



Freedom of Information Publication Scheme					
Protective Marking:	Restricted		Publication (Y/N):	N	
Title:	MPS Progress in the field of Information Management Since the Publication of the Stephen Lawrence Independent Review				
Summary:	A bullet pointed summary of activity undertaken by the organisation in response to Mark Ellison's criticisms of MPS records management.				
Branch / OCU:	Assistant Commissioner's Public Inquiry Team				
Date created:	13.07.2015	Review date:	12.07.2016	Version:	1
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MOPI Group	Group 4 (subset 10)	Retention period:	100 years / TNA (Public Inquiry)		

Introduction

1. This document will provide bullet pointed activity undertaken in response to criticisms of MPS records management, made by Mark Ellison QC in the Stephen Lawrence Independent Review. Information contained within this document will be suitable for public release and may be used to respond to media interest following the publication of the Inquiry's terms of reference on 16 July 2015.

Background

1. Within the Stephen Lawrence Independent Review, Mark Ellison states, 'We have considered whether a further Public Inquiry would have the potential to discover more evidence than we have discovered.....the potential for it to discover more than we have may well be limited. Fundamentally this is because of the chaotic state of the historical records held by the MPS. There are incomplete records of the moment; files have been destroyed; and the MPS uses a multitude of file-logging systems. In addition, a natural depletion of records will have occurred over time.' (SLIR, p.16)

Recognition of the Scale of the Records Management Challenge

1. The criticisms of Mark Ellison centered on the retention and retrieval of anti-corruption material. The MPS has been proactive in identifying that such criticisms are applicable to information management across the organisation; data indexes were inaccurate; there was widespread use of standalone systems which meant that documents were not centrally searchable and some material was unregistered and was therefore not retrievable.

2. The organisation recognises the scale of the challenge ahead and the significant investment in resources and digital solutions required to rectify past mistakes and achieve sustainable improvement. Cultural as well as procedural change will be required to place information management at the core of all policing activity.

Oversight and Governance

1. In May 2014 the Commissioner appointed Assistant Commissioner Martin Hewitt as the 'Professionalism' lead for the MPS. As part of this role, AC Hewitt provides the strategic direction for



the MPS response, and oversight at management board level, specifically in relation to the issues arising from the Ellison Report and upcoming Public Inquiry.

Anti Corruption Material

1. A dedicated team of 16 police officers and staff have been assigned to review all anti-corruption material held by the MPS. They have reviewed and indexed 3000 crates of documents, undertaking an initial assessment of material for relevance to current investigations and enquiries as well as the Stephen Lawrence Independent Review.
2. A contract has been signed for the entirety of the anti-corruption archive to be scanned onto a searchable database, facilitating the review and retrieval of relevant information. The scanning process is a major project that will be completed in 2016.
3. Obsolete IT systems used to store anti-corruption material have been reactivated and are being reviewed to identify material relevant to the Stephen Lawrence Independent Review and other current inquiries.
4. The cost of the work outlined above currently stands at £1,543,120 with an anticipated further spend of £2,870,020 in 2015.

Operation FileSafe

1. Operation FileSafe was established to apply learning identified from the Stephen Lawrence Independent Review, Operation Herne and a range of key stakeholders. Strategic oversight is provided by the MPS Information Assurance and Security Board and operational implementation is progressed by a working group of subject experts and key stakeholders.
2. Records management policy has been refreshed and simplified. New processes have been tested, communicated and are in the process of being implemented across the organisation.
3. A dedicated team of police staff has been assigned to review documents held within MPS archives to ensure that material is retained in line with policy and legislation and that it is properly and accurately recorded. This core team of subject experts is supported by officers and staff from across the organisation deployed on short term attachments. To date 63,000 files have been reviewed.

Independent Scrutiny Panel

1. An Independent Scrutiny Panel was established at the request of the Commissioner in order to provide oversight for all strands of Public Inquiry Team work. Their remit includes reviewing MPS plans to improve records management and document retention, commenting on proportionality and efficacy of approach. An Information management industry expert has been appointed to the panel to provide strategic and operational guidance.

Technology

1. Paper documents which were previously unregistered or indexed on standalone systems are in the process of being entered onto a corporate Information Asset Register. Once fully developed, this database will be centrally searchable and will facilitate higher level supervision and monitoring of our records.



2. The number of standalone non-corporate digital systems used within the MPS has been reduced by 75%, increasing corporacy around data storage and allowing staff to search for information more efficiently.

SDS Material

1. Via Operation Herne, 17 obsolete hard drives and digital data storage devices used by the SDS have been transferred onto an operational database and are now searchable and retrievable. A huge quantity of archived documents have been reviewed and copied into this searchable system. This should facilitate provision of information to the forthcoming Public Inquiry into undercover policing.

Review by the Information Commissioner

1. In May 2015, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) published findings from reviews and audits of police forces. Its findings are being considered by the MPS and the implementation of recommendations will fall under the auspices of Operation FileSafe and the MPS Information Assurance and Security Board. The ICO identified a failure when sensitive case material had been left in a police building when it was sold to a private owner. The MPS are ensuring that all police buildings scheduled for disposal are subject to an Op Filesafe review of material held within and are thoroughly searched prior to disposal.

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