

Appendix 2



HM INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY

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Commander Moir Stewart,
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Dear Moir

Re: Review of Knowledge Management Centre

Thank you for inviting me to review the Knowledge Management Centre (KMC) on Monday 20th August 2007. This letter details the conduct of my review and its findings.

Background

The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) report entitled "Stockwell Two: An Investigation into Complaints about the Metropolitan Police Service's Handling of Public Statements Following the Shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes on 22nd July 2005 highlighted a 'Lack of processes and a knowledge centre for ensuring that the Commissioner is factually briefed'. The IPCC report included the following recommendations –

Recommendation 1

The investigation has identified serious weaknesses in the MPS in relation to the handling of critical information including within the senior management team.

The MPA should consider what management action is required to resolve this and, in view of the serious nature of the failings, the Home Office and Her Majesty's

Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) should also consider what action they need to take to address the issues raised.

Recommendation 3

The Commissioner sets out to his personal staff his expectations in relation to keeping him informed of events occurring within the MPS area.

Recommendation 4

The responsibility for keeping the Commissioner and other key staff informed of critical information is made clear to the MPS senior management team.

In the aftermath of the July bombings, prior to publication of the IPCC 'Stockwell Two' report, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Bill Griffiths (now retired) had carried out a review of the events. Among his recommendation was the introduction of a Knowledge Management Centre (KMC). The development of that project was passed to the July Review Group and the work continues. The establishment of the KMC deals with many of the issues raised by the IPCC Report.

The aims of the Knowledge Management Centre are described as –

- To support and inform the Crisis Management Team (CMT), in order that it can provide effective strategic management and organisational response to an incident;
- Provide support for and reduce demands on Gold for information and ensuring that both Gold and CMT are jointly informed of the overall picture of events; and
- Support the reputation of the organisation through the provision of controlled, corporate and consistent information. Demonstrating that action taken is proportionate, legal accountable and necessary.

The KMC has been deployed twice, in connection with the threats to public health arising from the poisoning of Alexander Litvinenko and the attempted terrorist attacks of July 2007. It has also been exercised three times to test processes and its effectiveness, including during protests in opposition to the expansion of Heathrow Airport in August 2007. The latter deployment featured as part of this review.

Scope of the Review

The review was conducted within a short time-scale and is therefore limited to an internal examination of documentation outlining the development of the KMC, its processes and procedures, an examination of information products produced, and informal interviews with KMC practitioners during the course of the August 2007 exercise deployment. A full schedule of documents examined is included at annex 1. The findings of the review are included at annex 2.

There is scope for a wider review, considering customers perspectives and more extensive scrutiny on information control.

Further Learning Opportunities

I have highlighted some issues that have parallels with those experienced in the management of Joint Intelligence Groups convened to support the police response to a terrorist hostage incident. These include the need to recognise implications arising from demands for a widening of remit and the importance of ensuring consistency in briefings between the strategic response to an incident and the strategic lead of CT investigations. There may be some

benefit in observing the operation of a JIG during its next exercise deployment and discussing these issues with those responsible for its lead.

Conclusion

There can be little doubt that the KMC meets the need to ensure that the strategic command of the MPS is effectively briefed to manage organisational risks arising from critical events, and is tackling the issues raised by recommendations 1, 3 and 4 within the IPCC report

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Schedule of Documents

- Power-point Presentation 'Crisis Knowledge Management Centre: Moving from a Project Concept to Operational Readiness
- Recruitment Briefing for potential Knowledge Management Centre staff – 8th August 2007;
- KMC Structure for Operation Hargood;
- KMC Processes for Operation Hargood;
- Management Board Update on Knowledge Management Centre dated 31st May 2007;
- Management Board Update on Knowledge Management Centre dated 7th June 2007;
- Management Board Update on Knowledge Management Centre dated 11th July 2007;
- Generic Field Officer Aide Memoire;
- Knowledge Management Centre debrief 11th December 2006;
- 'Hot Debrief' notes from KMC 29/6;
- Three e:mail correspondences detailing Management Board Feedback of KMC for July 2007 deployment;
- KMC Project Working Group minutes 2nd May 2007;
- Service level Agreement between the Department of Public Affairs and the KMC;
- KMC Newsletter dated 26th June 2007;
- KMC Development Action Plan dated 10th August 2007;
- Analytical Timeline for Operation Hargood;
- Briefing products for Heathrow protest – August 2007; and
- Excel chart – Management of actions allocated.

