



STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD
4th February 2014

ACC Operations Portfolio

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Strategic Policing Crime Board with an appraisal of specified areas of the portfolio of the ACC Operations of West Midlands Police. This portfolio includes Criminal Justice.

BACKGROUND

2. The previous Operations portfolio paper provided to the Board in September provided an overview of the work of the departments making up the portfolio. This paper explores specific departments and projects in more depth to provide members with an understanding of current key areas of work.

BUSINESS AREA UPDATE - OPERATIONS

Traffic Unit/ Roads Policing

24/7 Roads Policing Provision

3. The current 24/7 establishment comprises of five teams split between Park Lane and Chelmsley Wood, working the standard force shift pattern. In total there are 96 police officers - 1 Inspector, 10 Sergeants, 85 Constables.
4. The department has two main foci, which are to reduce the number of collisions in which people are killed or seriously injured and to deny criminals the use of the road.
5. To support the first objective, 24/7 staff attend and manage the scenes of all potentially fatal and life-changing Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) across the force area pending the arrival of a Collision Investigation Unit Senior Investigating Officer (SIO), where this becomes necessary.

6. 24/7 staff also actively enforce road traffic legislation to ensure that vehicles using the road network are safe and being driven appropriately. An example of this is the Operation Piranha initiative that tackled the problem of vehicles being driven illegally by drivers purporting to be insured under open trade insurance policies. Traffic staff have seized a third of the vehicles recovered during this operation, the sale of which has generated £361k in the last 18 months.
7. The traffic department has also led the force's contribution to the national drink drive campaign. During December 2013 West Midlands Police increased the number of tests conducted compared to last year, with the traffic department mounting more than fifty high profile stop check operations in support of road safety and crime priorities. More than 6,000 drivers were stopped and spoken to, with in excess of three times that number passing the locations and witnessing the enforcement activity.
8. To achieve the second objective, denying criminals the use of the road, 24/7 traffic resources are now fully integrated with the intelligence led deployment of resources. Staff are briefed on current crime trends and deployed to support the LPUs and force departments in tackling these issues. The focussing of traffic resources in this way has resulted in a rise in the number of successful pursuits and arrests of offenders for serious offences, including car key burglary and drug supply.
9. The below statistics provide a snapshot of the current contribution of 24/7 traffic towards WMP service delivery over a 12 month period;
 - 62 Family Liaison Officer deployments to bereaved families from road deaths.
 - Initial investigation, scene management and SIO cover at 247 potentially fatal or life changing RTC's.
 - 27,000 incident logs were attended - predominantly immediate and early responses.
 - 1,500 arrests made including 66 for burglary dwelling, 24 for robbery, 43 for most serious violence and 154 for vehicle crime.
 - Almost 200 vehicle pursuits undertaken by traffic officers under the command of the Force Contact Centre.

Pro-active Traffic

10. The proactive team is located at Wednesbury and has an establishment of 28 police officers (1 Inspector, 3 Sergeants and 24 Constables) and is split into three teams who provide a pro-active capability 7 days a week.
11. The teams offer a range of tactical options in support of neighbourhood activity and force priorities. The team also provide a range of motorcycle escort duties and can provide a rapid response to developing crimes in action in support of other departments within WMP and external agencies/forces including the National Crime Agency (NCA). Effective relationships with Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID), Counter Terrorist Unit (CTU), Serious and Organised Crime Unit (SOCU), Economic Crime Unit (ECU) and the Gangs Taskforce has resulted in the arrest of numerous offenders for a variety of serious crimes including, robbery, aggravated burglaries, drug trafficking, money laundering and counter terrorism matters.
12. Since the team commenced operations in April 2012, they have been instrumental in the seizure of £12,972,000 of controlled drugs and recovered £1,496,000 of cash that has been investigated under the terms of the Proceeds of Crime Act.

