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## Strategic Review of MPS response to disorder: Early learning and initial findings

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Branch/ OCU:	ACCO - Strategic Review Team on behalf of the Commissioner
Compiled by:	Chief Superintendent Adrian Roberts
Date:	21st October 2011
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# Strategic Review

## Early Learning & Initial Findings Report



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## **Strategic Review of MPS response to disorder: Early learning and initial findings**

The purpose of this briefing is to provide, as promised by the Commissioner, early learning and initial findings from the Operation Kirkin (MPS response to the disorder) review work thus far. It is intended that this initial update will be built upon to deliver an interim report in mid November and a final report by late December 2011.

Whilst there are a number of opportunities across the reviews that have been identified, this briefing will focus on the high level findings, explaining progress and where appropriate changes to current procedures and operational tactics.

The review continues to operate within the strategic objective set out below:

*'To develop a detailed understanding of the MPS response to significant public disorder in London between Thursday 4th August and Friday 19th August 2011 in order to inform future policing operations, by ensuring organisational learning is recognised and developed for the future. This learning and the subsequent costed plans will be shared promptly, as appropriate, with key internal and external stakeholders.'*

The MPS is very proud of the officers and staff who put themselves in harm's way to protect the public and in the way London quickly began the recovery process. We are saddened by the tragic loss of life, the number of injuries that occurred and the significant impact the disorder has had on people's livelihoods.

This review will seek to complement other ongoing reviews and enquiries being conducted into the disorder (such as HMIC, Home Office and Local Authorities), realising the maximum learning opportunities to improve the future capability of the MPS and partners in dealing with public disorder.

An Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) investigation into the circumstances leading to the tragic death of Mark Duggan continues; this report will not, therefore examine those issues.

It is always the case that the MPS learns from all of its major operations and public order policing is an area that has been significantly challenged in recent years. The MPS maintains that in responding to the significant disorder and criminality that London experienced during August 2011, the importance of facilitating peaceful protest in the future will not be compromised. It will continue to be a challenge to get the balance right on every occasion, but we recognise the public requirement to intervene swiftly and decisively against criminal activity.

### **Background**

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The MPS is currently reviewing many thousands of pieces of information and will provide in its final report a comprehensive timeline, outlining the actions taken by officers in response to events, from the tragic shooting of Mark Duggan through to the end of the significant disorder in London. In the interim, the following provides a high level overview of events:

- The changing nature and sheer scale of events between Saturday 6 and Tuesday 9 August made it very different from anything we had seen in the capital before. Over a short space of time on Saturday it changed from a peaceful protest in response to the tragic death of Mark Duggan into significant spontaneous disorder in Tottenham.
- The following night (Sunday) the disorder and criminality spread to other boroughs (Haringey again, plus Enfield, Lambeth, Waltham Forest and Hackney) and on Monday night it was the sheer number and size of simultaneous incidents, touching almost every borough which was so significant.
- In fact by Monday night, serious disorder - that is individual crimes or a concentration of crimes - took place in 22 of London's 32 boroughs. We have never seen such levels of multi-site disorder in the capital before.
- At its peak we were receiving more than one piece of information per second. The number of 999 calls to the MPS increased by 400% in a 24-hr period, to over 20,000. The Fire Brigade received over 1,700 calls to reports of fires burning.

### Police resource levels

Throughout the disorder the primary role of the police was to protect life and maintain the Queen's peace. It is evident that during the disorder difficult decisions had to be taken at times to prioritise the preservation of life over protection of property, owing to unprecedented resourcing challenges as a result of the scale and fast-moving nature of the disorder.

The following gives clarity around resource levels deployed across the MPS during the disorder period, and illustrates the escalation of the police response:

**Saturday 6 August:** Approx 3,000 officers across London + 380 Met public order officers deployed to Haringey + 100 mutual aid

**Sunday 7 August:** Approx 4,275 across London includes 1,275 public order trained, of which 124 were mutual aid

**Monday 8 August:** Approx 6,000 across London includes 1,900 public order trained, of which 550 were mutual aid

**Tuesday 9 August:** Approx 16,000 across London includes 3,750 public order trained, of which 1,705 were mutual aid

Each day the number of officers made available was increased based on the information and intelligence received. Following the events of Sunday night, and

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the spread of disorder and criminality across London, the number of officers was significantly increased again (to 6,000, which is equivalent to the number of officers we normally make available to police Notting Hill Carnival on Bank Holiday Monday).

