences instead of the current British Crime Survey (BCS) comparator crime types.

### *Central policies*

To date the MPS has not fully implemented the NSIR. The NICL codes should be fully implemented. A significant proportion of police activity is not crime related. This work and the resulting intelligence will not be accurately captured without full implementation of NSIR and NICL codes. In the absence of this intelligence incidents can, and have, escalated into more serious offences.

Interviewees acknowledge that NCRS and NSIR are not 'magic wands' but are a first step to improving data accuracy and integrity. The MPS should be striving for data accuracy and integrity in everything it does. Compliance with NCRS and NSIR will be a by-product of this.

### *Local policies*

Interviewees highlighted occasions where local policies do not always comply with central policies and guidance. For example, officers being required to phone through to a specified officer before recording a BCS category crime

and obstacles stopping victims reporting certain crime types e.g. insisting on an IMEI number when reporting a stolen mobile phone<sup>18</sup>.

There was also concern that the NCRS 72-hour rule was being used inappropriately in some areas with certain crime types being held back until the last minute before final classification.

These local policies are often only highlighted to the FCR when they are 'found out'. The requirement to inform the FCR of any local policies should be regularly communicated to staff and officers.

### Training and resources

#### *CCC and call handling*

Interviewees often highlighted concerns around CCC and the quality of initial call handling when discussing training and resource issues. It was felt that initial call handling targets focused too much on time to answer the call rather than the quality of the call itself. There was also concern that CCC staff often did not ask the correct questions to elicit vital information at the earliest opportunity or record callers details accurately<sup>19</sup>. More focus should be placed on this during initial training and as part of the Quality Assurance (QA) process for call takers. It was felt that the general training needs of staff in CCC had not been fully addressed, often due to the limited number of trainer days available. There has also been poor uptake of the NCALT training. CCC has still had to rely heavily on the overflow call handling facility at New Scotland Yard to ensure they meet 999 emergency call answering standards.

One senior officer highlighted CCC staffing difficulties, particularly in the initial implementation stage, which may have affected the quality of service provision. Some staff were unwilling conscripts to CCC and the complexity of individual shift patterns, sickness levels, low morale and the conflict between the 24-hour CCC and more limited service hours provided by Telephone Investigation Bureaus (TIBs) further added to the problem. CCC is undertaking a rolling review of individual shift patterns in an attempt to align them more closely to business need.

#### *Officer/staff training and resources*

Interviewees also highlighted concerns around the quality of training for officers and staff. It was felt that crucial areas such as NCRS, the reasons why crimes must be recorded in certain ways and the processes for transferring crime reports between boroughs or force areas had not been clearly explained. As one interviewee stated, the information and training given to frontline reporting/supervising officers and staff, "barely scratches the surface of NCRS or HOCR compliance"<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> *Local policies that may present a barrier to crime recording, possibly discouraging genuine reports of crime, were also highlighted in an internal MPS paper (Summary of DAT crime recording issues (29/08/07)).*

<sup>19</sup> *Failing to take sufficient caller details at the first point of contact were also highlighted as a problem in an internal MPS paper (Summary of DAT crime recording issues (26/08/07)).*

<sup>20</sup> *Concerns around the provision and quality of training for officers and staff have also been highlighted in a variety of internal MPS documents (e.g. NCRS risk assessment (07/10/04));*

In addition there was concern that police officers and staff within CMUs are currently provided with the same levels of training. This was thought to be inappropriate, as police staff require more training than officers in legal definitions of crime types and the content of relevant legislation. It was also felt that the time between staff entering the CMU and attending their initial training course (up to six weeks) created a problematic knowledge gap. An interviewee suggested this could be addressed by supplying all new entrants with a training folder, with their learning from this to be quality assured by TP.

The importance of data quality and accurate crime recording should form part of the induction for all MPS officer and staff. Training should be continual and for all levels, not just sergeants. However, this should be developed in such a way that does not require mass retraining programmes. New officers and staff who are required to record crime, as part of their role would benefit from time spent within a CMU to enhance their understanding of the crime recording process.

Some interviewees questioned whether CMUs were staffed with people who want to be there. There were concerns about the number of officers and staff within CMUs who were on recuperative or 'light' duties.

There was also concern that the crime recording supervision element had been removed from sergeants training and should be reinstated. In addition, supervising and senior officers receive limited training on NCRS and HOCRs.

#### *Centralised systems*

Several interviewees highlighted the benefits of centralising crime recording systems. It was felt that a centralised crime recording bureau would create a number of benefits, including making training issues more manageable. However the benefits could not be fully realised unless the MPS IT systems were updated.

