

**Protective Services Committee
2 February 2012**

FORCE CID

Report of the Chief Constable

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to update Police Authority members on significant issues within FCID since the commencement of Paragon and more recent structural and procedural changes. It will highlight current detection performance compared with previous years' data and show case studies of how FCID are supporting Local Policing Units (LPUs) and investigating both major crime and serious acquisitive crime.

PROGRAMME PARAGON

2. Programme Paragon commenced in April 2010 which saw a fundamental change in the way criminal investigation was dealt with by West Midlands Police. Governance for the majority of the crime continuum fell to the central Force CID department, leaving acquisitive crime including burglary dwelling, street robbery and vehicle crime being dealt with by Local Policing Unit (LPU) investigators.
3. The table showing the crime continuum (Appendix 1) outlines the broad crime classifications that are owned by Force CID; a separate table has been created for Crime Screeners and shows the correct 'CRIMES' and Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) codes for the crime classifications as they appear on the CRIMES system. The table is by no means definitive, and is intended to be a 'quick reference' guide for officers and staff as to the type of investigations Force CID will deal with.
4. The structure following Paragon of FCID consisted of 24 'omni-competent' Major Investigation Teams (MITs), each of which was headed by a Detective Inspector supported by 3 Detective Sergeants and between 16 and 18 Detective Constables (DC posts were slightly weighted to account for increased demand in some areas). There was a lesser degree of expertise across these teams than what we previously had with the Major Investigation Unit (MIU) that dealt with homicide and the Serious and Organised Crime Unit (SOCU) that dealt with sensitive covert investigations against Organised Crime Gangs (OCGs). This resulted in an increase in staffing numbers so that detective experience had to be sought from the LPU support structure and spread across each of the Units. FCID officers work from 4 hubs across the Force area these being Bloxwich, Harborne, Aqueous 2 and Willenhall in Coventry.
5. The initial 12 months following Paragon were very successful for FCID, although not without its challenges. The 24 MITs were responsible for investigating all offences including homicide (all categories), covert and complex investigations against OCGs, Most Serious Violence (MSV) crime (section 20 major and above) and all Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC) including commercial armed robbery, cash and valuables in transit, car key burglary, aggravated robbery, distraction burglary and all fraud offences. Due to the teams being made up of detectives with varying levels of experience within criminal investigation, difficulties arose around the tasking process for level 2 covert investigations and the daily demand of having to respond to persons in custody and crimes reported proved problematic during busy periods. The homicide and covert investigations took core staff away from the MITs for protracted periods of time as these investigations require dedicated staff. Depleted numbers in MIT team staff resulted in the MIT teams being less able to respond effectively to reported crime than we would have liked.

RESTRUCTURE APRIL 2011

6. In April 2011, 12 months after the initial restructure FCID Senior Leadership Team (SLT) made some alterations to the structure in order to provide accountability and ownership for different crime types. MITs reduced from 24 to 20 teams with each still being lead by a Detective Inspector however DS numbers were weighted so most teams had 2 DSs and the DC numbers were reduced. Staff that were freed up by these changes were re-directed into a Murder Investigation and Review Team (MIRT) which became responsible for dealing with all Category A + B homicides and case building for all homicide offences removing this burden from the MITs. A Gang and Organised Crime Unit (GOCU) was established to investigate the most complex and covert OCG operations and also target the most high threat gang related nominals. The MIRT and the GOCU are located centrally and the majority of demand for these resources and skills lie in the Birmingham area. There are however facilities available at both Bloxwich and Coventry if major investigations need to be commenced from these locations. Appendix 2 shows the current organisational structure of the investigative teams for FCID.

7. FCID have invested a DCI, 3x DIs, 6 DSs and 48 DCs into three SAC Teams situated on the east, west and central hubs of WMP area. They are responsible for intelligence lead investigations against the criminal groups responsible for Burglary (car key, aggravated and distraction), armed commercial robbery and Cash & Valuables in Transit (CVIT) offences and other criminality identified that contributes to serious acquisitive crime performance (eg. metal theft, high value fuel theft). These SAC teams have been able to focus on those individuals and groups that represent real threat, risk and harm to the West Midlands. The support from the Regional Intelligence Unit (RIU) has been critical to the success of the SAC teams as the RIU submit intelligence bulletins informing them of key stop checks and arrests for serious acquisitive crime offences which is key to the tasking and targeting of key offenders. Imminent changes to the structure of Intelligence will also provide further support for this proactive SAC approach.

