



Metropolitan Police Authority

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Part 1 – Initial Screening

1. Officer(s) & Unit responsible for completing the assessment:

Andy Hull, Community Engagement Officer, Community Engagement Unit

2. Name of the policy, strategy or project:

Community engagement to counter terrorism ('Counter Terrorism: The London Debate')

3. What is the main purpose or aims of the policy, strategy or project?

- Sustain and widen informed, factual debate on how our society should respond to the terrorist threat
- Provide an opportunity for the police to explain what they do in this field, and why, and to dispel any misconceptions or misinformation
- Heighten public understanding of the national and international dimensions of MPS counter-terrorism functions and roles
- Enable the community to inform the police of their issues, considerations and tensions, leading to better-informed police decision-making
- Seek policy direction and strategic steer on counter-terrorism for the police from the public
- Challenge unproductive stereotyping of communities and polarisation of arguments with regard to terrorism and counter-terrorism
- Enable the MPA better to scrutinise MPS expenditure on counter-terrorism policing and better to oversee the community engagement aspects of this expenditure
- Enable the MPA to make a more informed assessment of the corporacy of the MPS approach to counter-terrorism
- Elicit from members of the community new ideas for new ways of working
- Foster a sense of public ownership of the problems, and their solutions
- Increase the likelihood of generating future community intelligence
- Increase public understanding of and confidence in the role of the MPA
- Demonstrate the MPA as guarantor of police transparency and accountability
- Build social capital – and therefore resilience – in London
- Assist other organisations to appreciate the impact their activity has on London's communities with regard to counter-terrorism

- Increase the amount of information publicly available regarding the terrorist threat and responses to it
- Contribute to national policy on counter-terrorism in police authorities, police forces and in government
- Work with the MPS on London's contribution to international counter-terrorism strategy
- Reduce the likelihood of future terrorist attack

4. Who will be the beneficiaries of the policy/strategy/project?

All Londoners and potentially all people.

5. Has the policy/strategy/project been explained to those it might affect directly or indirectly?

In some sense, the public explained it to us, in that the programme came about, in large part, as a result of written feedback from 70 participants and recorded discussions of 170 diverse Londoners at the MPA's 'Together Against Terror?' conference on 12 December 2005. This conference sought to involve a range of perspectives from people, organisations and communities diverse in their identity across all diversity strands. The MPA created an environment where it was possible to explore how diverse communities consider and experience the terrorist threat and the counter-terrorist response. The current, consequent programme of MPA community engagement to counter terrorism again places the promotion of equality at its centre by enabling diverse Londoners to work together and identify solutions through ongoing debate.

During its formulation, the present programme was circulated to 200+ London stakeholders for their feedback and comment. The usual formal internal consultation process was followed to allow MPA officers and members the opportunity to contribute to the programme's development. Extensive consultation with Specialist Operations and with the Citizen Focus and Diversity Directorate within the MPS took place on the programme. Discussions were held with ACPO (NCTT and TAM), the APA, and the GLA. The programme also draws upon the findings of consultative exercises undertaken by the Home Office ('Preventing Extremism Together Working Groups', August-October 2005) and the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee ('Terrorism and Community Relations', 22 March 2005).

The programme, once formulated, was then proposed, debated and approved, in public, at the MPA Co-ordination and Policing Committee meeting on 3 March 2006.

Informal discussions with community members from relevant groups and colleagues from relevant organisations around Europe continue. The programme outline is set, but the continuing evolution of its detail is responsive to input from practitioners and public alike.

6. Have you consulted on this policy?

Yes, widely. Please see answer to Question 5 above. The distinction between explanation and consultation is unapt.

