



College of
Policing



Structured Debrief Report

Operation Unity

The Policing and Security Response

2022 Commonwealth Games



Version Control

1.0 Report sent to West Midlands Police Darren Nugent 22.01.2023



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CONTENTS	Page
Introduction	05
Debrief Process	06
Debrief Sessions	07
Structured Debrief Team	08
Structured Debrief Attendees	09
Executive Summary	09
Examples of Identified Lessons	10
Debrief Summaries and Report Matrices	16
Debrief 1 Project Management	16
Debrief 2 Crime and Counter Terrorism	19
Debrief 3 Airwaves and Communication	21
Debrief 4 Strategic Oversight	23
Debrief 5 Venues, Villages, Security Coordinators	25
Debrief 6 Queen's Baton Relay (QBR)	27
Debrief 7 Partnerships	29
Debrief 8 Intelligence	31
Debrief 9 Resourcing	32
Debrief 10 Information, Technology and Digital (ITD)	34
Debrief 11 Business as Usual (BAU)	36
Debrief 12 Logistics	38
Debrief 13 Engagement and Community Impact	40
Debrief 14 Enabling Services	42
Debrief 15 Testing and Exercising (T&E)	43
Debrief 16 Corporate Communications and Briefings	45
Debrief 17 Gold Command	47

Debrief 18 Silver Command	49
Debrief 19 Firearms	51
Debrief 20 Welfare, Wellbeing and Professional Standards	53
Debrief 21 Specialist Assets	55
Debrief 22 Search and Dog Support	57
Complete List of Learning Outcomes	59

Introduction

On 21st December 2017 the city of Birmingham was announced as host for the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The Games took place between 28th July and 8th August 2022, and was the largest ever held, with 72 participating nations and over 1.3 million ticket sales.

The Birmingham Organising Committee for the 2022 Commonwealth Games, from herein referred to as the Organising Committee (OC), was responsible for the planning and operational delivery of the Games.

West Midlands Police (WMP) were responsible for the security of the event. It became the biggest operation in their history.

The Queen's Baton Relay (QBR) began on 7th October 2021 at Buckingham Palace in London and travelled through 72 Commonwealth nations and territories before landing in England on 4th July to commence a 25-day tour of the regions.

The opening ceremony for the 2022 Commonwealth Games took place on the evening of Thursday, 28th July in the Alexander Stadium, Birmingham, during which the baton was delivered to Charles, then Prince of Wales, who read the Queen's message to officially open the Games.

Athletes and team officials were housed in three villages, two students' residences at the University of Birmingham and University of Warwick, and the third the hotels at the Birmingham National Exhibition Centre (NEC).

The venues used for the Games were spread beyond the geography of the West Midlands Police whom led the police operation.

The venues included:

- Birmingham (Alexander Stadium; Utilita Arena Birmingham; Edgbaston Cricket Ground; Smithfield Market; Sutton Park, University of Birmingham Squash Centre; Victoria Square)
- West Midlands region (Cannock Chase, Staffordshire; Coventry Arena; Victoria Park Bowling Greens, Leamington Spa; Sandwell Aquatics Centre; National Exhibition Centre, Solihull; West Park, Wolverhampton)

- London (Lee Valley VeloPark)

The closing ceremony took place on 8th August 2022 at Alexander Stadium and included the formal handover to the Australian state of Victoria, host of the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

The police operation is named Operation Unity.

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief Process

WMP requested the College of Policing (hereafter referred to as the College) to coordinate a series of structured debriefs in order to support the learning process following the policing of the event. The process was carried out in line with current national structured debriefing standards. This document refers to submissions and comments from participants in the process but does not make comment on matters that may have been raised within other debriefs or reviews.

This debrief report will assist WMP and other forces in planning future events of this magnitude. A number of recommendations for improvement and areas of good practice have been captured.

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief Sessions

There were 22 subject areas identified for a structured debrief:

1. Project Management
2. Crime and Counter Terrorism
3. Airwaves and Communication
4. Strategic Oversight
5. Venues, Villages, Security Coordinators (SecCo)
6. Queen's Baton Relay (QBR)
7. Partnerships
8. Intelligence
9. Resourcing
10. Information, Technology and Digital (ITD)
11. Business as Usual (BAU)
12. Logistics
13. Engagement and Community Impact
14. Enabling Services
15. Testing and Exercising (T&E)
16. Corporate Communications and Briefings
17. Gold Command
18. Silver Command
19. Firearms
20. Welfare, Wellbeing and Professional Standards
21. Specialist Assets
22. Search and Dog Support

[Back to Contents](#)

Structured Debrief Team

Members of the debrief team have all completed the College of Policing debrief course and have participated in a number of debriefs locally and regionally. The team was led by Detective Superintendent Tony Brown of South Wales, who has considerable debrief experience and had previously led the team that debriefed the G7 summit. Please note that the team are made up of officers/staff from different forces and though they all deliver to the same College of Policing standards, some differences in style and reporting will be evident across the different debrief sessions.

Det. Superintendent Tony Brown	South Wales Police
Inspector Matt Johnson	Cambridgeshire Constabulary
Det. Inspector Kerry Dann	Kent Police
PC John Boon	Metropolitan Police
Deborah Goddard	Metropolitan Police
Sergeant Lorna Dennison-Wilkins	Sussex Police
Eric Mirfin	South Yorkshire Police
Melissa Dark	City of London Police
Sergeant Charles Mackenzie	West Yorkshire Police
Inspector Catherine Larsen	Avon and Somerset Police
Katherine Hughes	Greater Manchester Police
Sergeant Amar Khalil	West Midlands Police

The debrief process was conducted Monday, 26th September – Friday, 30th September 2022, and Monday, 10th October – Tuesday, 11th October 2022, coordinated by PC Amanda Baldwin (WMP) and Darren Nugent (the College).

[Back to Contents](#)

Structured Debrief Attendees

A full list of the attendees is included in the respective report matrix embedded in sections of this document. The order in which the names appear in the document and the report matrices' introduction do not reflect the numbers attributed to the attendees in sessions.

[Back to Contents](#)

Executive Summary

The College of Policing were requested by means of a service level agreement with WMP to co-ordinate a structured debrief of its response to the policing of the 2022 Commonwealth Games known as Operation Unity.

A structured debrief is standard practice in UK policing to capture learning from good practice and areas identified for improvement.

A summary of each debrief and a College of Policing structured debrief report matrix is provided for each session, with learning outcomes drawn from identified areas for improvement and areas of good practice, these will be assessed by WMP.

The analysis of data obtained from the various debriefs conducted provided the debrief team with a large volume of information and identified a number of key themes drawn from identified areas of improvement and areas of identified good practice, which could be replicated.

The debrief process takes account of participants' specific roles during the operation and comments they have made as a result, some of these are evidenced and supported by other participants and some may have been based on their own perceptions.

More detailed information is contained within each debrief report matrix embedded in each debrief summary and the complete list of learning outcomes is embedded at the end of this report.

[Back to Contents](#)

Examples of Identified Lessons

Below are some of the learning from across the 22 debrief sessions.

Areas Identified as Good Practice

Some of the areas that were highlighted that worked particularly well and could be replicated include:

- Visiting and speaking to other forces and organisations who planned and implemented similar events was invaluable and that in the run up to such event this should be considered standard practice. One suggestion was for a central organisation (NPoCC?) to hold details of those forces who have had expertise in particular fields.
- The Risk Register was seen as a key tool. It allowed issues to be recognised early, and addressed or escalated if not resolved. Active use of the Register increased trust and made Silver meetings easier because there was greater situational awareness and measures put in place. It provided reassurance to the Department for Digital Media, Culture and Sport, and the Home Office as it evidenced openness and transparency.
- Close engagement with NPoCC helped. As the NPoCC are used to dealing with government they were able to advise on how to best respond to requests for information and provide updates. NPoCC was a useful ally.
- Identifying ("Tag") all reported crimes related to the Commonwealth Games will to enable post-event crime analysis and inform future hosts of the Commonwealth Games of potential crime patterns.
- A missing persons team with well thought out policies was established early on which enabled enquiries to be completed expeditiously without creating incidents with foreign partners. A protocol was established which included informing foreign nations if citizens had gone missing, but due to potential human rights issues these countries may not be told where they are (if located) but were informed that they are safe. This applied to a number of international athletes. This allowed the Games to carry on with minimal press intrusion.