#### System failure and conflicts

##### *Pressure and conflicting messages*

A number of interviewees evidenced specific incidents where pressure was applied to CMU staff within the boroughs that affected the accuracy of the crime recording process and resulted in a degree of 'classification drift'<sup>21</sup>. This was often attributed to the focus on priority crime, which can create a perverse incentive to record crime inaccurately e.g. for robbery or pick pocketing to be recorded as theft. Though all policy leads interviewed agreed there was a perverse incentive effect, their views on the extent of this varied from a subconscious 'drift' to deliberate and intentional practices.

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*Discussion paper – Crime recording and Compstat (undated)). Problems were often attributed to fitting training sessions in to overcrowded work schedules. Consequences included disparate interpretation of the NCRS and HOCRs, lack of consistency in decision-making and poor data quality.*

<sup>21</sup> *An internal paper (Summary of DAT recording issues (29/08/07)) states that a number of officers and staff have confided in the DAT that they have been pressurised to make decision that they have felt were dishonest, such as classifying crimes incorrectly.*

One interviewee felt that although ethical accuracy is stressed as the ultimate priority ahead of targets, this does not overcome the fact that officers are aware of targets and have a desire to meet them. It was stated that inaccuracies are often, “mistakes rather than conspiracy to record incorrectly”. It was felt that performance targets introduced over recent years have made police officers skilled at, “using every tool possible to achieve targets”.

Borough commanders and SMT members are constantly dealing with the tension between recording crimes accurately, the ongoing pressure from central government to meet crime reduction and sanction detection targets and the duty of care to victims and communities. In addition to these pressures, the police must deal with an additional conflict i.e. that the Home Office recording standards do not always reflect the charging standards of the CPS. Furthermore, the police service is assessed on its ability to maximize sanction detections, while the CPS is measured against the rate of ineffective trials. These two sets of targets are often in conflict as it is in the interests of police measured performance to ensure that as many cases as possible are prosecuted. However, CPS measured performance shows improvements by only taking forward those cases that are most likely to result in a conviction.

Detections are seen as a significant measure of performance. Interviewees highlighted how some officers feel that if they can't detect the crime, why should they record it? Detection targets can lead to concentrating on 'quick wins' (e.g. cannabis warnings) or criminalising behaviour such as urinating in the street<sup>22</sup>.

### *IT systems*

Although the scrutiny did not examine IT provision, numerous interviewees highlighted the shortcomings of current IT systems.

There was widespread agreement across interviewees that the MPS IT systems were not technically sophisticated or robust enough to deal with the complexities of crime recording and investigation in London. There is little compatibility and integration of systems, many of which are outdated. Examples of this include the current CAD system based on an airline baggage handling system and the resource intensive work required to allow MPS systems to communicate with each other at a basic level.

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<sup>22</sup> This issue has been raised in a number of MPS internal documents (e.g. CIT risk register issues (23/11/04); MPS detections performance management framework discussion paper (13/02/07); MPS sanction detections (SD), detection-types (17/07/07)). These papers raise concern that the detection targets may lead the police service to unnecessarily criminalise individuals and behaviours in order to achieve performance targets, rather than exercise appropriate discretion. This may impact on neighbourhood policing, as individuals may be less willing to engage with and support the police due to their personal experiences. In addition, incentivising certain detection types may mean that new officers do not develop their understanding and skills across of range of detection types. It was felt that a system that credits five sanction detections from PNDs the same as five SDs for solving personal robberies does little to encourage officers to investigate crimes fully to achieve 'better quality' detections. Differentiating the values between the quality of detection types may be a way of addressing this.

Data often has to be entered several times on different systems, increasing the likelihood of mistakes and workload attached to generating a crime report. Examples given include crimes on Merlin not always being transferred to CRIS<sup>23</sup> and inaccurate perpetrator details including names with symbols (e.g. '\$') within them or ages and dates of birth not corresponding. This can considerably reduce the ability to accurately search all systems. Suggestions were made on how to improve the current system such as mandatory field entry, 'fool-proofing' (e.g. removing the ability to enter symbols inappropriately) and technical fixes for 'XX' (reports not allocated to a sector or borough) and '60' (miscellaneous reports) codes.

Shortcomings in MPS IT systems have been highlighted on a number of previous occasions. For example, the DOI is currently identifying and rectifying software limitations in CRIS and undertaking work to reduce the necessity to re-key information into a number of different systems.

The failure of MPS IT systems to fully integrate is not as a result of lack of work by MPS officers and staff but a consequence of outdated IT on which the systems rely. This should be addressed to allow the police to deal with the complexities of crime recording and investigation in London.

