



Briefing Document:

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TITLE AND VERSION	Public Inquiry Team - Briefing note re Records Management		
SUMMARY	Initial scoping report to assess resource requirement and make recommendations for Corruption review and Op FileSafe		
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Records Management - Resource requirement

Strategic challenge

The Stephen Lawrence Independent Review published 6 March 2014 highlights the failure of the MPS to locate documentary records relating to historic corruption enquiries.

Record Management (RM) Governance

The Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) - Deputy Commissioner. There is a legal requirement on organization to have a SIRO who holds overall responsibility for Records Management.

RM Policy - AC Martin Hewitt since AC Professionalism post created in May 2014.

Met HQ - [REDACTED] OTH 5

Deputies are Head of Portfolio and Planning Phil Woolf and his Head of RM [REDACTED]. BAND B6

Shared Support Services - [REDACTED] OTH 6

Deputies - Director of Logistic Services Adrian Buckingham and Director of Local Shared Support Services - Liz Church. SSS control physical and personnel assets involved in RM such as Registry and Regional support teams.

Recommendation -

1. There is a lack of clarity re ownership of MPS RM policy and processes which requires review of responsibilities by SIRO.

Corruption review

The impetus to review MPS Record Management of paper material relates to current difficulties in searching corruption material from the early 1990s. Intelligence was held on IT systems that are no longer in operation. Six hard-drives recovered from DPS are being reviewed and initial scoping has identified around 3,000 crates of corruption related material held in Registry and TNT. This includes both registered and unregistered material. Initial assessment is that one third of the crates hold exhibits or surveillance material such as video and audio tapes and stills. It is not believed necessary to view/listen to these as this will already have been done by initial investigating

teams and relevant material recorded on transcripts/case papers. These 1000 crates will however need to be assessed. The remaining 2000 crates are believed to contain primarily paper records, some of which may also be recorded on current DPS databases (Clue 2).

The degree of any data loss is currently unknown and subject to investigation. It has not yet been possible to assess how much of the material held in the crates is also held within the databases recovered and on current DPS IT databases (Clue 2). Completing this assessment will require a review of all the material held. The most efficient way to do this which will also enable the material to be searched in future is through scanning the material onto a database.

FileSafe sweep

MPS operation to locate and appropriately file or destroy material held on BOCUs and incorrectly filed or "lost within [redacted] operational buildings to be searched.

Op FileSafe plan:

Phase 1 - B/OCUs to review their RM processes including record of material FOD'd and stored in TNT, sweep their estate and complete SQL record of material held. B/OCU with security sensitive material will have the opportunity to identify all such material stored and agree bespoke search strategies using a combination of POLSA advice and oversight and DV/strap officers.

Phase 2 - Op Beacon review B/OCU returns to RAG assess premises for Quality assurance and High risk premises searches. Only a small proportion of MPS estate will be subject to full search by independent search team. Proposed around 10% of premises (approx [redacted] buildings) focusing on those assessed through RAG process as High risk or B/OCUs who fail to submit a comprehensive report on material held and their IM processes.

This option requires B/OCUs to take ownership of the problem and achieve a long term improvement in MPS IM. RAG assessment followed by deployment of independent search teams provides organisational confidence that a systematic search has been completed of premises identified as at risk of containing Op Beacon material or with inadequate B/OCU IM processes. The opportunity to appropriately file/dispose of material and implement office management regimes will enable the search team deployments to be completed more efficiently and reduce abstraction of officers from core duties.

Estimated Cost - **£717,000**. Phase 1 cost will be dependent on quality of existing BOCU RM processes and standard of office management. BOCUs will vary considerably in resources they need to deploy to search premises, review material recovered, submit material for storage and complete a detailed schedule of material held. This phase should not be considered as an additional cost to the MPS as BOCUs should already maintain efficient systems compliant with RM policy. BOCUs will require a period of around two months to assess existing RM processes, search premises and appropriately file or dispose of recovered material prior to Phase 2. Phase 2 will generate costs for independent search of high risk premises. The emphasis on High risk premises means average length of search operations is estimated at around 5 days per premises. [redacted] such searches by search teams of 21 officers amounts to 4515 working days. Using the Met Patrol Plus cost of a PC per annum of £58,000 this equates to approximately £717,000 cost.