It soon became clear that even the increase to 6,000 officers was not enough and as such the number was increased to 16,000 for Tuesday night. There was very limited disorder that night in London, although it continued to occur in other regions of the country.

### **Early learning and what is different now**

This section identifies areas that worked well during the response and those from which early learning opportunities have been identified. It outlines the changes that have been made following the review's early findings:

#### **Critical Incident Management and Community Engagement**

The review has examined the response to the tragic death of Mark Duggan and the subsequent community engagement activities. These aspects of the review are taking place in parallel with the IPCC independent investigation into the fatal shooting, and the separate IPCC investigation into complaints by the family about the information they were provided.

The review is looking at such areas as the command structure for managing the consequences of the shooting, communication, Independent Advisory Groups, Family Liaison, and Community Impact Assessments. Initial findings in all these areas will be developed into final recommendations through work with the MPS Diversity Directorate and the Community Engagement team.

The MPS understands the importance of engaging directly with communities across London and whilst we have mechanisms to do this the review is an opportunity to reflect and better understand those current engagement strategies.

#### **Mobilisation & Mutual Aid**

The MPS did not have enough officers available to quell the level of violence that escalated so quickly in Tottenham on Saturday 6 August 2011. The number of officers deployed met those levels set within the existing MPS Service Mobilisation Plan (SMP); however with hindsight the numbers were not enough and they did not arrive quickly enough.

We have subsequently changed the way in which we co-ordinate our public order trained resources in order to increase the numbers of officers available for deployment. This has been achieved by bringing Level 2 public order trained

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officers to designated areas where Police Support Units (PSUs) can be assembled more quickly rather than requiring Boroughs to provide minimum numbers of PSUs.

In addition, all force mobilisation arrangements are being reviewed. This review includes the wider mobilisation of assets including those for investigations, intelligence, logistical support and the use of Metropolitan Police Special Constabulary officers.

Whilst the Saturday night saw the mobilisation of mainly MPS officers initially, as the disorder spread in an unprecedented manner over the Sunday and Monday additional public order resource was brought into the MPS from other forces through mutual aid. Public order trained officers were then deployed across the London footprint, allocated to sectors in an effort to ensure an expedient response to emerging disorder.

The scale of mutual aid provided has given the MPS the opportunity to test the interoperability of tactics and communication between many forces simultaneously. This is of particular importance in the lead up to the Olympic Games. In both cases these have proved successful and of particular note is that Airwave radios worked successfully enabling officers from different forces to communicate with MPS officers.

The significant scale and complexity of the disorder has led the MPS to look closely at the options to increase the number of MPS public order trained officers with a corresponding increase in vehicles and equipment. The MPS has approximately 770 Level 1 trained officers and 3,500 Level 2 trained officers<sup>1</sup>. However, any increase will need to be balanced against the increased cost and levels of abstraction from boroughs and other units as a result.

### **Tactics**

Frustration has been expressed in some quarters that police officers seemingly stood by as offences took place. Whilst the MPS cannot currently rule out individual decisions at a local level, it is important to understand that there are a number of reasons why this may appear to have happened, including:

- the need to protect other emergency services, such as London Fire Brigade, engaged in saving life;
- to prevent further disorder spreading and thereby preventing further risk to life;

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<sup>1</sup> Public Order officers are defined as:

Level 1 = the Territorial Support Group, who receive Public Order training every five weeks.

Level 2 = officers who receive public order training every 18 months, and can be called upon to police public order events.

The total number of officers will vary at any one time, due to training requirements

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- to facilitate the arrival of more police resources.

At this stage the review has found nothing to suggest that senior commanders briefed local commanders on the ground to hold back from making proactive arrests where appropriate; in fact the contrary appears to be the case.

Whilst arrests on the ground may not have been made in some instances, 450 offenders were arrested over the three nights of disorder. Many of these arrests were the result of the bravery and dedication of both MPS officers and colleagues from other forces.