8. Performance in respect of the crime types for which FCID is responsible since Paragon and following the re-structure has generally shown a year on year improvement. Appendix 2 shows the performance data for the majority of our crime types since 2009/10. Not all data is available due to the fact that armed business robbery and cash in transit offences had separate markers pre Paragon.

Year	Murder	Att. Murder	Manslaughter	Sec.18	Sec.20 (Major)	Car Key BDH	Dist. BDH	Armed Robbery
2009/2010	88%	44.6%	88.2%	45.9%	36.7%	11.3%	11.7%	No data
2010/2011	84.6%	74.1%	100%	38.7%	33.3%	8.9%	15.5%	14.4%
2011/2012	119%	60.9%	100%	46.9%	37%	15.2%	17%	19.1%

9. **LESSON LEARNED POST APRIL 2010:**
 - a) Omni-competent teams of mixed skilled detectives makes delivery of service challenging due to so many competing demands.

 - b) Omni- competent teams result in the boundaries for accountability in performance being blurred.

 - c) Omni-competent teams have a tendency to steer towards the top end of the crime continuum (homicide and serious violent crime) neglecting acquisitive crime offences such as burglary. These are LPU priorities and the perception left is that FCID are not delivering for their communities.

 - d) Several areas of criminal investigation require a dedicated skilled resource, specifically complex and covert level 2 investigations and homicide (category A and B) investigations.

- e) Separating responsibility for MSV and SAC offences allows individuals to focus and be accountable for different crime types therefore delivering a more effective and focused service to victims.
- f) Central governance over all FCID resources enables quick and effective flexibility to move staff to where demand is highest.
- g) The current structure allows for Viper opportunities for cross border acquisitive crime and serious and organised crime.

PRIORITY BASED BUDGETING/CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

10. The recommended model suggested to the Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) panel focuses on an enhanced service for all offences within the current crime continuum with a slight reduction in staffing numbers (approximately 6xDIs, 3xDSs and 15xDCs). At present it is clear that the current staffing ratios across the MITs, SAC and MIRT are not providing the best service possible. PBB has provided us with the opportunity to further balance staff against demand. There remains too many staff on the MITs when compared to the demand for MSV. This would require an alteration in shift patterns, reducing from a 4 team shift pattern to a 3 team pattern thereby reducing the MITs from 20 teams to 15. They would continue to provide a 24/7 cover to LPUs and 3 MITs would be aligned geographically to LPUs under the leadership of a DCI. Staff would then be re-distributed (if PBB accepts this model) to increase the SAC teams staffing numbers. This would provide each FCID area DCI with their own SAC response and provide more flexibility to respond dynamically to SAC issues and support LPUs at an enhanced level with these issues. Each area DCI would then be accountable for all MSV and SAC within their geographically aligned area.
11. There has been some impact for FCID in relation to Continuous Improvement on the 2 LPUs that have currently undergone this change. The standard of investigations continues to vary. An early issue has arisen where front line supervision is not being made aware of all crimes being recorded. As officers now take reports directly and these get loaded onto the Crimes system often there is little leadership around the initial lines of enquiry. This causes issues for the MITs especially in relation to MSV where key lines of enquiry are missed. Feedback is given where appropriate and on occasions reports are returned to LPU for further work. Local FCID DCI/DIs and LPU DCIs are working at solutions for this issue. An issue of under and/or over criming has started to appear across the whole force area. For example, officers attending incidents will record an offence as a section 47 assault. The offence is then reclassified to a Section 20 major assault but this can be several days after the initial report was taken. In the meantime the victim and witnesses have had no contact from FCID and opportunities are often missed due to the time delay in receiving the report. Where local consultation has occurred with LPU SLTs to improve this so FCID investigate all MSV offending detections rates have improved. This is ongoing work across all areas of FCID.
12. Other areas currently being considered through PBB and CI include ways to better support LPUs in relation to general criminal investigation. Options include all Forensic Intelligence Packages (FIPs) for acquisitive crime (burglary and robbery) coming to FCID for investigation in an attempt to maximise all detection opportunities, improved working relationships with LPUs and ownership in relation to offender management.