Findings

Strategy and Purpose

- Processes adopted by the KMC fully meet the purposes for which the KMC was conceived in that it provides controlled, corporate and consistent information to support those leading the MPS in the reaching of decisions and effective communication with its partners and the public in the course of incidents presenting critical organisational risks.
- The KMC has been activated in support of events falling below the threshold of incidents for which it was conceived. This supports improvement processes but raises potential for 'mission drift'.
- During the deployment for the Heathrow Airport protests, steps were taken to widen the audience of KMC publications. As a consequence of sensitive and some unassessed information being included within briefings for the KMC, it was necessary to produce an 'open version' of the briefing product for the wider readership. The widening of the target audience raises a further risk of 'mission drift'.
- There is potential that opportunities and benefits presented by the KMC could be widened. This should not however be pursued in an uncoordinated manner. The rationale for activation of the KMC could be documented and ratified by Management Board. Any expansion of its remit, whether in terms of the threshold for its activation or widening of its target audience, should be properly planned, risk assessed and resourced.

Leadership and Development

- The KMC 'build' process is evident from the documents provided to HMIC. This has been led by an ACPO officer who has harnessed the expertise of a wide range of individuals in developing the unit from the point of need identification, through vision and towards delivery of capability.
- The ACPO officer leading development of the KMC is aware of the need to embed the concept within the thinking of the organisation and is cognisant that this is an ongoing process. Good use has been made of MPS communications media and other briefing opportunities to raise awareness.
- Good use has been made of debriefs from previous incidents and identifying opportunities from which learning could be developed.
- Intelligence management processes, appropriate I/T and accommodation have been identified. A number of core staff from the July Review Group and Commissioner's Private Office provide the basis of the KMC. They are supported by personnel with requisite skills available on a call out basis who perform KMC duties in addition to their main employment.
- Continuous review processes, which are open and accountable, consider training, infrastructural and process requirements.

Process and Infrastructure

- On the activation of a KMC, a control strategy is agreed with the unit's key customers. This is a good measure in ensuring that the KMC is working towards CMT objectives.
- Field officers are deployed to locations from which critical information can be obtained in support of KMC objectives. Achievement of their objectives is dependent upon the extent to which KMC rationale is understood by the unit from which information is coming from and the communication skills of the individual officers. It may be useful to develop a standard briefing document to assist Field Intelligence Officers in their briefing of link units as to the aims and purpose of the KMC.
- The use of colour desks to respectively receive information, assess and analyse, prepare briefing documents and disseminate is a recognised and effective method of legally and accountably managing the briefing of information.
- The KMC has been required to produce documents of different levels of sensitivity. Whilst not handling GPMS 'Secret' material, it is important that those who provide information are confident in KMC processes. Consideration could be given to appointing a 'Security Officer' to oversee document control and other process mechanisms.
- There is a process for 'fast tracking' actions. The allocation and tracking of actions is managed using an excel spreadsheet which enables supervisors to monitor overall and individual workloads. Consideration could be given to further developing this management tool by highlighting priority actions.

Interdependencies

- The crucial role of Gold in the police response to any incident has been recognised in the development of KMC. A fundamental principle that Gold should be briefed prior to the CMT where possible has been established. This is important in ensuring that contradictions do not occur in what is known to the strategic managers of any incident and the management of organisational risk.
- Key departments upon which the KMC will depend in supporting Gold and the CMT have been identified and measures taken to raise awareness of the role of the KMC. The Counter Terrorism Command (CTC) must be recognised as an important partner in providing the investigative response to terrorist threats.
- Information in possession of the CTC will include Secret and other protected material that will be inappropriate for handling by the KMC. Whilst the KMC offers opportunities to investigators and senior CTC officers by dealing with demands for information, they must retain responsibility for briefing protected information to Gold and the CMT in support of consequence and organisational risk management.
- It is essential that there are clear mechanisms for the co-ordination of CTC and KMC briefings to both Gold and the CMT. There may be value in indoctrinating a small number of KMC staff at senior level to assist in the co-ordination of the briefings.