7. Please completed the following table and give reasons/comments for where:

- (a) The policy/strategy/project could have a positive impact on any of the equality target groups or contributes to promoting equality, equal opportunities and improving relations within equality target groups.
- (b) The policy/strategy/project could have a negative impact on any of the equality target groups, i.e. disadvantage them in any way. **If the impact is high, a full EIA should be completed.**

Equality Target Group	(a) Positive Impact		(b) Negative Impact		Reason/Comment
	High	Low	High	Low	
Men		√			In providing an exclusively male environment for one of the public hearings, it is hoped that male Londoners will be afforded the opportunity to contribute to the debate free from any inhibition they may feel in a mixed-gender environment.
Women	√				One of the public hearings will be exclusively for women. Women's voices have not been adequately heard in this debate to-date. The terrorists who attacked London in July 2005 were all male. There is a prevalent sense of machismo associated with counter-terrorism. Both of these facts have meant that women, who play a crucial role in all communities and are well-positioned to prevent or discover terrorist activity in those communities, have not been sufficiently engaged by statutory authorities hitherto. This is a chance to redress that imbalance.

Equality Target Group	(a) Positive Impact	(b) Negative Impact	Reason/Comment
Asian or Asian British people	√		<p>One of the public hearings planned is for Asian men. This session will give Muslims and non-Muslims of Asian descent the opportunity to express their views on terrorism and the police response. There is a widespread view that unequal counter-terrorism policing interventions and racist backlash following the terrorist attacks on London is often based on skin-colour and not on faith. Thus Asians of all faiths and countries of origin have certain experience in common. This session will be a prime opportunity to communicate those experiences to one another, to police and politicians, and to the public at large through the media.</p> <p>There is nonetheless a risk – deemed by us to be worth taking – that by holding a session exclusively with Asian Men we shall stigmatise them further. We are acutely aware of this risk and intend to manage it appropriately, not least through a robust and sensitive media strategy.</p>
Black or Black British people			I do not consider there to be any especial impact, either positive or negative, upon Black or Black British people.
White people (including Irish people)	√		Some White people may be challenged by hearing the content of the session with Asian Men to understand better their perspective. This may improve race relations, to the benefit of White people as well as BME people.
Chinese people			I do not consider there to be any especial impact, either positive or negative, upon Chinese people.
Other racial/ethnic group (please specify)			I do not consider there to be any especial impact, either positive or negative, upon other racial/ethnic groups.
Mixed Race			I do not consider there to be any especial impact, either positive or negative, Mixed Race people.

Equality Target Group	(a)	Positive Impact	(b)	Negative Impact	Reason/Comment
Disabled people		√			<p>As a result of feedback received at the 'Together Against Terror?' conference, specific issues for counter-terrorism policing vis-à-vis disabled people were fed into the Disability Resilience conference which the MPA RDU delivered.</p> <p>After some discussion with colleagues, it is not my view that terrorism and its consequences are issues concerning which disabled people have a markedly different set of views or interests than non-disabled people.</p>
Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual people					I do not consider there to be any especial impact, either positive or negative, on Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual people.
Transgender people					I do not consider there to be any especial impact, either positive or negative, on Transgender people.
Older people (50+)					I do not consider there to be any especial impact, either positive or negative, on Older people (50+).

Equality Target Group	(a) Positive Impact	(b) Negative Impact		Reason/Comment
<p>Younger people (17-25) and children</p>	<p>√</p>			<p>Numerous recent studies and consultations stress the importance of engaging young people in this arena. The MPS 'Communities Together Report' on 13 July 2005 identified young people as a key population to engage, citing the necessity to <i>'ensure young people, and particularly young males, are represented in all consultation and decision making'</i>. The MPS 'Together, supporting our staff, tackling terrorism and developing solutions' report in August 2005 reiterated that <i>'demographic subgroups, such as women or young people, do not get enough attention, despite the fact that a gap is acknowledged'</i>. The I&DeA report 'Scoping Reassurance in London' presented at the Communities Together Seminar on 18 January 2006 proposed that engaging young people is still a key challenge. The Home Office-sponsored 'Preventing Extremism Together' Working Groups identified engagement of young people as crucial. Notwithstanding the Safer Schools Initiative and the Youth IAG, engagement of young people at a pan-London level on policing matters remains adequately to be addressed. Our dedicated hearing with young people and the Commissioner will be a step in the right direction.</p> <p>Furthermore, Lord Carlile of Berriew QC, the government's independent reviewer of anti-terrorism legislation, in his testimony before the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee on 14 February 2006, made repeated, specific reference to his concern that <i>'impressionable young men'</i> were being radicalised in British universities. Lord Carlile said he had talked to many people in universities who felt that recruitment and radicalisation were taking place on campus. Similar comments have been received by the MPA. Lord Carlile is clear that this issue must be addressed, that extremist student groups will not simply go away, and that to avoid this debate is perilous. This programme, with its six dedicated focus groups with students, allows the MPA take the lead in initiating this urgent and important piece of research and engagement. <i>[I recognise that not all students are young, but the form does not provide an appropriate category for me to put them into otherwise...]</i></p>

