



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

TOTAL POLICING

Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme	
Protective Marking	Official
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Title	Op Bramble - Unauthorised Encampment Policy Statement and Equality Impact Assessment
Version	2.0
Summary	Op Bramble - Unauthorised Encampment Policy Statement and Equality Impact Assessment
(B)OCU or Unit, Directorate	TP
Author	
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Author:	Martin Kirby				

Application

When? This Policy applies with immediate effect.

Who? All police officers and police staff, including the extended police family and those working voluntarily or under contract to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) or the Commissioner must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) policy and associated procedures.

This policy however applies in particular to officers and staff in the following roles, all of whom have responsibilities for specific actions detailed within the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):

- Control room staff and supervisors;
- Met Grip Chief Inspectors
- Front line and CSU supervisors/officers;
- Duty officers and Patrol/Neighbourhood Sergeants;
- Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officers;
- Borough/BCU Commanders;
- TP Inspectors/Sergeants and SLT;
- Supts performing Cluster Supt function;
- Taskforce (SC&O20) Officers

N.B. This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

The policy will take effect from the date of publication of this document.

This Policy applies in particular to officers and staff in the following roles: (This list is not intended to be exhaustive.)

Policy Principles

This policy instructs officers and staff to engage fully with all parties involved in relation to encampments and informs them what police powers exist should they need to exercise them. The policy introduced **Operation Bramble** (with the use of the single operation name for matters pertaining to Unauthorised Encampments) which allows better data capture and performance management through the “flagging” of this term.

The policy outlines that engagement with settled and unsettled communities is essential especially to build trust and confidence and instructs MPS personnel to work with these communities and partners, where possible, to help resolve unauthorised encampments.

The policy encourages local agreements and protocols with key partners as good practice and adhering to all aspects of this policy fully throughout. Whilst local protocols can be most beneficial in managing expectations of partners and ensuring consistency of approach, the policy states that each encampment must be considered on an individual basis.

This policy does not seek to limit the ways in which BOCUs/BCUs interact locally with Gypsies and Travellers, their wider communities or develop local policies. Nor does the policy seek to fetter the decision making of local senior officers, who have discretion on what circumstances in which to exercise police powers of eviction (and the requirement to justify such decision making).

Purpose and Benefits

This policy delivers several benefits to the MPS by:

- instructing local senior officers to apply a consistent approach to assessing Unauthorised Encampments and exercise sound decision when using police powers;
- improving police and partner cooperation with regards to the police response to Unauthorised Encampments;
- informing officers and staff of police powers, this policy will support managing the expectations of the public and partners;

The policy aims to foster better relations with the Travelling Community by promoting good and proportionate decision making that will make use the involvement and presence of a senior officer when dealing with Unauthorised Encampments.

It will promote an efficient and effective Police response to Unauthorised Encampments responsible for ASB, crime, disorder or those sited in a wholly inappropriate location. This greater efficiency will reduce costs and minimise disruption to the life of the local community.

It will enable better intelligence gathering and provide for a performance framework to measure and promote police effectiveness.

Health and Safety Impact Statement

This policy and associated Toolkit have been developed with appropriate consultation with the MPS Safety and Health Risk Management Team [SHRMT]. This is to ensure that all significant Health and Safety risks have been identified and quantified, and that resulting suitable and sufficient controls are in place, aimed at mitigating the risk to the MPS as follows:

- Compliance with health and safety at work statutory provisions including codes of practice;
- Compliance with working time regulations including 'Non Opt Out' and 'Opt out' legislation and MOPAC/MPS policies.
- MOPAC/MPS Safety Management System;
- Service delivery that may impact officer, staff or public safety;

Territorial Policing will continue to work with the SHRMT to ensure that the mitigating controls are suitable and sufficient and remain fit for purpose.

Any organisational learning arising from investigations are incorporated within an amended version of this policy or Toolkit.

Notices to be Cancelled / Amended

This policy cancels Item 8, Notices 41/2004, 13 October 2004.