- Well established partnerships with the police and ambulance service encouraged a “Team Emergency Services” approach which was proactive and worked really well – problems were shared and solved together.
- It was acknowledged that WMP provided all Airwave radios to mutual aid resources who therefore had no need to bring their home force radios for the duration of the operation. This meant that resources could not revert to their home channels and were only able to use the talk groups provided.
- Consideration should be given for the host force to organise transportation of mutual aid staff from the home force – this was very effective in getting resources to the correct locations and minimising the build-up of unnecessary vehicles.
- An App was developed that was used for briefings, with local information for Mutual Aid officers. This gave ‘what 3 word’ locations for feeding, welfare and other provisions along with information about the deployments. It was thought that the App was “brilliant” and that the person who designed it should receive recognition.
- The ‘SMILE’ mnemonic was clever and encapsulated the style, tone and purpose of the policing operation in a simple phrase.
 - **S**top Terrorism
 - **M**itigate protest
 - **I**dentify vulnerabilities
 - **L**ead by example
 - **E**ngage

National Learning

- Consideration should be given to developing/commissioning a national planning tool to support the policing of major incidents/events.
- A dedicated single platform IT solution is required for the logistics management in major operations of this magnitude.

- Consideration for regulation and planning permission policies to require new large event venues to have the ability to host emergency communications.
- There should not be a requirement for a Military Aid to the Civil Authority (MACA) request for military resources to be part of a deployment for a national event of this magnitude - deployment of military should be standard and they should be embedded with the committee at the beginning of the planning cycle.
- A recommendation that NPoCC or a similar centrally located body can play a greater role in assisting forces in finding out best practice and signposting them to other forces/agencies that may be able to help (a repository for guidance and advice). Consider mutual aid planners to come in from forces who have greater experience in planning these events.
- Review how Mercury is updated so that it can more accurately reflect more role profiles. By doing this it will cut down on time spent having to go to RICCs to obtain information for mutual aid.
- There needs to be greater recognition at a strategic level of the importance of a properly resourced Logistics Cell. Consideration should be given by the College of Policing to including an input on logistics on the Multi-Agency Gold Incident Commanders course (MAGIC).

Working with the Organising Committee (OC)

- Having a skeleton OC at the start of the programme and relying on a “just-in-time” model for key management positions is a false economy. The programme should be appropriately staffed throughout.
- When co-locating programme team resources, shared office space (as opposed to simply a shared building) should be considered as this will enhance relationships and joint understanding.
- To enable effective planning for high profile international events, develop robust procedures to enable the sharing of sensitive information between key stakeholders within restrictive “need to know” parameters, such as the route of the Queen’s Baton Relay (QBR) in this instance.

Planning

- Some of the planning team were allowed to spend time at COP 26 in Glasgow during their preparations and planning and they found this massively useful gaining some valuable tips on what was going well and what they would have done differently. For example, they picked up the plan to use Stagecoach as part of the transport plan as well as advice on how to handle some catering issues.
- Consideration should be given to increasing the number of individuals trained as planners so that abstractions to major events do not impact on business as usual.
- Participants agreed that an earlier engagement between planners and enabling services would have assisted in establishing clearer role profiles ensuring adequate resilience for BAU and Commonwealth Games teams.
- It is recommended that where a Chief Officer overrides Gold Strategy and Silver planning, a rationale is disseminated for Gold/Silver/Bronze commanders to include in their plans to reflect the short notice change to plans.

Logistics

- Industry experts should be considered for specialist roles that the police service is not experienced in dealing with (e.g., catering, accommodation, and transport). Police officers can work with them to operationalise their plans.
- Where experts (or experienced staff from other forces) are brought in to support an operation, they need to be brought in early enough to allow for changes to be made when issues are identified, and not merely brought in for the operational phase.

Resourcing/Recruitment

- Resourcing requirements should be identified at the earliest opportunity to allow for the associated logistical requirements to be identified and contracted. The resource requirement should offer as much flexibility as possible to allow for last-minute changes in intelligence or threat.

- The resourcing system (technology) currently used is not fit for purpose. Large spreadsheets had to be used which fell woefully short of how it presents the Force resourcing data and considerable problems resulted from this shortfall. The WMP resourcing system and how it presents the Force resourcing data should be reviewed with regards to improvement.
- Include representation from the duty management software provider (MYTIME for West Midlands Police) at the beginning of the planning to develop the software to meet the CWG duty management requirements.
- The impact of staff regulations on resourcing was not understood or catered for. Police officers and staff have different regulations and these restrictions caused issues in the resourcing plan. Challenges could have been alleviated with earlier involvement of BAU planners and the Union and Federation representatives.
- Commence the recruitment and selection process early, and include knowledge and experience linked to the role as a criteria and ability to create capacity within their BAU command workloads to afford time to plan the Games.
- Develop recruitment plans for the key planning roles of an event as big as the Commonwealth Games (CWG) that encourage interest from established specialist personnel (e.g., PolSA and Logistics) to share their experience and develop team members new to these roles. Lead roles should go to those members of staff with the appropriate experience, deputy and support roles can be used to develop other staff members.

Mutual Aid

- Host forces need to recognise that requests for non-specialist officers for protracted mutual aid deployments is rare and many officers attending will be experiencing mutual aid for the first time. Expectations need to be set from the outset in respect of accommodation, shifts, food etc. in order to minimise the impact on the logistics team.
- Consideration should be given for the host force to organise transportation of mutual aid staff from the home force – this was very effective in getting resources to the correct locations and minimising the build-up of unnecessary vehicles.

- Review the IT system (Mercury) used to manage mutual aid requests in relation to police staff (non-warranted) and identifying and recording the potential skills required nationally on mutual aid.

Briefing

- Any briefing pack for a specific venue should be developed in consultation with, and agreed by, the operational leads for the venues.
- Early consultation with the operational commanders following the tabletop exercises regarding the logistics and timings of briefings to ensure everyone is briefed properly and in place in time to carry out their duties.

Staff Welfare

- Engage with local venues, pubs, clubs, etc., to hold events for officers on Mutual Aid to help ensure that visiting officers had something to do when not working. It will also assist the local venues prepare for the influx of these officers.
- Develop a Welfare Brochure and provide a copy to all personnel working on the games. The brochure should list what services is available to those deployed to the Commonwealth Games, with details such contacts, locations, and how to access the services.
- Senior Leadership Team should include plans to formally thank and express appreciation for police officers and staff who worked in the planning and delivery of major events such as the Commonwealth Games.

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief Summaries and Report Matrices

Debrief 1 – Project Management

The debrief was conducted between 09:30 and 12:30 on Monday 26th September 2022., There were ten participants with representatives from West Midlands Police (WMP) and the Birmingham 2022 Organising Committee (OC) in attendance.

WMP brought in experienced Project Managers to support the delivery of this event rather than using senior police officers. The utilisation of a Project Management Team was seen as good practice, particularly as this allowed the project to be broken down into manageable areas of business. Project managers were able to probe plans from areas that they were unfamiliar with (e.g. search) in advance of assurance visits. The blend of operational staff (police) with experienced programme management professionals made for an effective team.

Early discussions related to the project and finance initiation. Consultants had been brought in to model costs and workforce plan prior to the city bids being sought. The modelling was based on the Glasgow (2014) and Gold Coast (2018) Commonwealth Games and provided a budget for the OC and WMP to work to. Both organisations were then placed under pressure to reduce what was a significant budget.

The OC's workforce plan had been modelled on a "just-in-time" staffing, this meant that the OC did not have sufficient staffing in the planning phase of the operation; the model was too lean and deviation from the model was challenging as it meant cutting costs further down the line. The "just-in-time" staffing model was felt to be a false economy, the additional resources and consultants required ended up costing more money than was saved.

The modelling was a key factor in finance and workforce planning. Since the modelling was based on previous events, it encouraged the organisers to fall back on previous plans and does not promote innovation.

Budget management continued to be a feature of the debrief and there was much discussion over who was most appropriate person to hold the budget, particularly as the OG did not have its own security budget.

The OC and WMP planned much of the operation in parallel. It was agreed by participants that a better model would have been to have had an integrated planning

team; this would have brought about economies of scale, particularly in respect of support staff that could have been shared between the two partners. Whilst there was some co-location, the Covid pandemic brought a halt to the good progress that was being made in this area.