DETECTIONS PERFORMANCE

13. From the attached data (appendix 3) it can be seen that year on year FCID are seeing improvements in detections across almost all their crime types. Although MSG Forces show higher detection rates than WMP it is clear that most of these do not have the same number of offences and as our detections are improving Most Serious Group (MSG) forces are generally declining, the feeling being that WMP have gone through the major changes following the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and are ahead of other forces in this respect.

14. FCID have recently conducted work around attrition rates of offenders as initial scoping suggested over 50% of suspects arrested for SAC offences were being no further actioned. This figure seemed particularly high and this data also feeds the national picture around detections which impacts on MSG performance. Work with the Organisation & Service Development (OSD) team has highlighted that if offenders are arrested for one offence, for example section 9.1(A) Theft Act (burglary with intent to steal) but charged with section 9.1(b) (burglary having stolen), although this crime is detected the initial crime recorded shows as NFA which gives the impression a crime has not been detected when it has, giving an inaccurate reflection of our performance. It is a common situation, especially with SAC and MSV offences where an offender is arrested for one offence but charged with something different. Any charging for these offences is done in liaison with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) or CPS Direct.

15. **CURRENT PROPOSALS**

- a) To separate MIT and SAC teams where accountability for specific crime types exist and have shown improved detection performance and morale of staff. PBB is supporting a further enhanced model of this structure.
- b) The Optimising Detections in Science (ODIS) pilot is due to commence on Birmingham South and Coventry supported by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) in an attempt to manage and investigate FIPs packages more professionally and improve detection rates. This is supported by both LPU investigators, Forensic Services Unit (FSU) and FCID detectives.

LIASION WITH LPUs

16. Levels of expectation from LPUs towards FCID varies across the force. FCID send representatives to LPU DMM, the frequency of this is left to local agreement between FCID DCI and LPU SLTs. FCID will always have representation at LPU Tactical Tasking and Coordination Group (TT&CG) meetings which is at DI or DCI level. Frustration exists on some LPUs that staff attending these meetings do not always have the required knowledge for all MSV or SAC offences. This gap occurs because of the limited resource FCID have available for the number of meetings required to attend and the shift pattern often means teams dealing with specific incidents are on rest day. Liaison in relation to major and serious crime investigations is acknowledged as very good.

17. **LESSONS LEARNED**

- More consistent attendance at LPU Daily Management Meetings and TT&CG with staff who understand the whole picture (Improvement following PBB).
- Separate governance between SAC and MSV has shown performance improvements in relation to detections. Although there is evidence of improved relationships with LPUs gaps still exist with knowledge of MSV and SAC offences.

MAJOR INVESTIGATIONS AND COLLABORATION

18. Limited collaboration opportunities exist at present and the demand for homicide in the region still centres around the West Midlands Police force area. Recent project evaluation and scoping with surrounding forces did not progress into any further positive activity. Mutual aid was supplied following the August disorders in support of the Op Pointer, Op View and Op Barton investigations (West Mercia 4 DCs, Warks 4 DCs and Staffs 8 DCs). These investigations were further supported by G4S who supplied skilled staff (all retired A19 police officers) for key roles within the investigation. This experience proved useful as WMP were able to increase and decrease their capability and capacity at very short notice with skilled staff to progress investigations at periods of exceptional demand. The current model provides reassurance that FCID can maintain normal business both within Major Crime, Serious and Organised Crime and Serious Acquisitive Crime. The following case studies indicate some of the investigations conducted by staff within the last 6 months.

OPERATION POINTER

19. This is the investigation into the triple murder of Shazad Ali, Abdul Musavir and Haroon Jahan on the Dudley Road at 0115hrs on the morning of Wednesday 15th August 2011. This investigation received national and international coverage and was a Category A+ homicide investigation.
20. In the initial stages over 70 detectives and police staff were working on the incident room which operated from Harborne Police Station. Over the course of the investigation 23 males (17 adults and 1 Juvenile) have been arrested in connection with the enquiry. 8 people have been charged with Murder and one with Perverting the Course of Justice.
21. Over 120 significant witness interviews were carried out. Over 3500 documents have been generated during the course of the investigation. Many thousands of hours of CCTV have been viewed in a dedicated CCTV viewing room established for the enquiry.
22. In the initial stages the operation was run with a team consisting of officers and staff from MIRT, MIT, RCMU and other force departments. Since late September 2011 the room has been run only with staff from the MIRT and MITs. During the course of the period from September until January 2012 only 12 officers have been abstracted from the MITs to the incident room. The figure currently stands at 10 following a review of staffing in December 2011. The enquiry established in the very early stages a close working relationship with colleagues at CPS who were dedicated to the enquiry and acted as the single point of contact (SPOC) for the investigation. The enquiry continues and has been an effective model for how FCID can investigate more serious and complex enquiries, flexing staff from all areas of business to support peaks within the investigation.