Recommendation

OTH 6

3. MPS to establish a central MPS "sorting office" to receive, review and arrange filing for both registered and unregistered files. [redacted] is currently preparing a Business case for this project. The Sorting office will ensure BOCUs complete a schedule of content and destruction date. This will improve adherence to RM policy and processes and enable development of a reliable system of searching unregistered material to determine what is held. There is a risk that without RM Quality assurance FileSafe will result in material simply being moved from BOCU premises to storage at TNT without a reliable, searchable record of its content being generated. This will increase storage costs to MPS without resolving the Strategic challenge of being unable to search for relevant material.

Records Management

Scoping of the activity required for the Corruption review and FileSafe has identified risks with current MPS records management in relation to material held at General registry and in TNT storage. RM policy enables BOCU to send unregistered material for storage at TNT. The requirement is that the BOCU retain a record of what is contained in each box and attach a destruction date to the box. BOCU Cmdrs are required to sign off material being sent for storage to ensure this is done. However RM do not have the resources to QA unregistered material sent for storage. RM cannot therefore confirm that BOCUs have maintained a detailed record of what is sent. There is no standard format for BOCUs to record the detail of material sent for storage other than a requirement for them to provide a local URN to TNT. Experience indicates many boxes do not have a destruction date attached or that it has become outdated with advent of MOPI. It is apparent that the RM policy is not consistently complied with.

General Registry - Current record of material held is not 100% accurate due to material lost transferring between locations and failure to return files booked out. Around two to three files requested cannot be located each month. Registry estimate their retrieval rate at 89-99% It is estimated that General Registry holds around 500,000,000 registered documents. Dockets are generally recoverable by searching on key details.

TNT Storage - In the early 2000s the Hayes repository where majority of MPS files was retained was closed. Material was transferred to a smaller site at [REDACTED] and storage of overspill material was contracted to TNT. In addition BOCUs requiring storage space were instructed to send material to TNT. TNT now retain 133,790 TNT boxes of material made up of both registered and unregistered files. These include loose files, TNT boxes and a collection of blue plastic crates. Around 62%, or 85,000 boxes, are unregistered material. The material is divided into 138 collations. One collation refers to all registered files, the remaining 137 are unregistered collations. TNT retain a list of general content of these collations, which BOCU owns them and date created. A collation can range from a single file to a large quantity of boxes. It is the originating BOCUs responsibility to record the content of each box within the collation and RMB do not retain this record. It is not known how BOCUs have recorded content and what, if any, weed and destroy policies they implement. As an example DPS' list of their material enabled files such as Tiberius to be located but is not indexed to enable searching content.

TNT records of what is in a collation vary from simply the name of the BOCU that submitted the material, e.g. "Southwark Borough records" to a description such as "Special Constable Personal files." A review of collation titles indicates that around 85 collations could hold material relevant to the ToR of Public Inquiry Team.

The sum of the TNT invoices for 2013-14 was £697K (ex-VAT). However this sum was inflated by a need to transfer material to TNT. Invoice amounts have reduced to just £100,000 in first quarter of this year due primarily to reduced transport costs.

Recommendation

4. Op FileSafe to require BOCUs to assess local records of material stored in TNT and ensure accurate, detailed and up to date. These records are then to be included on SQL return of material locally stored. As part of this process BOCUs to review disposal dates and ensure all crates have date recorded on outside. BOCUs to authorize destruction of material no longer required for retention under MOPI.

Current Resources available to address the problem

MPS Records Management Governance unit consists of one Band B team leader due to take voluntary redundancy on 29 Aug, three Band Ds, one Band E and a Band G. Half of these staff are deployed on arranging long term storage in National archives. There are two Band D posts for RM compliance which are currently vacant.

MPS RM Repository unit consists of one Band C, 2 Band E and 11 Bands F and G.

The majority of MPS BOCUs have an Information Manager but this post is vacant in some BOCUs and is not generally a full time role. JPS staff on RAA teams are responsible for managing investigation files once they are returned from CPS. This includes sending case files to registry or FOD.

MB have allocated 20 police staff to work on Records Management for AC Professionalism but at present it has only be possible to identify and recruit one member of police staff from the Redeployment pool.

Public Inquiry Team have requested secondment of an HPDS CI for 6 months to lead FileSafe but this has been refused by owning Business group.

Recommendation

5. Op FileSafe will generate large increase in demand on Registry. Additional temporary staff will be required to manage demand and QA material that BOCUs submit for storage. Alternatively operation can be delayed until recommendation 2 of a central "sorting office" is created.

Submitted for your information,

Detective Superintendent Neil Hutchison

MPS - UCPI
PROVISIONALLY
REDACTED