Another aspect that frustrated partnership working was the absence of a single secure IT platform that all partners could access, share, and manage documents. It was identified that there was no integrated planning tool available for purchase. Consequently, data was recorded in a number of places and on different systems which could not communicate with each other. This impacted on so many levels as manual changes had to be made across a number of platforms to reflect any update. Consideration should be given to developing/commissioning a national planning tool to support the policing of major incidents/events to improve efficiency, and create opportunities for shared resources and savings, and enable consistency across partners.

Where WMP, OC and other partners were co-located, strong professional working relationships were formed. When co-locating programme team resources, shared office space (as opposed to simply a shared building) should be considered as this will enhance relationships and joint understanding. Where WMP and OC resourced were co-located, it enhanced working relationships, information sharing and improved working practices.

The Risk Register was seen as a key tool. It allowed issues to be recognised early, address or escalate if not resolved. It was mentioned that some users did not want items to show as “red” on the register. If the Register is to be effective, it must be used appropriately. Active use of the Register increased trust and made Silver meetings easier because there was greater situational awareness and measures put in place. It provided reassurance to the Department for Digital Media, Culture and Sport, and the Home Office as it was showed openness and transparency.

Engagement with the National Police Coordination Centre (NPoCC) helped as the NPoCC are used to dealing with government so were able to advise on how to best respond to requests for information and provide updates - NPoCC was a useful ally.

The debrief recognised that individuals felt empowered, that the working culture allowed challenge, the working groups were effective, the transition from planning to

operation went well, there was continuity of command and that it was felt that there was a clear consistent governance structure within the police.



01.Project
Management Matrix v

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 2 – Crime and Counter Terrorism

The debrief was conducted between 13:30 and 12:30 on Monday 26th September 2022. There were five participants in this debrief session.

The participants agreed that when Birmingham was awarded the Commonwealth Games WMP started planning for the event with a “blank canvas” after having been provided with sparse information from previous games organisers or police services, i.e. Scotland and Australia. They stated that past experiences were expressed via anecdotal information rather than quantifiable evidence containing crime statistics. It was stated that it would have been extremely useful to establish a baseline particularly in areas such as safeguarding. For these Games WMP “tagged” all reported crimes that are related to the Commonwealth Games to enable post-event crime analysis and inform future hosts of the Games of potential crime patterns. This wasn’t available to WMP from past Games.

Participants agreed that it is paramount that in operations such as this that the right person is put into the right role at the very beginning, ensuring credibility and experience is exploited. It is recommended to commence the recruitment and selection process early, and include knowledge and experience linked to the role as a criteria and ability to create capacity within their business as usual command workloads to afford time to plan the Games.

It was agreed that there was a potential disconnect between Intelligence and Crime. Intelligence teams outlined far more risks that the crime teams thought was reasonable compared with business as usual. They agreed that this was useful in that worst case scenarios helps focus on ‘anything could happen’, however, prioritise using the R-A-G (Red-Amber-Gold) system before passing onto crime investigation would have been helpful.

It was felt that general crime issues did not increase pressure on policing resources, and that a team of one and seven CID officers provided resilience to the operation to deal with relevant games-related crimes quickly before rumours could spread in the public arena.

Participants recognised that Servator provided an invaluable service to the operation.

A missing persons team with well thought out policies was established early on which enabled enquiries to be completed expeditiously without creating incidents with foreign partners. A protocol was established which included informing foreign nations if citizens had gone missing, but due to potential human rights issues these countries may not be told where they are (if located) but were informed that they are safe. This applied to a number of international athletes. This allowed the Games to carry on without any press intrusion.

The group agreed that there is a lack of awareness of cybercrime procedures, and how they should be dealt with and by whom. A training package could easily be developed and delivered.



02.Crime Intelligence
CT Matrix v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 3 – Airwaves and Communication

The debrief was conducted between 13:30 and 16:30 on Monday 26th September 2022. There were nine participants in this debrief session.

There was a lot to discuss and the session was very engaging with many recommendations. Below are just a few of the many issues discussed – many more are included in the report matrix.

It was acknowledged that WMP provided all Airwave radios to mutual aid resources who therefore has no need to bring their home force radios for the duration of the operation. Each resource was provided with a radio, spare battery and charging equipment was placed at strategic locations to ensure that radios were charged and functional at all times. This also meant that resources could not revert to their home channels and were only able to use the talk groups provided.

Well established partnerships with the police and ambulance service encouraged a “Team Emergency Services” approach which was proactive and worked really well – problems were shared and solved together,

At a point during the operation the representative from the Ambulance service was unable to use the equipment and did not have an understanding of Airwaves. This created challenges for the rest of the cell in ensuring that multi-agency communication was fluid. It was recommended that all multi-agency representatives in the different cells have the appropriate skills and knowledge to fulfil their role (such as the Airwaves communication system in this instance).

Resilience around communications tactical advice was identified as a national issue due to the same people doing many roles, resulting in reduced corporate memory and huge gaps in knowledge and experience. Due to the nature of policing and different areas those forces with lots of incidents benefit from experienced tactical advisors who deal with demand regularly and then other forces have very little. It was recommended to utilise national resources more effectively for operations of this nature, looking at solutions such as people with access to “Insight” being utilised either remotely from their home force, or in the communications cell with the support of someone additional who is able to access local systems.

There were a number of issues discussed relating to issues at venues – there are national standards and guidelines when it comes to event planning and management including the “Green Guide condition 6” and the Purple Guide, however neither of these have anything that states consideration should be given to control room planning to ensure that emergency services can function from these rooms. Consideration for regulation and planning permission policies to require new large event venues to have the ability to host emergency communications.

Comms staff were unaccredited for access so could not get inside venues when there were faults reported. Access accreditation was purposely kept to a bare minimum. There were additional visitor passes, but the process of getting one took significant time and this impacted on the ability to expeditiously deal with issues as they arose. It is recommended that communications staff be considered when planning venue access security processes to enable them to get quickly get onsite to troubleshoot issues as they arise.

It was commented that the co-location of the technical team, communications team and IT capability in the communications cell was really effective and useful for fast time problem-solving. There was enhanced situational awareness and an acknowledgement that working face to face in the same room is far more effective.

The partnership working between the networks team, technical team, Emergency Services Network (ESN) team and Airwaves manager services teams were highlighted as excellent in the communications planning for this event.



03.Airwaves
Communications Mat

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 4 – Strategic Oversight

The debrief was conducted between 13:30 and 16:30 on Monday 26th September 2022. There were four participants in this debrief session, including representation from the Organising Committee (OC).

As this was a new experience for everyone, WMP scoped for past experience and used a peer review from the committee of the G7. This report was invaluable and recommended as good practice.

The group agreed that three and a half years of planning was about the right time. This was a late bid which meant it was less than the usual four years, but this was adequate.

It was commented that it would have been beneficial to have a “HMICFRS” type of inspection, but HMICFRS will only look at policing and fire service and cannot make a judgement across all areas of the governance. There is a need for an inspectorate role that could evaluate across all areas holistically.

A key discussion was about how the risk appetite from Government and Chief Constable changed within a fortnight of the Games commencing. This had an impact on the level of security required at the opening and closing ceremonies. Upon the appointment of Gold/ACC Ward the terms of reference document were agreed with the Chief Constable. This included addressing risk. Whilst this document is seen as good practice it should be reviewed on a more regular basis between Gold and the Chief Constable on the approach to the event.

Because of the contingencies built into the strategic plan, the operation was able to absorb the demands of the Chief Constable's fundamental changes to the opening and closing ceremonies. The strategic plan used for this operation could be shared as a good example.

Rest day payments for officers had a knock-on effect for Rest Days In Lieu. The Home Office objected to the stepping outside of regulations and refused to fund for cancelled rest days because they were known far in advance - even though the Federation agreed. The practice of not allowing re-rostered rest days for police officers in the policing of the Commonwealth Games should be reviewed as this did not save money as more officers were required on Mutual Aid. Alternative

approaches should be considered and the lack of ability to use these was detrimental to individuals and the organisation and had an impact on resourcing for Forces post Commonwealth Games as officers returned to Force with re-rostered rest days which need to be taken.

A draft Military Aid to the Civil Authority (MACA) request was submitted in 2021 but WMP were informed that they wouldn't get an answer back until February/March of 2022. This wasn't enough time for the proper planning to utilise the military effectively. The Home Office personnel weren't prepared to look at things in a discretionary bigger picture but only what the 'book' stated, adding that something would have to go wrong for a MACA request and that it could not be prepared in advance – the request was eventually signed off in January 2022. There was no discretion or flexibility. A compromise was made in the MACA requiring a percentage of the military to be utilised each day because the military liaison officer saw the benefit of military involvement. It was agreed that there should not be a requirement for a Military Aid to the Civil Authority (MACA) request for military resources to be part of a deployment for a national event of this magnitude - deployment of military should be standard and they should be embedded with the committee at the beginning of the planning cycle.