#### *Consequences of inaccurate recording*

There was considerable consensus between interviewees on the consequences of inaccurate crime recording.

The most frequently highlighted consequence of 'not getting the data right', raised by interviewees at all levels across the organisation, was the belief that the MPS cannot tackle crime properly if they don't know what is happening and where. Failure to obtain accurate data has the potential to compromise both officer and public safety and the quality of service offered to victims. One example given of potential loss of crime prevention through poor data recording was that it inhibited the identification of young people at risk of escalating criminality. As a result young people can 'slip through the net' when committing low level offences, only coming to the attention of the police when their offending has reached more serious levels<sup>24</sup>.

It was felt that the MPS had not focused enough training on the skill of initial investigation. Officers and staff were not consistent in recording information gathered at the scene of crime or from the victim to ensure a thorough initial investigation. This results in resources being wasted carrying out unnecessary secondary investigations to ensure the data and crime classification is accurate and that the evidence is recorded to maximise detections and service delivery. The MPS occasionally misses opportunities to identify and

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<sup>23</sup> This issue was also highlighted in an internal MPS paper (*Summary of DAT crime recording issues (29/08/07)*).

<sup>24</sup> Limited ability to use data as a predictive tool or complete effective risk assessment was also highlighted as a consequence of inaccurate crime data recording in DAT – activity analysis (12/06/07).

obtain high quality intelligence. It was felt that training alone would not resolve the problem. More intrusive supervision and holding to account was required.

The public, media and stakeholders could interpret inaccurate crime recording as an attempt to deliberately misrepresent criminality and safety within London. This could lead to a loss of confidence in MPS crime data<sup>25</sup>.

Finally, it was acknowledged that presenting an inaccurate picture of falling crime and crime related incidents to the Home Office could result in reduced resource allocation.

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<sup>25</sup> *Highlighted in an MPS internal paper (Independent performance oversight, (undated)) stating that, if after being made aware of reasons for poor data quality the MPS do not respond appropriately, there will be a possible public, MPA and central government crisis of confidence.*



## Conclusions

All interviewees appeared to agree that there is no single solution to the issues raised by the scrutiny. Key issues raised include:

### Physical and financial resources

The MPS should establish the costs and benefit of improvements or changes to crime recording processes. The benefits are not just compliance but the efficiency and effectiveness of MPS crime recording processes, the improvement of customer care, improved intelligence and better crime investigation. The ongoing improvement of data accuracy will rely to an extent on the adequacy of the MPS IT infrastructure and software systems.

### Supervision and training

There are gaps in the knowledge of those involved in the process. This applies to Borough Commanders' knowledge of HOCR, CMU staff knowledge of legal processes and crime and CCC staff knowledge of investigation requirements.

There is no clear understanding of who should supervise various aspects of the crime recording and investigation process. Responsibility for robust initial investigation and information gathering, along with accurate recording of the crime and investigation, needs to be clearly defined and enforced.

### Current standards and classifications

The NOL is confusing, particularly around the level of evidential proof required for prosecution and the balance of probability standard for crime recording.

### Purpose of crime recording

On a more fundamental level questions were raised about the purpose of crime recording. The system, initially devised as a method of recording evidence, has grown to encompass the needs of several stakeholders. There is some doubt about whether the current system can successfully serve the purposes of:

- Resource allocation and tasking.
- Crime identification and investigation.
- Public protection.
- Performance management and comparison.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations have resulted from the scrutiny:

**Recommendation 1:** The MPA and MPS need to focus on the importance of basic data quality. Officers and staff across the organisation must understand the reasons for the importance of data accuracy e.g. high quality investigations and tasking, adequate resource allocation and officer and public safety. These issues should be promoted, rather than the focus being solely on compliance with recording standards. Staff who take information directly from members of the public, whether at CCC or station front counters, should be trained in the type of information required to carry out a successful investigation and provide high quality customer service. To consolidate this, staff dealing with crime recording, particularly in CMUs, who have minimal previous policing experience should be given additional training, especially around legal definitions.

**Recommendation 2:** The independence of the DAT and the FCR line management should be reviewed. Their work should be championed at ACPO level within the MPS management board. CMU line management should be made independent of BOCU line management, either by physically centralising CMUs or by retaining them within boroughs but centralising line management.

**Recommendation 3:** The MPS should fully implement the NSIR and the NICL codes.

**Recommendation 4:** The MPA and MPS should work with the Home Office to facilitate a full review of the NOL. In addition there should be a full review of the disparity between the NCRS and CPS charging standards.