OPERATION COLSPUR

23. Investigation into the murder of Emma Ewart (bn. 02/04/84) who lived at 21 Navigation Way, Coventry. Emma was single and had an 8 year old daughter.
24. On 28th May 2011 Emma Ewart was reported 'missing' to West Midlands Police by her family having not been seen since 24th May 2011 when she was last seen at her home address. On 2nd June 2011 her body was discovered in the canal next to bridge number 14 at Bulkington Road, Bedworth by a passing member of the public who immediately contacted the police. Officers from Warwickshire Police attended the scene and her body was recovered by specialist search and recovery officers from Thames Valley Police. Collaboration with Warwickshire resulted in the investigation being lead by West Midlands Police and supported with staff from Warwickshire.
25. The Major Incident Room was run from Willenhall Police Station evidencing the ability of FCID to flex staff and IT to where demand is required. On the 8th June 2011 a male from Coventry was arrested and interviewed at Nuneaton Police Station over a 3 day period and initially denied knowledge of Emma Ewart and her death. Eventually, when evidence relating to telephone usage was disclosed to him he admitted to knowing Ewart stating he had been with her at the time of her death but he stated he did not kill her. He stated that he panicked upon discovering her dead, did not seek medical intervention and later disposed of her body in the canal at Bedworth. On 11th June 2011 he was charged with the murder of Emma Ewart and he was remanded in custody. On 10th November 2011 He appeared at Birmingham Crown Court and an additional charge of Pervert the Course of Justice in relation to body disposal was added. He pleaded guilty to this charge and not guilty to murder. A date has been set for trial at Birmingham Crown Court on 18th June 2012.

OPERATION SATURN

26. At approximately 1815 hours on Sunday 20 November 2011 at St Annes Catholic Club, Nineacres Drive, Chelmsley Wood, an altercation took place when offenders have attended the location. The deceased Harry BROADHURST (22 years) received a fatal stab wound to his chest. Three males were arrested and charged with Murder and Section 18 Wounding. Approximately 26 Detectives are working on this investigation which was run out of Aqueous 2, one of the main Major Incident Room locations.

SERIOUS ACQUISITIVE CRIME INVESTIGATIONS

27. Four active and prolific offenders - all convicted of Aggravated Burglary, Burglary Dwelling House (BDH) x 4, Taking a Vehicle Without the Owner's Consent, Handling - all pleaded due to the strength of the evidential case - will be sentenced in late January. This group were particularly active in Birmingham North and across the border into Staffordshire Police Area. We also dealt with the mother of one for handling a stolen Rolex watch - she has been sentenced and we are currently exploring through Safer Estates the eviction of her from her home address. FCID lead operation involving covert tactics.
28. Another prolific offender charged with Aggravated Burglary and Cannabis cultivation - he entered the IP's address by smashing his way in through a rear door whilst in possession of a number of weapons - threats made to IP's and demands made for the keys to their car. When we arrested him we discovered a large cannabis farm at his home address. He is remanded into custody.
29. Another identified following a protracted investigation as being responsible for a number of distraction burglaries on Birmingham East. Arrested, charged and recalled to prison in relation to a previous sentence for distraction burglary.
30. Covert tactics were deployed when two offenders were identified as prolific car key burglars on Birmingham North and Staffordshire Police area. Warrant executed 4 days prior to Christmas and a large amount of property seized including keys to a stolen Audi TT motor car, computers, Christmas presents all stolen during the course of a number of burglaries. We also recovered tools which are the subject of on-going forensic examination and comparison against a number of crime scene marks. Both were charged with 4 offences of burglary and remanded in custody.
31. Prolific bogus burglar identified as being responsible for a number of offences. She has been charged with one offence against an 80 year old victim and remains on bail for the rest pending some enhanced forensic work – a persistent offender against the elderly and vulnerable. She has pleaded guilty at court and we await sentencing in early February.
32. FCID SAC are in the process of finalising a large scale covert investigation into a well organised OCG who are responsible for in excess of 35 burglaries at CO-OP stores whereby the back was cut off the ATM machines. The gang also stole high performance cars to facilitate their offending overnight from keepers addresses. The value of cash stolen is in excess of £600,000 and the value of vehicles stolen amounting to approximately £250,000. These offenders will be charged at the end of January.
33. Significant offender charged with 4 robberies and possession of Class A drugs. The victims ranged in age from 69 - 85 years, all were given horrific beatings in their homes prior to items of jewellery, most of which had sentimental value, were stolen. FCID/Intelligence believe that without this arrest WMP would have been dealing with a fatality, such was the level of gratuitous violence used against victims. He was identified by the SAC team as being a likely offender and a number of covert tactics deployed against him. In addition his partner was arrested for the handling of a number of items stolen during the course of his offending. He is on trial w/c 17th January 2012.