There were positive comments about the working relationship with the Policing Crime Commissioner who was supportive and had oversight, requesting regular updates and checking how things were progressing. The Policing Crime Commissioner was keen to make sure business as usual wasn't unduly affected by the Games and was involved in the legacy side.



04.Strategic
Oversight Matrix v1.1.

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 5 – Security Coordinators (SecCo), Venues, & Villages

The debrief was conducted on Monday 26th September 2022. There were eleven participants in this debrief session, including representation from the Organising Committee (OC).

It was commented that in the beginning, the Security Status planning was at Substantial though the actual threat was Moderate - business as usual. Because of our increased level of planning to Substantial, we had a healthy risk appetite throughout, so it was surprising that two before the start the Chief Constable directed the planning to be a higher level and so there was then no risk appetite at all. It helped that the planning had been to substantial level.

Originally there was going to be just one village for the athletes, however this was later extended to five, The venue teams were left to determine where the boundary lines were placed. The Police and Security were not present. The Police venue commanders/SecCo did not agree with the risk assessments, however they matched the expectations of the OC. The OC venue teams should consult with the Police venue commander (inc. SecCo) on venue/village security issues, including the setting of security boundary lines at the venues and villages.

It was commented how the Police are very insular, and generally don't outsource the things that could be. "We need to change how we do business, because we can't do everything. We need to bring in Subject Matter Experts." The Organising Committee had consultants to advise them on specific areas of planning, whereas WMP simply allocated a resource to manage similar planning themes without any previous experience. In some cases Police officers returning from sick leave were being given enormous tasks that should have been outsourced. Sergeants and Inspectors were broken. They were being asked to do things that they were equipped to do. It was recommended that for events of this magnitude consider outsourcing the planning and implementation of key functions that Police have little experience of.

The reaction to the accreditation 'surge' didn't come until three months from the start of the event. So many people who were required to be in the system, didn't have accreditation. This had massive implications. Processes needed to be changed. Though acknowledging issues re. accreditation, it should also be recognised that a hundred and twenty seven thousand applications went through the Vetting and

Accreditation process, and nine hundred and sixty were refused. This massive workload should be recognised as a significant achievement.

It was beneficial to visit and speak to Police Forces who had previously planned similar events, e.g. Police Scotland with their previous CWG experience, and Devon and Cornwall Police with the G7 summit. Going into delivery of the Games, the initial negativity issues that we had faced were overcome and the group agreed that it was a huge success.



05.SecCo Venue &
Villages Matrix v1.0.doc

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 6 – Queen’s Baton Relay (QBR)

The debrief was conducted between 09:30 and 12:30 on Tuesday, 27th September 2022 with seven participants.

The group agreed that on the whole the QBR planning and execution worked well due to the “can do” attitude of team members and the determination to make a success of the operation.

At the beginning of the planning phase there was a great deal of interest from staff and officers, but this soon waned when awareness of the length of engagement became apparent. It was as though they realised that it was not going to be as glamorous as first thought. The setting up of recruitment awareness ‘discovery days’ for the escort runner when recruiting the runners of the QBR meant that only those who wanted to join, actually enlisted. These days cemented the realisation of how hard the role was going to be, “warts and all” – giving potential applicants an informed choice.

Participants felt that the original planning cycle should have been established seven years before the event. Even though they had just over four years in which to plan they felt that they were ‘behind the curve’ initially and they were ‘chasing their tails’. This left them feeling on the back foot.

There was a Safety Advisory Guidance meeting which participants stated did not provide sight of the route plan until just four days before the actual event was announced to the public. This information should have been shared in a timely fashion to allow for more effective planning. There was a reluctance to share to minimise the potential for planned disruption from opportunistic protest groups. To enable effective planning for high profile international events, robust procedures are required to enable the sharing of sensitive information to key stakeholders within restrictive “need to know” parameters.

Previously shared information from the Metropolitan Police regarding the Olympic torch run and the implied physical demands allowed planners to shape the recruitment requirements for baton relay runners

During the baton relay itself the escort convoy become the responsibility of the planning team, which was something they should never have inherited. No planning

for a separate logistics support team had been made. Having no logistical support for the escort convoy led to numerous issues, such as officers being stranded in locations with no plan of how to get to the next stage of the QBR. Plan to provide logistical support for the convoy teams during the operational phase of the Queen's Baton Relay (QBR).

Recruitment for such for such events whilst desiring to be inclusive and diverse should also be practical and bespoke. It was commented that during the recruitment phase for the escort convoy officers there was a conflict between the standard HR advice provided and the practical needs of the recruitment process due to the physical and mental demands from the role (escort convoy runners). The advice was inaccurate and flawed and wore the team down, with the team having to seek separate HR and legal advice to enable them to recruit the most appropriate staff for the physically demanding role.

There was and still appears to be no plan in which officers and staff engaged in the operation will have time to decompress, recuperate and reconnect with business as usual. It was suggested that many have been left wondering where they will be posted and feel very much "left by the wayside". Some are unsure of their future role after event. One had to prepare for and remotely "attend" a job interview in their hotel room. There was insufficient time allowed to "decompression" – just one day off to readjust.

Interagency interoperability was a positive factor and was facilitated by information sharing and good communication. The ambulance service expressed their appreciation of all information that was shared by WMP and was of great assistance in their planning.



06.QBR Matrix
v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 7 – Partnerships

The debrief was conducted between 13:30 and 16:30 on Tuesday, 27th September 2022. There were eleven participants in this debrief session.

Obtaining the plans from the respective areas for the previous games assisted in the planning for these Games.

Whilst discussing the theme of Testing and Exercising (T&E) the group felt that the scenarios were not designed to test the emergency response and resilience, the consensus across Police, Fire, Ambulance and Military were that the scenarios were designed deliberately not to impact on the games or the Organisational Committee (OC). The T&E programme should have set aims and objectives that include testing all elements of the Commonwealth Games including venues, major incident response and specific games logistics. It was also recommended to gain multi-agency strategic agreement regarding the ownership of the T&E plan, with shared ownership with the Organising Committee (OC) with accountability for the learning and recommendations identified from the T&E.

There were different boards and meetings, many were held using MS Teams, with no clear reporting meeting structure or terms of reference. There was duplication of attendance by members by partners across these meetings stretching the resources and duplicating of work.

There were delays in the contract being signed with the Ambulance service and with other emergency services and establishing the level of staffing required caused issues with assuring the accreditation (process to obtain a pass into the event.) The military had agreed a two-level process, then ambulance had a schedule in place, and then fire and police had separate processes. It is a known issue and is too onerous on services that already have a level of accreditation. Review the accreditation processes for the emergency services to minimise delays in obtaining the accreditation for entry.

There was only one emergency services representative in the Games Operation Centre (GOC) – and that was the Police who were providing feedback into the MACC for all agencies. It was felt that this was a lot to put onto one agency.

Consider having strategic level representation from all Category 1 responders at the GOC.

There was a clearly a cohesive Local Resilience Forum that worked really well with effective partnership engagement that solved critical issues. AIRBOX assisted in enabling multi-agency situational awareness (a key JESIP principle).



07.Partnerships
Matrix v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 8 – Intelligence

The Head of Intelligence was unable to attend the Crime and Counter Terrorism debrief session so one-to-one session was set up that took place on Monday, 10th October 2022, from 12:30.

The key points of discussion were:

- The Joint Intelligence Cell (JIC) was formalised on 5th January 2022, located next to the Multi-Agency Command Centre, to support the decision-making process and identify the threats. There was a strategic assessment coming out monthly about the threats to the Commonwealth Games (CWG), and a tactical assessment that delivered intelligence gaps with recommendations. This early implementation was helpful to support early planning for the operation.
- From 4th April the policing intelligence partners co-located within the WMP Op Mojarra intelligence unit, forming the Joint Intelligence Cell (JIC) to manage any contingencies during the Games – with our partners physically embedded. Having the JIC with the embedded partners proactively collecting intelligence for the Games ensured a single version of the intelligence picture.
- The WMP Gold was the national Gold for the Queen’s Baton Relay (QBR), and each UK region for the QBR had a regional intelligence lead for each regional Silver that fed into the JIC. It is recommended that an Intelligence Lead is set up for each regional Silver lead for the QBR.
- The Intelligence product once created and agreed at a government level, was peer reviewed by an independent force (Staffordshire Police in this instance).
- Don’t underestimate threat from the weather. There was a severe heatwave that peaked ten days before the Games started, it affected the QBR – it could have affected the Games if it occurred ten days later as the emergency response would have taken resources away.



08.Intelligence Matrix
v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 9 – Resourcing

The debrief was conducted between 09:30 and 12:30 on Wednesday, 28th September 2022, with eleven participants.

The participants felt that there was a clear and concise mission statement from the top right from the beginning and this set the nature and style of the event and helped promote the right ethos throughout.

Visiting and speaking to other forces and organisations who planned and implemented similar events was invaluable and that in the run up to such event this should be considered standard practice. One suggestion was for a central organisation (NPoCC?) to hold details of those forces who have had expertise in particular fields.

Some of the planning team were allowed to spend time at COP 26 in Glasgow during their preparations and planning and they found this massively useful gaining some valuable tips on what was going well and what they would have done differently. For example, they picked up the plan to use Stagecoach as part of the transport plan as well as advice on how to handle some catering issues.

It was highlighted that there was a lack of guidance and expertise in planning generally for such a large event of this nature. There was a feeling that there was an assumption that the 'police' were good at being able to deal with these events but a lack of expertise within the organisation and no clear model to follow. Some participants felt this was a wider issue than Operation Unity with a lack of corporate knowledge across the country. This operation was seen as multiple events coming under one banner and when experts were brought in it was often too late in the planning process to be effective.

There was a recognition that officers from Devon and Cornwall who had dealt with the G7 event did come and speak with planning staff, but this was too late in the planning cycle. In many cases these officers had experienced similar issues in their operation.

It was widely felt that some forces appeared to have a prejudice to the supply of SCs on mutual aid and in some cases just didn't send them despite the strategic requirement from the RICC to do so. The propensity to do so, it was felt, rested on

forces cultural attitude to SC staff. Engagement at a strategic level was felt to be good but nervousness about capability and capacity at a lower level meant the requests were blocked. SCs with specialist skills were unable to book on duty using their comms system. The system only recognised them as on duty for independent patrol on non-independent patrol and as a level 3 resource. The result was that in many cases bronze commanders didn't know who they were getting and with which skills. Much work was done with engagement around the use of community volunteers and there was great interest but on the day volunteers were not needed and having given up their free time this did not reflect well on force reputation.

It was identified that another pool of resources available were police staff. Some 600 expressed an interest in working the Commonwealth Games but following this expression several barriers appeared to block the process including a complex application form and some resistance from HR. The group recommend a smooth, simple and more inclusive recruitment process to encourage more police staff to be part of and contribute to these national events, minimising unnecessary barriers that make this a more difficult process that discourages applications.

There was collective feeling from all participants that the general culture of learning and a willingness to adapt was good throughout the operation. In many cases there were some really good and new ideas brought forward.

In terms of purchasing the team were confident to step outside the normal tender process when required despite the fact that this was out of the ordinary in many cases. There was a clear need to do this due to the time constraints and operational necessity.



09.Resourcing Matrix
v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 10 – Information Technology and Digital (ITD)

The debrief was conducted between 09:30 and 12:30 on Wednesday, 28th September 2022, with six participants.

Participants agreed that despite the challenges created by not being included in the initial planning stage that on the whole their role in the Games was successful.

Participants agreed that there should have been early engagement between despatch personnel and planning leads. Applications were invited from staff to work as liaison between their departments and planning but the roles never actually happened. Staff were disappointed and unaware of what their roles during the games would be. This lack of engagement led to “a chaotic start” to the Despatchers’ involvement during the first days of the event.

Participants stated had highlighted that the despatch space was not adequately laid out to allow communication between despatchers. It was stated that this became very apparent between the CWG when despatchers were split up to the detriment of a free flow of information. When planning the despatch estate for events of this magnitude ensure there is adequate space to allow communication between despatchers and minimise the need to separate them to the detriment of a free flow of information.

Briefings to staff were inappropriately lengthy and contained a large amount of irrelevant information. It was suggested that any written briefing needed to be far more concise and that physical face to face briefings outlining role profiles would have been more effective.

During the Games 2,500 mutual aid officers were provided to West Midlands police from other Force areas across the UK. The Mutual Aid Management System (MAMS) was going to be used to backload these officers onto the WMP despatch systems. This was impeded by the lack of timely of information provision by the other forces. With nearly 800 officers details having to be inputted just days before the official opening. Despatch staff were left struggling to input this information without which there would have been issues where officers were deployed, particularly in the event of an emergency situation. This last-minute scramble could have been mitigated if there had been a core team in place to deal with this.

Participants suggested that during the Games there was a lack of 'radio discipline' from a minority of users. This involved talk group excursions and unauthorised 'point-to-point' conversations, which resulted in some radios having to be rendered unusable and new devices provided. This put additional pressure on IT support staff.

The participants said that there appeared to be little appreciation of their hard work, re-enforced by senior officers attending a function of thanks to which rank and file officers and staff were not invited and that, to the date of the debrief, no such undertaking has been made. A high profile appreciation event to rank and file officers and staff for their hard work should be organised in a timely fashion.



10.ITD Matrix
v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 11 – Business as Usual (BAU)

The debrief was conducted between 13:30 and 16:30 on Wednesday, 28th September 2022, with eight participants.

There were two tabletop exercises for BAU and Commonwealth Games. These focussed on who would deal with what, what was games related and what as BAU with the second exercise being protest related. These exercises were useful.

The focus on demand by carrying out proactive warrants and other initiatives in the run up to the Games was welcomed by officers and was effective.

Though overall a positive experience, the group felt that the impact of Operation Unity on BAU was almost an afterthought that came into the process too late. This created many challenges in unravelling strategy and decisions that had already been made. If BAU had been included earlier these issues could have been reduced. BAU also had the COVID pandemic exacerbating the issues and cause the structures to be remote from the organisation. The Operation Unity Team were siloed and there was not enough consideration for how Operation Unity would impact BAU until the last minute.

BAU staff felt disconnected and undervalued and were working all hours. Operation Unity staff had a “goody bag” and had enjoyable shifts with people who wanted to be at the Games. They were fed three times a day and had breaks. It felt like the Commonwealth Games Organising Committee did not fully consider the impact on the local community. Future planning should engage positively with the BAU staff and recognise their crucial contribution to the Games. Consider allowing local BAU officers to visit the venues to make them feel included. Make a BAU plan for site visits, explain how they are supporting the Games and have a communications strategy to support this.

There were no posting principles for student officers and Resourcing didn't know who was on what rotation. The planners and BAU didn't know when the protected learning were coming to Divisions. 75% of the resources for BAU were student officers who were posted blind. BAU didn't know if they were at work that week or not. Protected learning should have been delayed but this had been extended just before the Games. Consider suspending protected learning.

There was an impact by required attendances at court. If staff had a court case and were then abstracted, they needed to be back filled and this then became a BAU problem to backfill. Often the court notification was last minute, and the courts were over a wide geographical area. There was no strategy or policy for how we would respond to court appearances as a force. This resulted in another hidden demand and cost on BAU.

There was great innovation. BAU had authority to hire fifty hire cars, but there were none in the UK. BAU then worked out where all the underutilised vehicles were in the Force and these were redeployed. This was extra work which was carried out to a high standard with no complaint in short timescales.

The group agreed BAU staff pulled out every stop to make this work, even areas which were not their responsibility. Under great demand and challenge, it was all delivered because of the commitment and good will of the people who delivered this on top of their day jobs. Leadership in this area was excellent. Visible, consistent and problem solving approach. This paved the way for the delivery of BAU. Richard Fisher, in particular did an excellent job.



11.Business as Usual
Matrix v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 12 – Logistics

The debrief session was conducted at 13:30-16:30, Wednesday 28th September 2022. with representatives from the Logistics Cell that had responsibility for Resourcing, Business Support, Coordination and Readiness, Engagement, Catering, and other functions, together with a logistics planning representative from British Transport Police and Programme Management from West Midlands Police. In total there were eleven participants.

The debrief opened with discussions around the creation of the logistics team and its membership. It was felt that the team was too lean from the start and there was a desire to keep the membership low to save money.

WMP sought to make opportunities to be involved in the Games inclusive and transparent and whilst this was applauded, it was felt that this led to some staff being put in a role that was beyond their ability. “Round pegs in round holes” was a phrase that was repeated during the debrief as being needed. Consequently, it was recommended that experienced staff should be used for major events with development opportunities being given to individuals in deputy or support roles.

There was also some frustration that police officers were used for specialist roles that should have been given to contractors or consultants from the start; the police service does not usually have transport, accommodation, and catering experts in-house and it was felt to be a false economy to try to develop staff in those areas whilst planning a major operation.

Whilst WMP sought to learn from the G7 and COP26 operations by sending officers to those events, the Devon and Cornwall / Police Scotland officers that were brought in to support Op Unity were engaged too late, so where issues were identified, in many cases there was insufficient time to change the plans.

The recurring theme was that there was pressure to make the Games affordable, but the result was that the team was too small, resources were brought in too late and that specialist external resources should have been used in a number of areas instead of police officers and staff.

The debrief then highlighted operational issues experienced by staff in respect of Catering, Accommodation and Transport. It was felt that a number of these issues

would have been avoided or simplified if specialists – including internal teams such as WMP Legal Services – had been involved earlier.

Despite some frustration and disappointment that things didn't run as smoothly as hoped, the debrief participants were enthusiastic and proud of what had been achieved. Many of the things highlighted as having run smoothly and being put forward as best practice were the things that had been sufficiently resourced. This reinforces the need to properly resource the Logistics Cell.

Of note, the innovative mutual aid transport plan, whereby foreign force officers were collected by WMP, was seen as a success and a model to use again.



12.Logistics Matrix
v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 13 – Engagement and Community Impact

The debrief was conducted on Thursday, 29th September 2022, with seven participants.

Discussions commenced around the Organising Committee (OC) did not seemingly want to engage. West Midlands Police (WMP) engaged, but it wasn't their role. It was done to minimise legacy impacts. One participant mentioned that they went straight to "the boss" and it was agreed WMP would engage and talk to everyone. The OC should have communicated with them all but didn't, such as the delivery of messaging, businesses wanted to understand. West Midlands Police began to push back saying that it was the Organising Committee's responsibility to engage. Responsibilities were never clearly defined.

The group discussed how an unexpected and seemingly minor community issue can grow into a massive media story and significantly impact operation plans. At one point there was a communications focus on a community near to the 'Jewel in the Crown' venue. The Local Authority were taken to court by a local resident over an area of land that was to be sectioned off for an event at the stadium, prohibiting access to an old lady to care for a number of Ferrell cats on a nearby allotment there. The lady won and the Local Authority had to change their plans. This in turn impacted upon the security zone that was in place for the stadium and that had to be changed, meaning that 40 thousand people walking to the stadium had to be diverted.

There was a lot of discussion regarding engagement with the Special Constabulary. Across all the Special Constables that arrive from different forces their information was sporadic and inconsistent. Some Specials had received a significant amount of information from their force and/or Regional Information Coordination Centre (RICC) RICCs, whilst others received very little and had to chase different teams / departments for obtain it. It was recommended that RICCs have strong links with a Special Constabulary SPOC for each force in their region, to enable the distribution of relevant information to each force Special Constabulary and allow for a more consistent flow of information. Mercury gave very limited information in regard to the Special Constables who were attending and their capabilities, i.e. driving courses, JESIP training, etc. Some forces amended which officers were being sent, although

Mercury wasn't updated, and the information fed to relevant people prior to arrival, meaning call signs and staffing lists had to be changed at the very last minute. NPoCC need to develop processes with the RICCs and home forces so that Mercury can provide details of the wider skills capabilities of the Special Constabulary.

Assigning a Specials Command Team early (almost 2 years beforehand) assisted in a wide range of issues being addressed prior to the games even began. This included specific Special Constabulary related considerations around accommodation, hours etc. as well as assisting regular Bronzes in allocating, briefing and deploying SC's during the surge days, whilst also assigning radios/call-signs, etc. The links the SC Command Team created with regular Bronzes were useful to answer specific questions and allowed the SC Command Team to deal with logistic issues, without having to distract the Bronze from managing the event. This also allowed the SC Command Team to attend briefings and then to brief some of the surge day serials, if they were unable to attend the main briefing due to travel issues etc.

It was commented that large local businesses were concerned from a safety and security perspective - they saw security as an issue for their businesses and their workers. The sharing of the planning and arranging walkthroughs at some of the venues helped them with their own planning to get their staff into work. They appreciated the contact, discussion and awareness.

The Schools and Universities Programme that identified and worked with schools in the impact area was all joined up so it's legacy provides schools, universities etc. with a focus. Police messages were put out when appropriate, e.g. a drones multi-purpose pack, designed to be rolled out by PCSOs. This was targeted and immediately alleviated fears re. the threat from drones.



13.Community
Engagement Matrix v'

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 14 – Enabling Services

The debrief was conducted between 09:30 and 12:30 on Thursday, 29th September 2022, with three participants.

Participants agreed that on the whole Enabling Services involvement in the Commonwealth Games was positive and contributed to successful outcome.

It was stated that WMP's approach to enabling and shared services was very much taken from an officer-centric angle, with roles being allocated to officers without the necessary skills and with commercial experience. It was suggested that moving forward role holders should be appropriately selected to carry out roles.

It was agreed that enabling services were under resourced throughout the Games' planning and execution period and that there was a distinct lack of resilience across shared service providers which could have created major issues in the event of an extraordinary situation such as staff sickness.

There was a distinct lack of points of reference for planners to refer back to from previous games holders. Such information would have assisted in making informed decisions in the run up to the games.

Recruitment for fixed term contracts had a poor uptake, it was perceived that the reason for this was unattractive salaries.

Participants agreed that an earlier engagement between planners and enabling services would have assisted in establishing clearer role profiles ensuring adequate resilience for BAU and Commonwealth Games teams.

Contingency planning should include Insurance Services, whom could have assisted in mitigating costs when last minute accommodation solutions ultimately cost £200000.



14.Enabling Services
Matrix v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 15 – Testing and Exercising (T&E)

The debrief was session conducted between 13:30 and 16:30 on Thursday, 29th September 2022, with nine participants.

A number of participants stated they felt that there was great support from their senior leadership teams and generally speaking a good understanding strategically what was required. It was commented upon that this project was still delivered whilst there was a global pandemic occurring and that this additional challenge should not go unrecognised.

Several participants stated that it was difficult to get commanders to attend the testing and exercising events and the fact that some were absent made it difficult to run a meaningful exercise. Despite the fact that there was an edict that if the principal commander could not make it a deputy should be sent this was often not the case meaning that participants had to 'double hat' to make it work. It was suggested that there was some 'training apathy' / fatigue among commanders who were being asked to attend two sets of training, one for the police and one by the Organising Committee (OC). In cases there was duplication of training or a feeling that the training had little relevance to the commanders, so they did not show up. As time progressed this feeling was compounded, and the situation got worse.

During scenarios participants felt that OC treated the exercising as if they were part of the planning process rather than having a plan in place already and then testing it to establish if it was robust and fit for purpose. There was a strong feeling from all participants that plans were never really pressure tested fully because the OC never really had a plan ready for the exercise when it ran. It felt as if the OC were running exercises and writing the plan on the back of these. In several scenarios, the exercise would run to a conclusion where key infrastructure would be out of action but rather than continue to pressure test the exercise beyond that point the OC would conclude the exercise at that point thus avoiding the need to exercise into an increased critical state. Exercises should be planned in manageable blocks that run to a natural conclusion and not be reset to enable easy resolution. Agencies should have contingency plans in place prior to the exercising to enable pressure testing. All elements of testing and exercising should include input from strategic command.

Following the first exercise a draft report was produced but no formal result finalised and published. This fed into the second exercise where lessons learnt were not fed back and so there was no onward organisational development. There was a concern that West Midlands Police do not have a tried and tested system for tracking recommendations following debriefs and that these tend to get lost in time and case to be implemented.

Several participants commented on the size of the budget allocated to testing and exercising. There was a feeling that the team needed to be bigger than it was but that budgetary constraints curtailed this. There was a perception that there was little understanding about the scope and scale of the T&E required at a strategic level and as a result budgeting was done with a “finger in the wind” approach.

Whilst there was some conversation regarding budgets it was recognised by the group that there was in fact a large emphasis placed on testing and a considerable budget allocated. Where needed, staff were sent on courses and there was a focus by the Chief Constable on maximising legacy opportunities.