Camera Enforcement Unit (CEU)

13. The Camera Enforcement Unit (CEU) is responsible for the operation of fixed safety (speed and red traffic-light) cameras, including those on the local motorway network, together with the deployment of four mobile enforcement units across the West Midlands Police area. The staff establishment is 13, comprising of 2 police officers and 11 police staff.
14. Year to date, from 1 April 2013, 40,705 offences have been detected and passed to the central ticket office for processing. 33,510 notices of intended prosecution have been sent out with 7,933 awareness courses completed. The number of offences detected is broadly in line with the anticipated annual figure of 65000 offences for 2013-2014.
15. Exploratory work is underway to assess the viability of deploying new digital fixed speed cameras in the Birmingham and Solihull areas. Initial discussions have taken place and potential sites have been identified. A tender document is being prepared by the local authorities for the supply and installation of equipment. The potential running costs for West Midlands Police are still to be confirmed but it is unlikely that they will be fully covered by the income generated from the resulting speed awareness courses and this will be a consideration when assessing the potential viability of the project.
16. Wolverhampton and Dudley local authorities have suggested that they may also wish to be involved in the installation of digital safety cameras to some extent.

Integrated Emergency Management (IEM) and Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Project (JESIP)

Local Resilience Forum (LRF)

17. The LRF is a group mandated under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) that consists of Strategic Leads / Chief Executives from Category 1 and 2 Responders as defined under the Act. Through mutual consent the group also encourages representation from the Voluntary Sector. The LRF is chaired by ACC (Operations) with a vice chair of Assistant Chief Fire Officer.
18. The LRF is a strategic decision making group that directs the work undertaken by the General Working Group (GWG). The GWG has a number of statutory and non- statutory sub groups working on specific projects. A police staff manager, who is externally funded by the 7 Local Authorities of the West Midlands, fulfils the role of LRF Co-ordinator.
19. The aim of the LRF is to strengthen partnerships between organisations that make up the membership by planning and working together, carrying out training and exercising and building good working relationships. The LRF works to the main duties of the CCA.
20. The LRF use social media and other organisations' communications systems to disseminate appropriate messages to prepare communities in response to incidents and events. These communications along with the production of a Community Risk Register (CRR) identify risks applicable to the West Midlands Conurbation (WMC). This register gives advice and guidance to allow communities to make preparations that will reduce demand on agencies in the event of a disaster and enables stronger community engagement.

21. Current work in progress includes:
 - Review of the governance documents for the LRF;
 - Setting priorities and objectives for the next three years and monitoring the progress on these;
 - Review of LRF Plans;
 - Ongoing work by the Training and Exercise Group;
 - The Risk Assessment Working Group is reviewing the current threats to the WMC; culminating in the production of Individual Risk Assessments and an updated CRR in February 2014.
22. Work planned for 2014 includes:
 - Review of the funding structure of the LRF, particularly focusing on the post of LRF Coordinator to ensure that funding is apportioned fairly and efficiently.
 - Delivery of an LRF wide exercise;
 - Review of the LRF Meetings to ensure they can provide strong strategic direction;
23. Currently the work of the LRF is planned on a yearly basis. The LRF Chair is currently proposing work to enable the setting of long-term objectives as part of a 3 year plan. Part of this plan will involve reviewing the funding structure for the LRF and the LRF Coordinator role with a view to obtaining a longer-term agreement for the current finance (currently £45k per year) which would secure the future of the LRF Coordinator role.