Section B: Equality Impact Assessment

Policies are developed and reviewed using a consultative approach involving relevant internal and external stakeholders. Additionally, developers must consider what action needs to be taken to help overcome or minimise any disadvantages that people who share a protected characteristic will experience in compliance with the Equality Act 2010. Finally, the impact of the policy will be monitored to identify any emerging issues, learning and benefits post-delivery of the policy. The table below summarises the outcomes of these steps:

Research and consultation	
Review of research	"Inequalities experienced by Gypsy and Traveller communities: A review" (Sarah Cemlyn, Margaret Greenfields, Sally Burnett, Zoe Matthews and Chris Whitwell 2009) - obtained through the equality and Human rights Commission website (http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/documents/research/12inequalities_experienced_by_gypsy_and_traveller_communities_a_review.pdf)
Internal consultation	MPS Legal services; Safety and Health Risk Management Team; Finance Business Partner; Information Assurance Team; Police Officers and Police Staff; Staff and Police associations; Police Federation; Unions; Neighbourhood Partnership Managers.
External Consultation	The Equality and Human Rights Commission; London Gypsy and Traveller Unit; Integration and Faith Division Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG); The Travellers Times; Friends, Families and Travellers (www.gypsy-traveller.org/); Gypsy and Romany Traveller Police Association.
Protected Characteristics (Equality Act 2010)	
Summary of Equality Impact Assessment	It is recognised that this policy and the enforcement of associated legislation will have a disproportionate impact on Gypsies and Travellers as they predominately are reported to establish Unauthorised Encampments. Gypsies and Travellers are recognised and protected as ethnic groups under Human Rights and Equality law. To minimise the impact of this disproportionality and to ensure the legislation is applied in a proportionate, lawful and reasonable way the policy provides guidance on considering human rights and delivering proportion good decision making in each specific encampment situation. It does not seek to impose a blanket threshold for the invocation of legislation and is entirely compatible with the relevant legislation in expecting decision making on the merits of each case by a suitably senior and locally accountable officer. The policy instructs officers and staff that should any persons come to police notice who may appear vulnerable such as children or vulnerable adults they must take action.
Age	The policy instructs officers and staff to follow appropriate MPS policy should they come across any persons showing signs of vulnerability from children and young people to vulnerable adults.

Deaf/ disability	The policy instructs officers and staff to follow appropriate MPS policy should they come across any persons who are deaf and / or disabled showing signs of vulnerability.
Gender reassignment	The policy instructs officers and staff to follow appropriate MPS policy should they come across any persons showing signs of vulnerability.
Pregnancy and Maternity	The policy instructs officers and staff to follow appropriate MPS policy should they come across any mothers showing signs of vulnerability.
Race	It is recognised that this policy and the enforcement of associated legislation will have a disproportionate impact on Gypsies and Travellers as they predominately are reported to establish Unauthorised Encampments. Gypsies and Travellers are recognised and protected as ethnic groups under Human Rights and Equality law. To minimise the impact of this disproportionality and to ensure the legislation is applied in a proportionate, lawful and reasonable way the policy provides guidance on considering human rights and delivering proportion good decision making in each specific encampment situation. It does not seek to impose a blanket threshold for the invocation of legislation and is entirely compatible with the relevant legislation in expecting decision making on the merits of each case by a suitably senior and locally accountable officer. The policy instructs officers and staff to address any reports of hate crime towards Gypsies and Travellers whilst handling any encampment issues by following MPS policy.
Religion or belief	No specific impact has been identified or anticipated at this stage.
Sex	No specific impact has been identified or anticipated at this stage.
Sexual Orientation	The policy instructs officers and staff to follow appropriate MPS policy should they come across any persons showing signs of vulnerability.
Other issues for example: Low income groups, single parents, rough sleepers	No specific impact has been identified or anticipated at this stage.
Monitoring	
12 month implementatio n plan	This policy will be monitored for 12 months with a series of exercises to ensure compliance and capturing any issues or lessons identified. Activities include carrying out a series of questionnaires to operational leaders to make sure they continue to be aware of the policy and are compliant with it. There will be a continued engagement with GRT groups and the EHRC (previously involved in initial consultation) to measure the impact of the policy change on the GRT community within London. Generic (non-incident specific) feedback questionnaire will be submitted to senior leaders to engage the operational effectiveness of the

policy and to understand issues of fairness and application. Questionnaire submitted to LA Community Safety leads will seek to understand partnership working and police responsiveness / consistency to this issue. Finally, this policy has been given the name OP Bramble to enable “flagging” on CAD and Crimint (with quality assurance support from Met CC and Met Intel). This will enable the extraction of data to inform the review and measure the effectiveness of the new policy. New Op Bramble SMF created for CAD. This will be done through the creation of a summary report at 12 months post implementation. This report will consist of a presentation of the data captured above and SME comment.