The contact report process was mentioned and highlighted as a good practice for functional leads to identify their biggest risks based on their risk analysis. This drew in a necessary focus to these areas.



15.Testing &
Exercising Matrix v1.1

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 16 – Corporate Communications and Briefings

The debrief was session conducted between 09:30 and 12:30 on Friday, 30th September 2022, with five participants.

It was discussed that there was no real thought or consideration to the briefings until the last minute, and logistics (such as where the briefings would actually take place and in what format) were not considered early enough. The briefing team consisted of one Sergeant and one Constable which was insufficient resources for an operation of this scale.

The actual logistics of delivering the briefing was challenging – events such as the marathon and cycling which were spread across large geographical areas meant that trying to brief and then get everyone where they needed to be – this was really challenging.

A Special Constable command team was deployed to support the command briefings. This was very effective as it meant that the Specials were deployed and looked after and all their briefing, meet and greets, duties and debriefing was managed very positively.

The comms around the use of the Special Constabulary was also very effective and bespoke work was done around social media promoting the Special Constable role – showcasing to commanders what the special have achieved and also left a really good public footprint and nationally.

It was seen as a real positive that Corporate Comms were embedded in Op Unity from the start and the fact that the embedded member of staff was part of the senior leadership team was also highlighted as a positive as it highlighted the importance of comms and ultimately meant they were able to achieve things that they might not have been otherwise able to.

There were issues around the protocols and decision making structure for last minute changes and sign off needed to be agreed. Everything needed to be run through the OC which took time because policing decisions were not a priority for them. This caused frustration as something that could have taken 30 minutes to resolve would sometimes takes days. This then created issues with relationships and some mistrust which then just compounded the issues already being experienced.

The comms strategy was highlighted as effective – especially around the use of “softer stories” such as the OC naming the police games puppies – a really positive story and built a better relationship with the OC. Equally getting Team England, the Commonwealth Federation and local authorities involved also worked really well – especially around comms related to CT and public safety messages.

Lots of work was put into the engagement with the Mutual Aid element of the operation and those from other forces were encouraged to proactively engage with the communities so that they too felt invested in the Games and part of it so that they would take that back to force - the impact of the Games could be felt wider nationally than just the Midlands.



16.Corp. Comms &
Briefing Matrix v1.1.doc

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 17 – Gold Command

The debrief was session conducted between 09:30 and 12:30 on Friday, 30th September 2022, with four participants.

The session began with discussion about the Gold Command Room. They agreed that there should have been more work to assess if the functionality of the Gold room was appropriate and how to use the room effectively. For example, making sure MS Teams was up and running (this was not installed until the last minute), screens not working, poor sound quality. As a Gold Control function the room needs to be able to be stood up at no notice. There was no GOV WIFI capability in the control room or Gold Command. This resulted in multiple WIFI zones and log in requirements. There was not a clock on the wall - this was a simple thing but having a clock would have assisted and made things more efficient.

Name badges - everyone had placards near desks so it was known what agency they were from. It would have been beneficial to have name badges. Everyone was meant to have a name badge and each desk was required to have their name on, but this didn't happen and it made communication more difficult. Implement strict discipline for all personnel from all agencies to where name badges and agency identification along with the clear signs identifying desks and zones within the command and control room.

The front office desk had a register of persons who could be admitted to the room. There were no spare seats so if additional people arrived there was nowhere for them to sit. Three Home Office people came on one occasion and this created difficulties. It was felt that the Gold Room planning should include a process to manage the unexpected arrival of additional personnel into the command and control cell. This could include a register of expected persons and terms of reference for the arrival of individuals, and also plans to manage visits by high-level VIPs to minimise impact of the Gold command.

Tactical and Strategic personnel had different colour lanyards, so it was easy to establish who did what and each function was kept separate. This helped internally but also assisted partners to know which individuals did this role. This was very well received and everyone understood their roles.

Everyone in the Command and Control Centre was content and happy. Room managers were efficient and made sure everyone was looked after. Room managers worked early and late shifts. This role should be involved in exercising in advance to ensure knowledge of the role, room and structures.



17.Gold Command
Matrix v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 18 – Silver Command

The debrief was session conducted between 09:30 and 12:30 on Friday, 30th September 2022, with six participants.

The participants agreed that the Gold strategy came very late – about two weeks before the operational phase. It was 30-40 pages long with a clear strategy that the tactical plans could be checked against. But the tactical plan was created first. It didn't cause any problems in this instance, but it could have if the strategy had been risk-averse. It also didn't allow time for any peer review as a result. This also meant that the bronze plans didn't come through fast enough to inform the Airwave communications plan which caused issues.

It was commented that the QBR was 11 days across 4 police forces and that QBR Silver set out clearly what was wanted with good attendance at the meetings. There was a lack of information from the OC, especially regarding the route, etc., but generally had good engagement. But it was not possible to identify any airwave blackspots because the QBR route wasn't shared until late so the QBR Silver was unable to share the plan. This was the same for the Games in generally.

There were two dress rehearsals for the opening ceremony, the Chief Constable wasn't happy with what he saw at the first one and what he heard from the PCs on the ground and provided feedback which required a re-write of the plans ready for the second rehearsal, but he still wasn't happy – the Inside Bronze, Outside Bronze, and Firearms Bronze plans had to change, even though the Gold strategy hadn't change. There had been no change to the threat assessment, yet the resources on standby were now deployed. It was felt that the planning commanders' professional integrity had been challenged. The last minute changes started raising concerns with staff who thought it was based on developing intelligence, which it wasn't. If something had gone wrong and the plans had been looked at in a follow-up investigation or inquiry, this would have been challenged.

Silver Commanders didn't have both a staff officer and a Public Order Publics Safety Advisor (POPSA), so a "double-hatted" POPSA was allocated to perform both roles. Separating and providing the roles should have been part of the resourcing plan. If you know how many Silver and Bronze Commanders then you should be able to plan how many of the support roles are required. The CCC function isn't just Gold,

Silver, Bronze, it should also include all the supporting roles and communications staff. Some commanders tried to appoint a staff officer to be told that they have been allocated a POPSA for both. Many of the roles were selected by the individual commanders rather than being allocated by the planning/resourcing team. Airwave tactical advisors were also double hatted as loggists, dispatchers and other roles. It was concluded that double hatted officers should be given a primary role, with the other skills recorded as secondary if not being used in their primary role.

The multi-agency command centre (MACC) could have been set out more effectively. At £43million it should have been better designed. Command should be in the centre. MACC had all the right people but in the wrong place. Command was at one end, but if it was in the middle Command could have engaged with everyone. As it was at one end, Silver had to make a conscious effort to walk all the way to the other end to maintain visibility and accessibility. It meant roles at the opposite end had to walk the full distance to get a decision. Silver Command should have been in the centre to allow fair and easy access for all.

There was a bespoke Gold Floor at the MACC with a different set of partners, e.g., the Military, staff from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, etc., because Gold had a base it didn't interrupt Silver that much.

There was a MACC representative in the Games Operation Centre (GOC) and a GOC representative in the MACC worked well, they were located close to Silver. It is important to thoroughly brief these roles – particularly the GOC representative in the MACC - to prevent unintentional “leaking”. This happened early on, but once addressed it was no longer a problem.

Partners' commitment should be acknowledged, they provided representatives in the MACC, e.g., the NILOs and Military Liaison Officers (MLOs), who were empowered to update and make decisions. This was very effective - partners had properly bought into this.



18.Silver Command
Matrix v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 19 – Firearms

The debrief was conducted between on Monday 10th October 2022 with four representatives from the West Midlands Police who were involved in the planning and operational delivery of the firearms aspect of Op Unity.

The debrief opened with discussions relating to the planning of the operation. It was felt that firearms commanders and planners were engaged too late in the planning phase of the event and operationally, this caused issues:

- A number of tactical parameters had already been signed off on the basis of SecCo recommendations; in many cases, the SecCos were not firearms commanders and had not received tactical advice.
- The logistics plans had been finalised before the firearms operational plans were completed and so the operational plan had to fit the logistics, not the other way around
- Arrangements had been made with venues that were incompatible with the operational firearms plan.
- There was an absence of logistical support before and after the Games whilst the firearms operation was still ongoing.

The late involvement of Firearms assets in the planning phase was a key factor throughout the debrief.

It was felt that the process of obtaining Mutual Aid staff via NPoCC is flawed. Many staff that arrived were different from those named by NPoCC and the skills did not match those that were required.