34. Male arrested for a £165,000 fraud/theft against a vulnerable 85 year old male. He was arrested after a covert operation was set up by SAC team to identify and arrest the offenders responsible. The fraud was complex and involved a level of grooming of the victim akin to that utilised by paedophiles. He remains in prison pending trial. An associate of his has also been arrested for a £65,000 fraud against another vulnerable victim, and has just entered a guilty plea and we await sentencing.
35. SAC are in the process of preparing a case against an OCG who were breaking up vehicles stolen by way of Car Key BDH prior to exporting them to the Middle East and Africa. 7 members of that group have been charged and await trial - the value of vehicles stolen and handled by this group is in the region of £7,500,000. All are due to be tried in June 2012.

NORMAL BUSINESS – OPERATION VIEW

36. The period during August and September provided challenges in maintaining performance. Extra resource was required in order to maintain normal business and manage the major investigations post disorder. The extra resource was supplied by LPU's (20 DCs), Mutual Aid as highlighted above and the use of temporary staff from G4S to provide CCTV viewing capacity and specialised MIR capacity in relation to exhibits and disclosure.
37. Performance during August and September in relation to MSV and SAC did see a drop however since these investigations have been reduced to case building performance has improved. Operation View figures to date include:
 - 538 Op View arrests
 - 178 NFA
 - 74 bail for CPS
 - 277 charged of which 117 convicted
 - 1 acquitted
 - 10 discontinued
 - 6 FTA
38. Following a national de-brief at Scotland Yard the WMP model was identified as best practice in relation to response and MIR set up. FCID Op View team are in the process of putting together a de-brief document highlighting best practice for future similar incidents. To be completed March 2012.

CONCLUSION

39. Following the commencement of Paragon in April 2010 FCID have made a number of alterations to structure and systems in order to provide more ownership and accountability. These alterations have resulted in better service to victims, witnesses and communities and LPU's, greater clarity for FCID staff and LPU staff in relation to ownership of various crime types, enhanced leadership from DCIs, DIs and DSs, improved ability to identify and grip linked offences, improved relationships/communication and tasking processes with LPU's/Depts, more realistic potential to achieve performance especially in relation to detection outcomes and more stringent control over budgets of major and serious acquisitive crime.
40. PBB has provided us with the opportunity to further match demand with resource. Panel 3 is due at the end of the month (January 2012) where FCID will get clear guidance around their future structure. If the recommended model is accepted it is fully anticipated that further performance improvements will be seen in 2012/13.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

41. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, costs are within existing budgets.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 42. Section 6 of the Police Act 1996 requires the Police Authority to secure the maintenance of an efficient and effective police force for its area. Section 10 of the same Act gives the Chief Constable direction and control of the Force subject to the general accountability to the Police Authority within the scope of Section 6 and the requirements of the Policing Plan.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 43. The Authority provides for the continuation and development of policing services for all people in the West Midlands, irrespective of the protected characteristics of; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Both the Authority and the Force are committed to delivering the principles, strategies and priorities of their respective Equality Schemes.

RECOMMENDATION

- 44. That members note the update.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS