

IN THE MATTER OF THE INQUIRIES ACT 2005

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE INQUIRY RULES 2006

THE LEVESON INQUIRY

EXHIBIT "*DF/P*"
WITNESS STATEMENT OF DICK FEDORCIO

I attach to this statement (as exhibit "*DF/P*") a copy of a letter dated 21.10.02



Working for a safer London

Michael Shurety
Director of HR Services



105 Regency Street
London
SW1P 4AN

Telephone:
Facsimile:
email:

Your ref:

Our ref:

Personal - Addressee only

Mr Dick Fedorcio
Director of Public Affairs
Room 1301
New Scotland Yard

21 October 2002

Dear Dick,

Contract of Employment

Further to my letter of 30 September 2002, I am now writing to let you know the outcome of the discussion at the MPA Remuneration Sub-Committee held on 17 October. As a result of a discussion at an earlier meeting of the Sub-Committee you were granted an extension of one year with an undertaking that this would be reviewed following a more detailed debate about the nature of future senior civil staff appointments.

I am pleased to inform you that the Sub-Committee have now agreed that your appointment as Director of Public Affairs should be on a permanent basis. This will be effective from the 17 October 2002. The other terms and conditions you are currently subject to will continue to apply.

This letter notifies a change to your conditions of service and is issued pursuant to Section 4 of the Employment Rights Act 1996. You are advised to retain this letter as it may form part of your contract of employment.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this letter in more detail, do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Shurety



IN THE MATTER OF THE INQUIRIES ACT 2005

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE INQUIRY RULES 2006

THE LEVESON INQUIRY

EXHIBIT “DF/2”
WITNESS STATEMENT OF DICK FEDORCIO

I attach to this statement (as exhibit “DF/2”) the relevant written policy and procedure documents as set out below:

1	Special Notice 24/98 Corporate Communication Strategy	21 August 1998
2	Special Notice 19-00 “A new policy for relations with the media”	22 September 2000
3	Notices 06-2001 Item 2 “Taking the media on police operations”	Undated
4	Notices 17-2003 Item 5 “Metropolitan Police Service Media Relations Policy”	Undated
5	Media Relations Standard Operating Procedure	5 July 2006
6	MPA Scrutiny of MPS Media and Communications ¹	Undated (but believed to be 5 April 2007)
7	Directorate of Public Affairs: Media Relations Policy (Version 2)	4 June 2008
8	Directorate of Public Affairs SOP: Media Relations Standard Operating Procedure (Version 2)	4 June 2008

¹ This is not in fact an MPS policy or procedures document

Special Notice 24/98

Friday 21 August 1998

Corporate Communication Strategy

 **METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

■ Corporate Communication Strategy

(Deputy Commissioner)

Background

Communication is vital to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to meet the need for information, build understanding amongst our target audiences and harness support. This is widely recognised within the Service as being of benefit to the MPS, its staff and the people of London.

However, many of our communication activities exist in isolation and are not planned within a framework aimed at reinforcing key corporate messages in a co-ordinated and sustained approach. This highlights the need for a Corporate Communication Strategy that provides a focus and structure for our various communication activities and implementation plans. Such a strategy also provides a context for the important task of 'Communicating Our Values' as set out in Strand 3 of The London Beat.

Aim

An integrated Corporate Communication Strategy should seek to build support for and understanding of the MPS by explaining and promoting its plans, activities and achievements.

In doing so, our aim is to:

- strengthen public confidence and trust;
- improve the public perception and satisfaction of the MPS; and
- reassure the public that the police are tackling crime ethically, effectively and professionally without increasing the fear of crime.

If we are successful this will improve our relationship with the people of London who will respect our integrity, appreciate our values, understand our strengths and limitations and acknowledge their active partnership in working for a safer London. At the same time our staff will be fully informed so that they are able to support this direction.

Strategic Communication Framework

Effective communication can help improve and enhance the overall performance, image and reputation of the MPS. A Corporate Communication Strategy must provide a framework which reflects key corporate activities and encompasses:

- projecting the ethics and values of the MPS as set out in the Statement of Our Common Purpose and Values;
- preparing and implementing communication strategies which support and reinforce:
 - The MPS five year strategy - The London Beat;
 - The Annual Policing Plan; and
 - policy initiatives;
- providing communication support for portfolio responsibilities and other corporate and area issues and initiatives;
- providing the communication support to enable the MPS to conduct its operational activity effectively at corporate, headquarters, area and local levels;
- maintaining and improving the relationship between the police and other interested groups through promoting a positive image of the role and work of the police;
- establishing a clear understanding of our aims, objectives, policies and activities at all levels across the MPS;
- integrating internal and external communication; and
- producing MPS communication material that is consistent in appearance in terms of style and content.

Corporate Communication Strategy - *continued*

Each of these will be delivered through proposed actions, detailed products and supporting materials for all individual media and public relations implementation plans which recognise the needs of differing audience targets.

Guiding principles

The development of individual implementation plans must reflect this Strategy and address a set of guiding principles covering objectives, audiences, key themes, media policy, corporate identity guidelines and performance measures. These are set out in the Annexes to this Special Notice.

Audiences

Within each broad audience there will be a large number of specific target audiences. We therefore need to assess each communication need individually and find the appropriate channel to meet this need. We need to adopt the same core message but with different emphases for different audiences.

Key themes

Our success in the future and our ability to police London into the twenty first century depends on us having the right people, doing the right things in the right way.

These three strands are at the heart of our MPS Corporate Strategy and highlight the importance of our staff to its successful implementation. They must be reflected as the key themes which will be incorporated into individual communication strategies as appropriate.

The tools for delivering the Strategy

There is a range of communication tools at our disposal to deliver the Corporate Communication Strategy through the implementation of individual media and public plans. Clearly defined and measurable objectives with specific aims, key messages and target audiences will be needed before selecting which particular tools to use.

To do this, research and monitoring is of paramount importance to establish the audience, their particular issues of importance, the most effective channels of communication for reaching these audiences and to measure the impact and effectiveness of our communication activity.

Underpinning all of our communication activity is the need to maintain the integrity of our image. A consistent corporate style must be adopted and its application in print, publicity and advertising controlled and managed in an informed way.

The tools at our disposal include:

■ **Media relations**

Our relationship with the media is crucial and encompasses three main areas:

- Proactive - actively promoting the policies, work and achievements of the MPS;
- Reactive - Responding quickly and accurately to media inquiries; and
- Media training - To give professional advice and training to officers dealing with the media and assist officers in handling the media at scenes.

Our commitment to openness in working with the media should be reaffirmed and communicated across the MPS.

■ **Public affairs**

We need to manage relationships with key individuals, organisations and groups, especially decision makers and influencers, keeping them informed of MPS initiatives through briefings and regular contact. It may also be necessary, on occasion, to devise lobbying programmes to influence policy development or decisions by other bodies.

Corporate Communication Strategy - *continued*

■ **Publicity and advertising**

Continue to support actively and promote issues through publications, internal communication activities, advertising, marketing, event launches and sponsorship opportunities.

■ **Internal communication**

Our staff are our most valuable asset. It is therefore vital that we keep them informed in a timely and appropriate manner. We must continue to develop effective means of communicating our strategic priorities to every member of the MPS.

■ **New technology**

Recent advances in technology need to be developed further to support our existing communications tools. In particular, the Internet for external communication and the Intranet for internal communication will be valuable assets.

Performance measures

A continuing process of information gathering and monitoring should support the implementation of the Strategy to measure its effectiveness.

Specific research programmes will be established to evaluate media coverage and advertising effectiveness.

Implementation

This Strategy will be implemented through the development of the Directorate of Public Affairs (DPA) annual action plans at a corporate, area and portfolio level. They will use the resources available to the DPA in its budget and form the basis for advice, guidance and influence by DPA staff in helping other MPS staff plan and develop their communication needs and activities.

This Corporate Communication Strategy was endorsed by Policy Board on Wednesday 24 June 1998.

John Stevens

Key themes

■ The right people

The MPS has a world class reputation for the quality and professionalism of its people and service.

● Officer safety

The profile of officer safety including policy training and the provision of equipment, has probably never been higher. The ability to deal effectively with conflict situations is a vital skill for any police officer.

The aim is to increase officers' ability to deal with violent or potentially violent conflict in safety, to increase public confidence in their effectiveness and in the appropriateness of their use of force.

● Career opportunities

We encourage and support professional development and expect all staff to strive for continuous improvement and to seek consistently high standards.

The MPS tenure policy will help our aim to have personnel with broad experience at all areas.

● Recruitment

We are maintaining our recruitment programme and plan to recruit 1650 constables in the 1998/99 financial year.

The MPS is committed to equal opportunities and ensures that all staff have the opportunity to develop and acquire relevant skills.