Equality Target Group	(a) Positive Impact	(b) Negative Impact	Reason/Comment
Faith groups (please specify)	√		<p>Islam:</p> <p>There is a prevalent view that in the current climate British Muslims suffer threefold victimhood: they were among those killed and injured on 7 July 2005, they are the object of backlash faith-hate crime in the aftermath, and they are the ones who are most affected by the police response to the attacks. All four of the suicide bombers on 7 July 2005 were British Muslims. Negative stereotypes of British Muslims are developing in some quarters as a result. There can be no doubt then that the current terrorist threat does disproportionately affect British Muslim communities. It is therefore legitimate to place particular focus upon British Muslims in community engagement activity in this field. Concerted effort has been made by the MPS, Home Office and others since 7 July 2005 to engage Muslims in London around these issues, not least through the Home Office Task Force and the Muslim Safety Forum. However, Muslim women and Muslim young people remain largely unengaged. These subsections of the community have the potential to make valuable contributions to the London and national debate.</p> <p>An inevitable emphasis upon Islam in some areas of this programme should lead to a heightened understanding of the role it plays and can play in the field of terrorism and counter-terrorism today.</p>

8. Please give a brief description of how this policy benefits the equality target groups identified in the above table, i.e. promotes equality?

The programme we have designed acknowledges the significant but different contributions people of different 'equality target groups' can make to tackling terrorism in London. Where especial emphasis is placed upon particular subgroups or demographics, it is reasoned and defended. The programme stands to benefit all groups identified above by encouraging each to understand and respect the needs, priorities and expectations of the others.

9. If there is a negative impact on any equality target group, is the impact intended or legal?

No negative impact is intended, but I acknowledge the risk that holding a hearing exclusively with Asian Men may wrongly be interpreted as an aspersion that all terrorists are Asian Men or that all Asian Men are terrorists. Clearly, this is not the aim of the session and careful steps will be taken to explain this in all related documentation and communications.

If the negative impact is not intended, discriminatory and/or high in impact, complete part 1 and move on to the full assessment.

10. What actions could be taken to amend the policy/strategy/project to minimise the low negative impact?

The session with Asian Men could be dropped and replaced with a session with another group. I think the demerits of such a course of action outweigh the merits. MPA members have often insisted that all Asians – not just Muslims – suffer the racist backlash from the right wing and the disproportionate use of police powers such as s44 stop-and-search. The session planned with Asian Men recognises and seeks to explore this commonality.

11. If there is no evidence that the policy/strategy/project promotes equality, equal opportunities or improves relations within equality target groups, what amendments could be made to achieve this?

N/A

12. How will the policy, strategy or project be implemented including any necessary training?

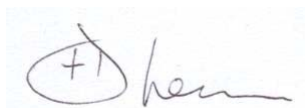
Implementation will be managed by myself. Sally Benton shall be collaborating with me on it and Monica Roucou will be assisting in an administrative capacity. We shall be steered by Lord Harris, Cindy Butts and Reshard Auladin. I shall continue to be supervised in this work by Tim Rees as Head of Community Engagement and by Catherine Crawford as the Chief Executive and policy lead on Counter Terrorism.

Full Assessment necessary: Yes
 No

Date completed: 19 May 2006

Signed by Line Manager: Tim Rees

Signed by Race & Diversity Unit:



Approved by SMT:



Please return a hard copy and electronic copy to the Race & Diversity Unit once completed. The original signed hard copy & an electronic copy should be kept within your unit for audit purposes.