**Recommendation 5:** The supervision of crime recording processes should be strengthened both centrally and at borough level. The CROG should be either independently chaired or report regularly to the MPA lead member for data quality. Its function as an advisory panel, rather than an executive decision making board, should be maintained. Supervision of crime recording data should be included as part of sergeants' training, specifically how to supervise and why. Performance assessment across the MPS should take account of data quality, for example through the Performance Development Review (PDR) process or through CCSMs.

**Recommendation 6:** A robust, risk-based crime recording audit system should be developed and maintained. DAT internal audit function should be able to call on the MPA IA resource to assist with audits whilst maintaining ownership of the process. The MPA should review its internal audit skills base to ensure that it has the resource to offer support to the MPS when conducting data quality audits.

**Recommendation 7:** CCC targets should be reviewed to reflect both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of their work and to increase the focus on the quality of the data obtained and recorded. Resource allocation at CCC should be reviewed to take account of the nature of call centre work and the effect it has on attendance levels and staff turnover.

**Recommendation 8:** The MPS should expedite the pilots into the centralisation of crime recording and report progress to the MPA Planning, Performance and Review Committee (PPRC) on a regular basis.

**Recommendation 9:** The MPS SMT should ensure that boroughs systematically inform the FCR of local policies before implementing them.

**Recommendation 10:** The MPS should conduct a review of Merlin to ensure there are no records on the system that should, but have not been, recorded as a crime on CRIS.

**Recommendation 11:** The ongoing improvement of data accuracy will rely to an extent on the adequacy of the MPS IT infrastructure and software systems. Although this scrutiny did not examine current IT provision, it is apparent that this area should be subject to further scrutiny. The MPS must ensure that sufficient resources are allocated so that both the IT systems and the relevant business processes meet current and future needs.

## **Appendix one**

### **Home Office Counting Rules – Whether & when to record**

Section A (General Rules) of the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) sets out whether and when to record an incident or crime record. For more details please see the Home Office website.

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/countrules.html](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/countrules.html)

#### **Incident reports**

All reports of incidents, whether from victims, witnesses or third parties and whether crime related or not, will result in the recording of an incident report by the police.

Reasons for recording incidents are:

- The force has all available information in relations to possible crimes in the area.
- Allow for an audit trail to be created.
- Ensure consistency of crime recording between forces.

Where a report is recorded as a crime initially (e.g. telephone report direct to Crime Management Unit), it is not necessary that an incident report is also created. However, where the report is not recorded as a crime, an auditable incident report should be registered (whether in the force incident system or some other accessible or auditable means).

#### **Whether to record**

- An incident will be recorded as a crime (notifiable offence):

For offences against an identified victim if, on the balance of probability:

- The circumstances as reported amount to a crime defined by law (determined by the police).
- There is no credible evidence to the contrary.

For offences against the state, evidence must be clearly made out to prove the offence before a crime is recorded.

The test to be applied in respect of recording a crime is that of the balance of probabilities *i.e. is the incident more likely than not the result of a criminal act?* In most cases, the belief by the victim (or person reasonably assumed to be acting on behalf of the victim) that a crime has occurred is sufficient to justify its recording, although this will not be the case in all circumstances.

- Where there are grounds to suspect that a victim related crime may have taken place but no victim can immediately be found or identified,

the matter should be recorded as a crime related incident until such time as the victim is located or comes forward.

- All reports of crimes made where the offender (if age known or otherwise) is under the age of 10 years should be recorded as a crime.
- In exceptional cases where there is overwhelming evidence that a serious crime has been committed, a force may decide to record even though the victim has declined to confirm or cannot be found.
- In the case of a public order incident where on the arrival of the police there is no continuing disorder and no specific intended victim, the incident will not be routinely recorded as a crime.

### **When to record**

- A crime should be recorded as soon as the reporting officer is satisfied that it is more likely than not that a crime has been committed.

It is a national requirement that an incident should be recorded as a crime within a standard timescale of 3 x 24 hour periods from the time the incident is first logged. A maximum of seven days is allowed (to cater for situations outside of the control of the police such as where victims are unavailable), providing the explanation for the delay is clear on the log.