JESIP and Partnership Working with other Emergency Services

24. JESIP has been established to address the interoperability between blue light responders with 7 key concepts. These concepts are joint working, communication, command, control, coordination, risk and learning.
25. JESIP will produce joint doctrine to be adopted nationally by the blue light services. This doctrine will be introduced through combined multi-agency training delivered across the greater West Midlands Region (based on the West Midlands Ambulance footprint). Training will be delivered in tri-service training sessions, with WMP officers being trained between February and September 2014 at Tally Ho! Learning and Development has allocated two trainers for this delivery as part of the multi-agency training team.
26. WMP has agreed to become a pathfinder force to ensure the JESIP training compliance and enable the training to be shaped and developed during the delivery of the programme. As a pathfinder, WMP are also required to take part in two days of exercises, funded by JESIP, to test the effectiveness of the training on the interoperable response. These exercises will take place between February and August 2014 and will be delivered through an exercise planning group.
27. WMP are training approximately 170 officers of Inspector rank and above whose regular daily roles may require them to undertake a Bronze (Operational) or Silver (Tactical) Command role in a major incident.
28. JESIP training is designed to create increased and more effective partnership working and interoperability that will deliver a coordinated response to major incidents. This aims at improving our ability to respond and effectively deal with major incidents in order to effectively protect the public and minimise the potential impact of such incidents on the community.

Review of the Emergencies the West Midlands Area Could Face

29. Integrated Emergency Management (IEM) are responsible for ensuring that WMP have plans in place to enable an effective response to civil emergencies that face the organisation and our communities. IEM ensures compliance with the statutory duties imposed under the CCA. The role of IEM is predominantly to identify risks from the National Risk Register (NRR), National Risk Assessment (NRA), National Risk Planning Assumptions (NRPA), horizon scanning, operational and exercise debrief and to then identify best practice to mitigate these risks and reduce any potential impact on the people of the West Midlands.
30. The Risk Assessment Working Group (RAWG), an LRF sub group, completes an Individual Risk Assessment (IRA) for each risk. LRF members then use the IRA to inform the creation of plans or policies relevant to mitigate the risk. The information from the IRA's is also formulated into a public facing document, the Community Risk Register (CRR), which issues advice and guidance to the public on the measures they can take to mitigate the impact of an incident. Work is currently underway with the RAWG to complete a new CRR for April 2014 that will give more detailed guidance to the public.
31. Currently WMP has plans covering all the risks identified on the current CRR. The type of risks that are planned for include terrorist attacks and civil unrest, public health issues such as outbreaks of disease, transport accidents such as those involving the chemicals or hazardous materials, large fires/explosions, disruptions to the supply of essential services such as water and electricity, and natural disasters such as severe weather and flooding.

Financial Implications

32. The LRF is currently funded by the 7 Local Authorities that make up the WMC at a cost of £45k for the year 2014 – 2015. This post and funding is currently reviewed every 12 months in line with Local Authority funding streams. As noted above, work is commencing during 2014 to seek agreement for future funding to be on a longer-term basis to enable consistency with the delivery of a proposed three year plan for the LRF. WMP contribute to the LRF through the housing of the LRF Coordinator, supply of management structure, stationery and meeting venue costs.
33. JESIP is delivered as a national programme and only has financial implications of the abstractions of approximately 170 officers for the delivery of one days training, supply of two trainers to deliver this training, delivery of two days of exercises and classroom allocation costs associated with these events. JESIP does not bring additional funding to cover the cost of the delivery of the training but may have funding available for the delivery of the exercises.

Conservative Party Conference 2014 (Operation Pelkin)

34. Operation Pelkin is the West Midlands Police operation for the provision of policing for political party conferences.
35. The Conservative Party Autumn conference is due to take place in Birmingham between Sunday 28th September and Wednesday 1st October 2014 at an 'island site' incorporating the International Convention Centre and Hyatt Regency Hotel on Broad Street. The Gold Commander for this year's operation is Assistant Chief Constable Cann and the Operational Silver Commander is Superintendent Godwin. West Midlands

Police has been at the forefront of delivering conference policing since 2008 and this will be the 6th major political party conference in Birmingham.