The accreditation system was too prescriptive and did not allow dynamic covert access to buildings for recces or in support of operations. It was recommended by the group that police accreditation is managed internally and that the Code of Conduct is relied upon to ensure professional practice.

The relationship between West Midlands Police and the Royalty and Specialist Protection Team from the Met was highlighted as a positive aspect of the event. Command protocols between senior commanders were clear, and the command protocols that were written to cover spontaneous incidents around the event have been used on other policing events since the Games.

Internal relationships with support teams, such as the service's Legal team were also highlighted as being effective.

Overall, the armed operation was seen as a success, but it was felt it could have run much smoother if Firearms representatives had been engaged earlier on in the planning process.



19.Firearms Matrix
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[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 20 – Welfare, Wellbeing and Professional Standards

The debrief was conducted at 09:30 – 12:30, Monday, 10th October 2022, with three participants.

The group thought that earlier engagement with the Professional Standards Department (PSD) and the Operation Unity team was required. It was a long and difficult process engaging with all the different mutual aid forces and for the legal team to draw up the PSD policy, but PSD was brought in late so made the task more difficult.

It was noted that there was no existing or prior PSD Policy for events of this nature dealing with large amounts of mutual aid officers. PSD reached out via the national network to other forces for examples but were unsuccessful. It was recommended that consideration be made for the development of a national knowledge hub for sharing organisational learning / reference material (in this instance relating to Professional Standards). All plans, good practices, templates, policies, etc., should be accessible for future planning nationally. This would ensure learning is captured and shared, good practices embedded, and mistakes not repeated.

Senior Leadership Team did not understand the PSD Policy once it had been written. This led to PSD being unnecessarily drawn into issues such as sickness. In future events PSD should brief the command team and have close engagement via assurance meetings throughout the planning phase.

Recruitment of officers was seen as unfair in the beginning of the CWG recruitment process, as it appeared that people were chosen because of personal relationships and not because of a fair recruitment process. Some staff associations did not engage in the planning stage, but later were critical of the recruitment process. They were invited several times but did not send a representative.

Consultation with other forces that had recently arranged large events (Police Scotland, The Met, Devon & Cornwall) was very useful for picking up their “lessons Learned” and being able to use those lessons during the planning / response.

National charities took on a lot of the welfare work, they were better at doing it than the Police service. They engaged better with the police officers/staff as the people

who were delivering it were coming from a personal position, especially around Mental Health/wellbeing.

It was commented that the British Association for Women in Policing (BAWP) were very positive. They engaged pre-planning, setting up workshops to assist Women officers/staff in applying for roles for the CWG. This helped improve the diversity of the planning teams, once the initial recruitment policy was rewritten.

The Welfare Brochure developed with a lot of help from Print and Design was considered effective. Copies were given to all personnel working on the games. The brochure contained lots of relevant information (contacts, event details, location details etc.) detailing what was available to those working on the games.

The group recommended engaging with local venues, pubs, clubs, etc., to hold events for officers on mutual aid to help ensure that visiting officers had something to do when not working. It also assists the local venues prepare for the influx of these officers.

The inclusion of Occupational Health in the planning and delivery of welfare and logistics, and having them on site where officers were stationed, was well received, and made a difference.



20.Welfare Wellbeing
Matrix v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 21 – Specialist Assets

The debrief was conducted at 09:30 – 12:30, Tuesday, 11th October 2022, with ten representatives from the specialist teams involved in the planning and operational delivery of Op Unity.

Overall, the specialist assets' operation was seen as a success, but it was felt it could have run much smoother if representatives had been engaged earlier on in the planning process.

The debrief opened with discussions relating to the planning of the operation. It was felt that commanders and planners responsible for specialist assets were engaged too late in the planning phase, or in some cases not at all, and this caused concerns and issues:

- It was felt that the West Midlands Police did not recognise the size and significance and impact of the Commonwealth Games and insufficient planning resources were put in place, the focus being on other up-and-coming events.
- There was too much work for a single Specialist Assets Bronze; it was felt that there should have been a lead for each area of business (CBRN, Traffic, Servator etc) to ensure that their views and plans were properly represented.
- The logistics plans had been finalised before the specialist assets' operational plans were completed and so the operational plans had to fit the logistics, not the other way around.
- It was felt that two key areas – the city centre and the road network – were not recognised as a risk as the focus was on the main venues.

The late involvement of specialist assets in the planning phase was a key factor throughout the debrief.

The accreditation system was too prescriptive and did not allow access to buildings for recces or in support of operations. It was recommended by the group that police accreditation is managed internally and that the Code of Conduct is relied upon to ensure professional practice.

'Policing the Air' is a relatively new area of business for UK Policing. The Air Operation was a success. As a result of this, policing at airports is now different. The

police in Victoria have requested a copy of the Air Operation plans to be used as a basis for their plans for the next Commonwealth Games. There is a lot of learning that has come from the operation which is worthy of further debrief.

There was recognition that the success of the operation had been due to getting the right individuals involved and the value of subject matter experts from outside the organisation was highlighted.

It was agreed that the 'SMILE' mnemonic was clever and encapsulated the style, tone and purpose of the policing operation in a simple phrase.

Stop Terrorism : Mitigate protest : Identify vulnerabilities : Lead by example : Engage

A police resource was deployed in the Regional Transport Co-Ordination Centre (RTACC) and proved invaluable, particularly as keeping the road network flowing was key to the delivery of the Games. It was felt it was because the right people were in the right roles, those deployed understood road policing matters.

An app was developed that was used for briefings, local information for Mutual Aid officers. This gave 'what 3 word' locations for feeding, welfare and other provisions along with information about the deployments. It was thought that the app was brilliant and the person who designed it should be credited.



21.Specialist Assets
Matrix v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Debrief 22 – Search and Dog Support

The debrief was conducted at 09:30 – 12:30, Tuesday, 11th October 2022, with four participants.

It was a very engaging session with discussions around the following points.

- The CWG recruitment process for specialist roles didn't recognize past experience, recruitment was based round a job, not a skill set. For example, officers were recruited as a PoISA, and then sent on the PoISA course having no previous experience. Staff with no logistics experience were put in a logistics role, without any previous experience they didn't know what they were doing and so were always "behind the curve", other roles with experienced PoISAs knew what to do and were ahead. Having to learn on the job brought its stresses. There was a lack of appreciation about the needs of some of the specialist teams, such as search, they can't be treated like other roles.
- Officers applied for posts in the CWG but their existing role was not held, so at the end of the CWG they sent back to neighbourhoods and response where their specialist skills are not required. Almost all PoISAs work in Operations, some didn't apply because they didn't want to give up their BAU role in Operations after the event.
- Initially, the CWG roles were promoted as investing in our future, that the CWG would upskill officers and offer valuable experience for moving forward in their careers, but it hasn't resulted in that. A change in the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) partway through affected this – it's as though the new SLT weren't aware of the original promises.
- The request went in during the planning phase that search teams would need feeding at the venues. But the logistics failed with transportation, getting people to the right place, and feeding. Search officers were working at venues for eleven hours without having a meal. The search operation commenced two weeks before games, searching 7pm-7am. POLSAs ended up managing logistics, resourcing, feeding when they should have concentrating on the search issues.

- The same issues were faced by the search dogs. From a dog support basis, a lack of understanding of what was needed. Dog handlers were at least 40 minutes away from the kennels, that's ninety minutes out of duties straight away.
- The Logistics contact system didn't stand up until about nine days after search started because it wasn't seen as the go live day. There should have been a search officer and a dog officer embedded in logistics.
- The Police National Search Centre were requested to be part of the planning and peer review, but they didn't have the capacity to provide this service. Also they were unable to coordinate an independent peer review by sourcing suitably competent search assets to provide the peer review. WMP had to source independent peer review support from other forces (such as South Wales), the Search Centre should have been able to coordinate this, even if they couldn't be part of the review.
- The duty management system wasn't effectively managed to deal with the CWG, this resulted in an endless amount of XL spreadsheets being created – "1000s" were produced, with different spreadsheets for mutual aid. The result was confusing. MYTIME is the WMP duty management system, they should have been brought in at the very beginning of the planning to develop it meet CWG demand.



22.Search inc. Dogs
Matrix v1.1.docx

[Back to Contents](#)

Complete List of Learning Outcomes

The Learning Outcomes are broken down into the debriefing subject themes (tabs on the spreadsheet).



Overall Learning
Outcomes.xlsx

[Back to Contents](#)



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