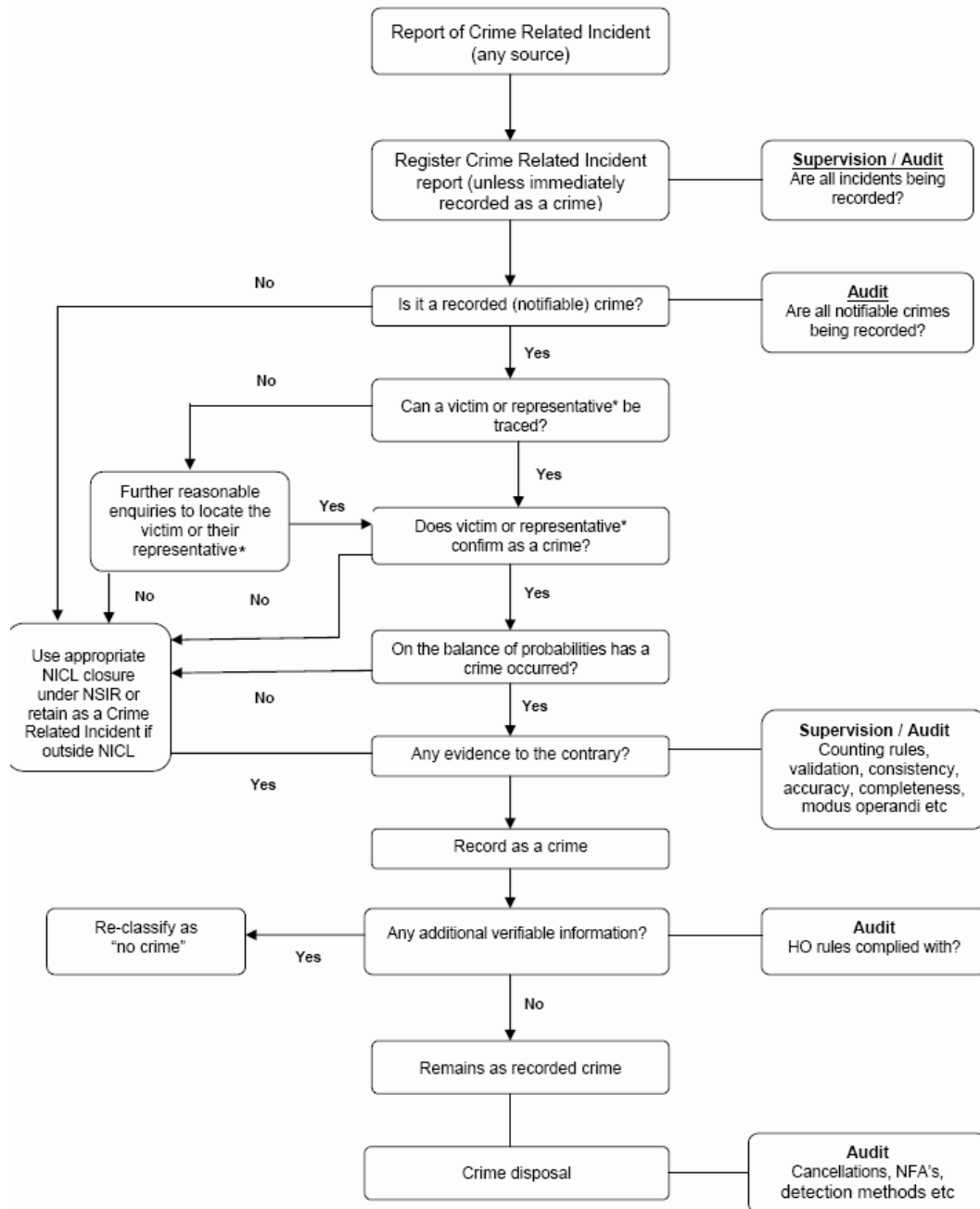
Recording should not be delayed in order to wait for further details of the case, including the likelihood of a detection.

- The timing of a recorded crime, for the Home Office statistical returns should relate to the date it is recorded.
- Once recorded, a crime should remain recorded unless there is additional verifiable information to the contrary.

The only exception to this requirement for recording crime is for undercover operations.

Where the Force Crime Registrar is satisfied that compliance is not possible due to the complexity, or possible compromise, of the investigation they (the FCR) should ensure compliance within the above timescales, immediately following the conclusion of the investigation. Furthermore, where an exception has been granted the FCR, in liaison with the authorising officer, must ensure that all crimes have been recorded applying all the general principals.