36. In 2013 the threat from international terrorism to all 2014 party conferences was raised from Low to Moderate. It is expected that due to the proximity of the event to the 2015 general election it may attract more delegates when compared to the 2012 conference, when 12000 delegates attended, more media interest and the attendance of cabinet members who require additional security protection. There is also the potential to attract more attention from individuals and groups who wish to demonstrate or protest. These factors may result in an increased level of cost compared to the 2012 operation.
37. Planning commenced on the 2nd September 2013 and to-date the force has hosted both the Risk Assessment Group (RAG) and Planning Evaluation Groups (PEG) in preparation for a final presentation of the force's security plan to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and the Home Office at the Executive Conference Security Group (ECSG) on 12 February 2014. The ECSG will agree funding for the operation and it is anticipated that ministerial support will be granted based on 85% cost recovery by the Force. Full cost recovery is available for any private security staff that are utilised, allowing the level of police resources to be minimised.

Safer Travel

38. The Safer Travel Police Team is a unique partnership approach to providing intelligence led policing across all modes of public transport in the West Midlands region. West Midlands Police Officers and Community Support Officers work in collaboration with their British Transport Police (BTP) counterparts. The staff structure of the partnership is currently:
 39. 1 WMP Inspector, 1 BTP Inspector, 2 WMP Sgts, 1 BTP Sgt, 11 WMP PCs, 3 BTP PCs, 15 WMP PCSOs and 8 BTP PCSOs. CENTRO (transport operators) are the third organisation in the partnership and fund approximately half of the £1.5 million staffing costs. A very good working relationship exists within the partnership.
 40. The partnership has two dedicated intelligence analysts who provide crime and anti-social behaviour data on a monthly basis and prepare problem profiles which are used to direct resources to particular routes where crime and ASB are an issue. Overt and covert patrols are conducted in risk areas and proactive use is made of CCTV to allow real time response to crimes in action. Cross modal patrols involving WMP staff monitoring the rail/metro network is reciprocated with BTP staff providing reassurance and crime patrols on the bus network.
 41. A flagship element of the Safer Travel Command Centre is the CCTV control room providing 24/7 intelligence led monitoring of over 1000 cameras across the public transport network. Work is currently underway to upgrade the cameras from analogue to HD digital and to utilise funding from London Midland to expand coverage to their stations.
 42. January 2014 has seen the partnership move significantly forwards toward more effective cross modal policing of the public transport network with the creation of 3 mixed force teams each led by a Sergeant. Moving forward, and subject to BTP approval, BTP staff will become Associate WMP staff to allow for more effective cross force management primarily utilising WMP systems, following the CMPPG model of working. In the medium term the Partnership will become subject to a Section 22a Police Collaboration legal agreement formally recognising the partnership arrangements.

43. The partnership will also benefit from dedicated Public Protection Unit (PPU) resources from February 2014 to tackle sexual offences on public transport. The use of dedicated resources in this way mirrors the successful Metropolitan Police Project Guardian initiative.
44. Until April 2014 the Partnership are held to account in relation to objectives set out in the Local Transport Plan (v3) requiring a 5% reduction in crime across public transport and a 5% increase in passenger perceptions of safety and security in the 3 years from 10/11. The West Midlands Local Transport Policing Plan has now set out six new objectives across four areas of focus: regional co-ordination and visibility, CCTV and technology, passenger engagement, and long term problem solving. It is clear that improving passenger perceptions of safety and security will be a key driver for the partnership moving forward.
45. The partnership's Performance and Strategy Group monitor performance against these objectives reporting into the Integrated Transport Authority and also the PCC and BTPA. The partnership produces its own tactical assessment, which details performance data/analysis and seasonal trends to allow proactive work to tackle emerging issues.
46. Year to date performance in terms of overall recorded crime is at +2% on buses. This can be attributed to the more efficient crime recording of bus damage incidents. Significantly there has been a 57% reduction in the number of robberies associated with bus travel and a 23% reduction in assaults resulting in injury. There has been an -11% reduction in total crime on rail and a -32% on the Metro.