A range of tactics were used by police over the period of disorder; other tactical options including the possible use of water cannon and baton rounds are being considered within the review.

The use of water cannon requires a precise environment. It works most effectively against large, static crowds that are (for example) throwing missiles at police or other communities. As such it does have its tactical limitations; however, if available it could have been considered as a tactical option during this disorder. The review will fully cost the options of making water cannon available to the MPS.

Baton rounds are discriminate weapons that are fired at individuals who pose a violent threat where life is at risk. As a contingency, baton rounds were made available throughout the disorder. However, due to the fast moving nature of the disorder and the availability of other tactical options, they were discounted.

The review has identified that a more localised availability of this resource (more teams over a wider footprint) might have resulted in the deployment of baton rounds. This is being further explored in the review.

The review has identified a high level of confidence amongst frontline officers in their public order training and personal protective equipment, but acknowledges the need to explore alternative tactics to deal with disorder on such a widespread and fast moving scale.

To this end further work is progressing in liaison with the Centre for Applied Science and Technology (CAST), to examine new technologies. The review recognises that any future recommendation to use new tactics would require broad ranging community and stakeholder consultation.

### **Criminal Justice and Investigation**

Work continues, under Op Withern, to pursue those involved in the disorder. The attached **appendix** provides the latest breakdown of offences and charges. The

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early findings are that the partnership criminal justice response was a successful one and included innovations such as extending court hours.

Learning opportunities centre on formalising the partnership good practice and embedding these into business as usual. Examples include: Integration of criminal justice responsibilities into public order command and control structures; criminal justice partnership contingency planning; and creation of a single police point of information for co-ordinating with SERCO, National Offender Management Service (NOMS), Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

This experience has enabled us to identify organisational learning opportunities in a number of areas of investigation in large scale public disorder; centred on command and control; and capacity to mobilise trained investigative asset.

As the review continues to progress in this area, some significant changes are already underway, such as the establishment of a CADRE of investigators (including senior officers) trained specifically in investigations involving large scale public disorder.

Furthermore, early improvements have been implemented to training programmes and facilities to enable the capture of best evidence on a large scale more quickly (retention of officer notes, command logs and improved CCTV capture). We are also conducting a review of our imagery strategy more widely to ensure we are making best use of technology to support timely justice outcomes.

### **Social Media**

Social media provided significant opportunities for both open source information and community engagement. However, the combination of volume and speed of information at unprecedented levels posed a significant challenge to policing during the height of disorder. The MPS is reviewing systems to coordinate, assess and prioritise social media content for intelligence purposes.

Whilst the MPS has successfully developed the use of social media to communicate with the public during recent high profile public order events, the review will make recommendations to further optimise this valuable tool in managing major events.

### **Organisational Learning linked to the Olympics**

Lessons identified from the disorder are already being incorporated in the planning and preparations for the Olympics. These include changes within the Special Operations Room and the flow of information to strategic partners and Borough Commanders.

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## Other significant areas under review

Whilst this briefing identifies early high level findings, there are a number of other changes that have been made to existing processes as the review has progressed. There are other areas where work is continuing but the volume and complexity of data and analysis required mean that this is still work in progress.

## **Causality**

The review is examining what, where and why offences happened; together with the demographic breakdown of offenders, including the transience of offenders. The future work will investigate and map on deprivation and socio-political analysis into the context of the disorder over time for context, to establish why and what factors caused people to get involved. This is understandably a complex piece of work, that will take sometime to finalise.

## **Riot Damages Act**

The MPA has received over 3,844 claims. 70% of the claims have now been checked to remove duplicates and to place the compensation amount requested by the claimant onto the IT system. Liabilities are currently estimated to be between £200m & £300m, the MPA continue to look to fully recover all costs from the Home Office via special grant. Significant MPA/MPS resources have been committed to this work to ensure the MPA are in a position to make early decisions regarding individual claims.

## Next Steps

It is intended that these emerging findings and the early learning will be built upon to deliver an interim report in mid November and a final report by late December 2011.

For further enquiries, please contact Judith Mullett, Head of Strategic Relationships, MPS on 0207 230 2424.



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