## Whether to record



\* Representative means, "A person reasonably assumed to be acting on behalf of the victim"

## **Appendix two**

### **MPS DAT structure, functions and intervention strategy**

#### *DAT structure and functions*

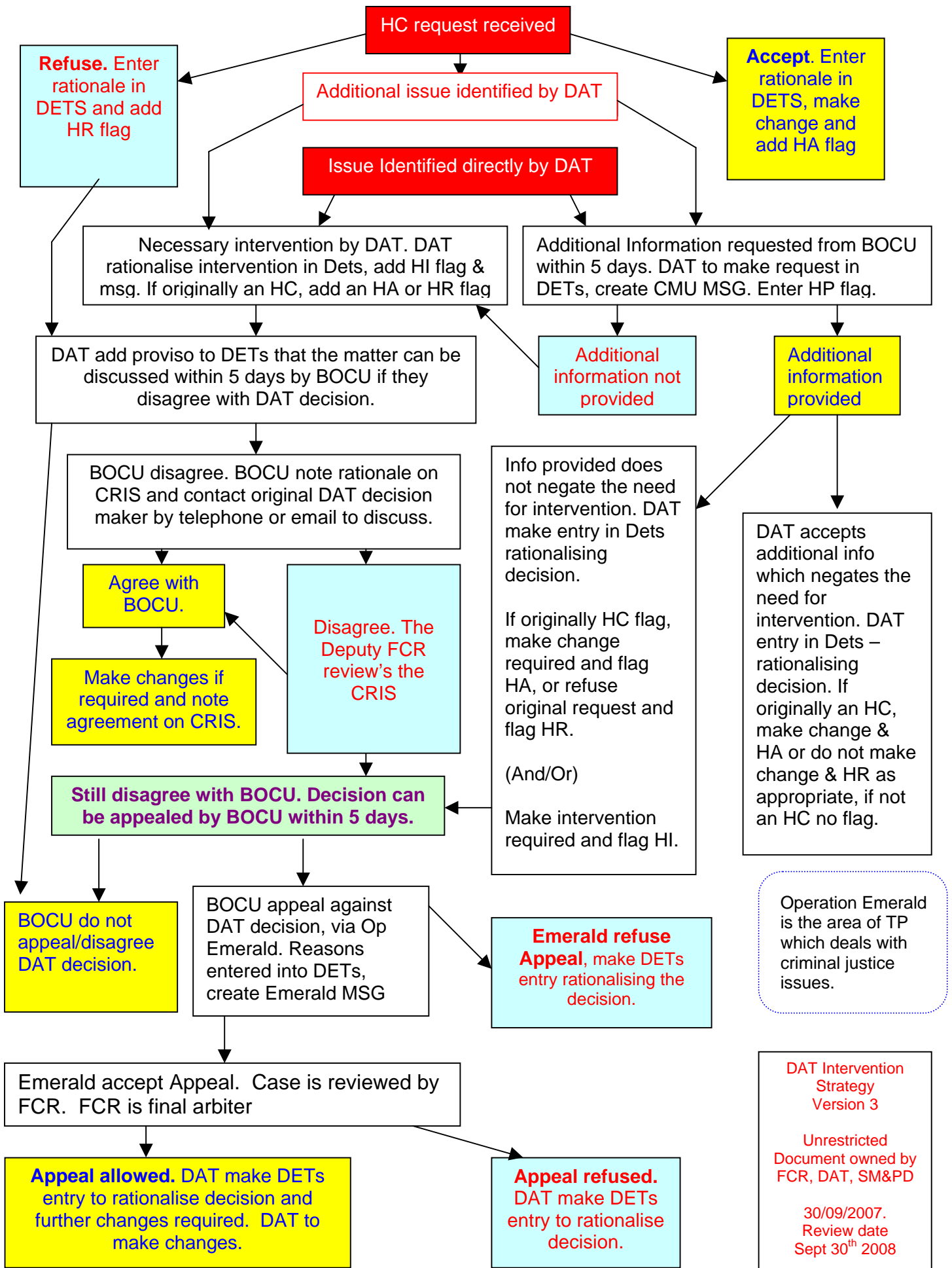
The DAT (formerly the Crime Integrity Team) was formed in April 2003 to manage the implementation of NCRS in the MPS. This team consists of the FCR, a Deputy FCR and 7 Assistant Crime Registrars. There are approximately 1,000,000, crimes recorded by the MPS annually. DAT (crime) deal with all requests to change the classification of crime, disputes between the MPS and other forces, and spend a limited amount of time auditing recorded crime.

The DAT (Incident) team consists of the Force Incident Registrar (FIR), a Deputy, an Audit Manager and 2 Assistant Incident Registrars. The MPS records approximately 4,750,000, incidents annually. The FIR and their team were formed to implement the NSIR in the MPS. At present only one of the four categories (ASB) has been implemented. The FIR's team complete limited daily audits of recorded incidents.