National Police Air Service (NPAS)

47. The transfer of the West Midlands Air Unit to the National Police Air Service (NPAS), which took place on 2nd October 2013, went smoothly.
48. Superintendent Miles, Operations Department Superintendent, has been identified as the Force SPOC to oversee day to day service delivery and a Central Region Operations Working Group is in place to review operational delivery and feed any issues identified to NPAS.
49. ACC Collins, who was the Central Region's Executive representative on the Independent Assurance Group (IAG), has recently stood down from this position due to her promotion and transfer to West Yorkshire and she has been replaced on the IAG by ACC Frost from Northamptonshire. Chief Constable Rhodes (Lincolnshire) and PCC Ron Ball (Warwickshire) remain as the Central Region's representatives on the Strategic Governance Board.
50. The first quarterly performance report has been produced by NPAS, covering the period 02.10 13 to 31.12.13. However this data is relatively limited due to an issue with the current flight recording database, which is due to be upgraded to a single national version.
51. During this reporting period NPAS have attended 493 calls for service within the West Midlands Police area and is well within the force's agreed flying hours. Comparison with the same period in 2012 shows a slight reduction in hours flown, requests for service and positive outcomes.

52. Following receipt of this first report, meetings have been held within force and with NPAS resulting in the development of an action plan to understand and provide assurance around the level of service being provided. The key areas for examination include:
- I. The use and productivity of the new 'hailing channel' which is the system through which dynamic and quick time NPAS support is requested
 - li. The availability and response to West Midlands Police by NPAS during the early hours of the morning
 - lii. The internal marketing and communication of NPAS including snap shot surveys with staff to ensure a sufficient understanding of their role and how to access the service.
 - liii. Development of performance data with NPAS to ensure clear performance accountability and comparisons with pre NPAS performance data.
53. NPAS continues to be rolled out across the country with the Metropolitan Police due to go live in October 2014. The Strategic Governance Board has commenced a piece of work to develop the future model of NPAS and are currently engaging all PCC's and Chief Officers in relation to the criteria that they feel should be prioritised when considering future models.

BUSINESS AREA UPDATE - CRIMINAL JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

Introduction of Custody Officer Assistants

54. 10 newly recruited Custody Officer Assistants (COAs) started work at Birmingham Central Custody in October 2013. They were introduced as a pilot as part of the Custody Modernisation Programme and are funded by the release of 5 Custody Sergeants posts which took place in January 2014.
55. Unlike Detention Escort Officers (DEOs), COAs do not have designated powers to use force to restrain and taking samples but they do provide a more flexible workforce within the custody environment and are already proving to be a very welcome addition to the team. Their presence has released DEOs from some of their existing tasks allow them to give greater support to sergeants with the management of detainees, including booking prisoners into custody on arrival at the custody suite.
56. It was anticipated that the introduction of COAs would reduce the abstraction rate of front line police officers to cover constant watch duties in respect of detainees at high risk of self harm. This benefit has materialised and is appreciated by Birmingham West and Central LPU.
57. The full evaluation of the COA pilot will be used to inform the future staffing model of the new custody facilities.

Custody New Build

58. Two new sixty cell custody suites are to be built in order to provide a custody estate that is fit for the future requirements of the force. The present estate of twelve custody suites will be reduced to six once the two new suites are open for business. Land has been acquired and planning permission granted for the two new sites that will be located in Oldbury (Western Site) and Perry Barr (Central Site).

59. The final costs for the Oldbury site are still under review as the price submitted by the contractor exceeds the original estimate given to the force. This has caused delay to the signing of contracts and start of the building work. It is anticipated that building will now begin in March 2014 and finish in April 2015 and the suite will be in operational use by June 2015. It is anticipated that the Perry Barr site will be in operational use by March 2016. This site includes additional office accommodation for more than 350 staff and is an integral part of the Force Estates Strategy.

Constant Watch Review

60. All persons arrested and taken into custody are subject of a risk assessment carried out by the Custody Sergeant in relation to the level of care required in order to ensure their safety. Safer Detention (2012) is an ACPO approved document that provides guidance to Custody Officers responsible for the safety and welfare of persons held in Police Custody and suggests 4 levels of care that aim to prevent self-harm and most significantly deaths in custody .