#### *Force Crime Registrar (FCR)*

The FCR is the operational lead for the DAT (Crime). He/she is responsible for the development, implementation of crime recording policies, crime recording audit programmes, and the achievement of a consistent and accurate response to crime recording. They ensure prompt and adequate circulation of changes to HOCRs and act as the MPS representative on crime recording matters with the Home Office and other forces and feedback to the Home Office regarding the consequences of proposed changes. The FCR advises the ACPO crime recording lead on NCRS and HOCR and identifies potential flaws and weaknesses in MPS crime recording policies. The FCR also brings to the attention of ACPO unsustainable performance claims and suggests remedial action.

*DAT intervention strategy*





## **Appendix three**

### **MPS CROG structure and functions**

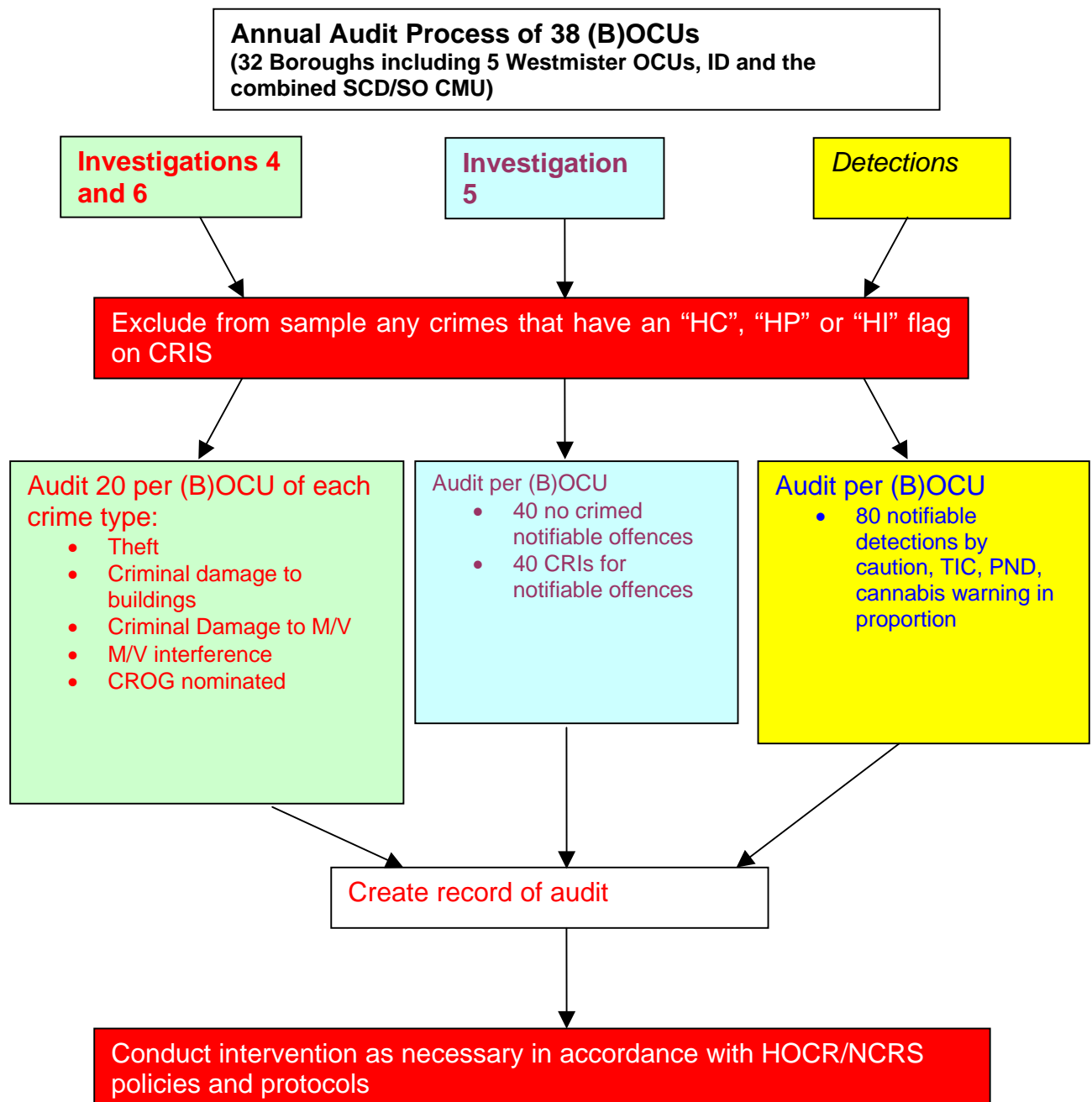
The CROG was formed to ensure consistent communication between the Crime Integrity Team (now DAT) and other Business Groups. The group meets monthly, includes representatives from most Business Groups and the MPA and is chaired by the MPS lead Commander for crime recording. The group has recently been expanded to include a representative from the FIR's team to ensure that the 'cradle-to-grave' incident/crime recording process is appropriately examined. The FCR presents the feedback from previously circulated proposed changes to HOOCR and gathers feedback for the Home Office. Each business group has the opportunity to raise issues regarding crime-recording policy. The Commander uses this meeting to monitor the NCRS Action Plan in response to the previous audit of crime data.

## Appendix four

### Examples of internal and external audit processes

#### *Internal*

Protective Marking	Not protectively Marked
Suitable for Publication Scheme	Yes
Title and Version Number	Annual Audit Process of 38 (B)OCUs
Relevant to	All staff in crime recording
Summary	Annual Audit process
Author	Colin Duncan, FCR.
Date Created	14 <sup>th</sup> August 2007
Review Date	14 August 2008



### *External*

In April 2002 ACPO, with support from the Home Office and HMIC, introduced the NCRS. This provided police forces with a standardised framework for consistent recording of crime. Following the introduction of the NCRS, a review of its implementation was conducted by the Audit Commission and the Wales Audit Office on behalf of the Home Office. Auditors examined selected data to test compliance against the standards and its management arrangements, and presented each force with a comprehensive audit review.

The four-year audit programme concluded in 2007 and there are no plans for the Home Office to fund any further data accuracy audits.

## **Glossary**

### **A**

ACPO – Association of Chief Police Officers  
APACS – Assessments of Policing and Community Safety  
ASB – Anti-Social Behaviour

### **B**

BCS - British Crime Survey  
BOCU - Borough Operational Command Unit

### **C**

CAD – Computer Aided Despatch  
CCC – Command, Control and Communication  
CCSM - Crime Control Strategy Meeting  
CDRP – Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership  
CIT – Crime Integrity Team  
CMU - Crime Management Unit  
COP – Coordination and Policing Committee  
CPS – Crown Prosecution Service  
CRI – Crime Related Incident  
CRIS – Crime Report Information System  
CROG - Crime Recording Oversight Group

### **D**

DAT - Data Accuracy Team  
DDM - Designated Decision Maker  
DETS – Details of investigation on CRIS  
DOI - Directorate of Information

### **F**

FCR - Force Crime Registrar  
FIR – Force Incident Registrar

### **H**

HA (flag) – Denotes that the request to consider reclassification of an offence has been accepted/agreed  
HC (flag) – Denotes a request to consider reclassification of an offence  
HI (flag) – Denotes an intervention by the DAT  
HMIC – Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary  
HOCR - Home Office Counting Rules  
HP (flag) – Decision pending  
HR (flag) – Denotes that a request to consider reclassification of an offence has been rejected/refused

### **I**

IA – Internal Audit  
IBOs – Integrated Borough Operations  
IT – Information Technology

## **K**

KPIs – Key Performance Indicators

## **M**

MPA - Metropolitan Police Authority

MPS - Metropolitan Police Service

MSG – Message

M/V – Motor vehicle

## **N**

NCALT – National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies

NCRS - National Crime Recording Standards

NICL - National Incident Category List

NOL - Notifiable Offence List

NSIR - National Standard for Incident Recording

## **O**

OCU – Operational Command Unit

## **P**

PDR – Performance Development Review

PND – Penalty Notice for Disorder

PPRC – Planning, Performance and Review Committee

## **Q**

QA – Quality Assurance

## **S**

SCD – Specialist Crime Directorate

SM&PD – Strategy, Modernisation and Performance Directorate

SMT – Senior Management Team

SO – Specialist Operations

SOPs – Standard Operating Procedures

SPIs – Statutory Performance Indicators

## **T**

TIB – Telephone Investigation Bureau

TIC – Taken into Consideration

TP – Territorial Policing

TPCMU - Territorial Policing Crime Management Unit

## Contact details

If you would like further information about this scrutiny, please contact:

Jane Owen  
Head of Planning and Performance  
020 7202 0214

Gemma Deadman  
Performance Analyst  
020 7202 0248

Melissa Wagstaff  
Research Analyst  
020 7202 0213

Metropolitan Police Authority  
10 Dean Farrar Street  
London  
SW1H 0NY

Fax: 020 7202 0200  
Minicom: 020 7202 0173  
Email: [planning@mpa.gov.uk](mailto:planning@mpa.gov.uk)

Further information about the MPA can be found on our website:  
[www.mpa.gov.uk](http://www.mpa.gov.uk)