61. Levels 1 and 2 are performed by custody staff during their everyday duties, whilst Level 3 involves dedicated monitoring of CCTV covering the detainee's cell and Level 4 involves a member of staff monitoring on a one-to-one basis in close proximity. Level 3 and 4 are therefore known as Constant Watch.

62. West Midlands Police place approximately 11% of detainees on Constant Watch. This can result in a drain on front line police resources as there is often insufficient capacity to carry out the watches from within the custody establishment.

63. A review of the risk assessment process was commissioned by Chief Superintendent Burgess. The review confirmed that the force has adopted the recommendations of Safer Detention in line with national guidance and that custody staff are not overly risk averse.

64. Healthcare professionals (HCP) have a significant role to play within Constant Watch and provide expert advice to Custody Officers in relation the appropriate levels of care required. As a consequence of the review and a newly agreed position with the healthcare service provider, greater clarity is now being sought from custody doctors and nurses in relation to the rationale behind their recommendations which is helping to better inform the level of watch required.

65. Recent custody snapshots have shown that about 70% of Constant Watch is now performed by custody staff. This has been helped by the introduction of Custody Officer Assistants (COAs) at Birmingham Central.

66. The rationalisation of the custody site to just six suites will make the staffing model far more resilient, enabling custody staff to manage a greater percentage of the constant watch requirement. The recently introduced mental health street triage pilot in Birmingham and Solihull will further reduce the volume of persons coming into custody suffering from mental illness and thereby reduce constant watch requirements.

Police led Prosecutions (PLP)

67. West Midlands Police launched Police Led Prosecutions on the 13th August 2013. All specified traffic offences for the entire force area are now prosecuted at two Central Traffic Courts within Birmingham Magistrates Court. Guilty pleas and cases heard in the defendant's absence are presented by court presentation officers, a responsibility previously undertaken by the CPS. Defendants who elect trial are returned to their local court for that purpose and the case is returned to CPS to prosecute.

68. Typically over one hundred cases will be heard daily by the Traffic Courts; the court sitting twice weekly. Each successful prosecution enables the court presenters to apply on behalf of the force for £80 in costs. Taking into account the additional workload, staffing costs and the rate at which defendants actually pay those costs, it is anticipated that this initiative will definitely go on to generate income above the cost of delivering the service. It is likely that £465,000 will be recouped by the force this financial year versus a staffing cost of £112,000.
69. Since the introduction of PLP there has been an increase in percentage of guilty pleas, less adjournments, less wasted court time and a strengthened relationship with the court.

Joint action plan with the Crown Prosecution Service to improve file quality

70. West Midlands Police Criminal Justice Unit staff and CPS colleagues have conducted a joint review of working practices around the preparation of cases for court. As a consequence of this, a joint action plan for improvement has been drafted and recently endorsed by both partners.
71. Improvement is needed in respect of timeliness, quality and administration. An essential aspect of improvement is the need to achieve proportionality around file building through the early identification of those cases likely to result in an early guilty plea. Presently there is too much unnecessary 'overbuilding' of files putting unnecessary strain on the resources of both partners. The CPS has taken on 35 administration staff to release lawyers back to their core duties in support of the plan.
72. A trial of more enhanced joint working between the police Criminal Justice Unit staff and the CPS is set to start in February for all Birmingham cases. Under this pilot CPS lawyers and police case review officers will sit side by side and proactively review cases at the earliest opportunity making balanced decisions around the quality of evidence provided by the investigating officer and what needs to be done to raise the opportunity of getting an early guilty plea. A similar project in Staffordshire has shown that this method of working is beneficial to the victims, witnesses and the agencies within criminal justice system. There are no staffing implications for WMP and CPS colleagues will migrate into the police office at Colmore Gate.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

73. These matters are covered in the individual department updates.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

74. These matters are covered in the individual department updates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

75. The Board is asked to note the content of this report.

Gary Cann
Assistant Chief Constable (Operations)