■ The right things

We must ensure that we are doing the right things effectively and efficiently.

● Partnerships

Working in partnership provides effective solutions and can have a positive effect on our relationships with communities and other organisations by increasing a sense of trust and understanding.

The MPS response to the Crime and Disorder Bill and our approach to community safety will provide opportunities to project our positive approach to partnership and consultation.

● Performance

We concentrate most of our efforts in three key areas, tackling crime, patrolling and responding to calls from the public.

We are continually striving to improve our performance and intend to increase crime detection and reduce crimes to make London a safer place.

Public satisfaction with policing in London remains high with 93% expressing satisfaction with response to 999 calls, the highest of any metropolitan force.

● Working practices

We are becoming more intelligence led rather than event driven, making greater use of targeting, technology, surveillance, informants and forensic science.

Corporate Communication Strategy - continued

The way in which murders are investigated within the MPS has undergone change as has the approach to the training of detective constables.

- Technology

The MPS uses Information Technology to support many operations on the beat, in police stations and in headquarters buildings, the focus being on helping police officers do their jobs. The next generation of technology for police radio and command and control (C3I) is also being developed.

Systems available for use by officers include OTIS, CRIMINT and GIS.

- The right way

We are committed to policing in the right way.

- Accountability

The creation of a Mayor for London, a Greater London Authority and a directly elected Metropolitan Police Authority will increase our accountability and build even stronger partnerships with local authorities and the communities we serve.

- Values and integrity

All our people must be honest, fair, sensitive and deserving of public trust. The vast majority of MPS staff act with professionalism and integrity. While genuine error can be understood and often forgiven there is no place for deliberate unethical behaviour, dishonesty or corruption. We will deal with these speedily and without compromise to inspire public confidence in our investigation of complaints.

- Best value

To ensure that we continue to maintain and improve on our current levels of performance and to ensure that every penny is spent wisely we are adopting a strategic approach towards improving delivery of best value over the next three to five years.

Corporate Communication Strategy - *continued*

Annex B

Communication principles

In devising any strategy we need to bear in mind the environment in which we operate and should consider:

- why do we need to communicate?
- what has been said so far?
- what are the potential benefits?
- what advantages/disadvantages do we start with?
- who is our intended target audience and what is the current prevailing opinion within this audience?

In proposing any communication activity we need clear objectives which are SMART - specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely.

Audiences

Within each broad audience there will be a large number of specific target audiences. We therefore need to assess each communication need individually and find the appropriate channel to meet this need. We need to adopt the same core message but with different emphases for different audiences.

It is vital to segment each audience according to their needs/concerns:

- who are the key audiences?
- what is the agenda of each audience?
- what are the key concerns of each audience?
- what does the MPS wish to achieve with each audience?
- what response do we want from each audience?

Target audiences can include:

- staff;
- Londoners:
 - generally;
 - by area or location;
 - ethnic groups;
 - special interest groups;
- media:
 - print;
 - broadcast;
 - national;
 - regional;
 - local;
 - specialist;

Corporate Communication Strategy - continued

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Ti
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- politicians:
 - Members of Parliament;
 - London councillors;
- public affairs:
 - business leaders;
 - opinion formers;
 - decision makers;
 - community leaders;
 - the Home Office;
 - the Government Office for London;
 - the Local Government Association;
 - the Association for London Government;
 - other police forces;
 - the Association of Chief Police Officers/Police Federation/Superintendents Association;
- Metropolitan Police Committee;
- Shadow Metropolitan Police Authority;
- visitors to London.

Performance measures

A continuing process of information gathering and monitoring should support the implementation of the Strategy to measure its effectiveness. Points to be considered include:

- how well did we get our message across?;
- did we achieve our objectives?;
- did we reach our target audience?;
- what tangible results can be seen for our efforts?;
- what resources did we use?;
- did we get best value from them?;
- could we have done it better?

Specific evaluation programmes are being established for media coverage and advertising effectiveness.

Corporate Communication Strategy - *continued*

Annex C

Media policy

The public has a huge interest in law and order issues and the media pays significant attention to matters that involve the police and crime. The MPS has a duty to let the media know things that should be in the public domain. However, there needs to be a balance between this, protecting the rights of a victim and pursuing the successful conclusion of an investigation.

The aim is to be both proactive and reactive when dealing with the media. By being proactive we intend to gain maximum media coverage and understanding of the MPS policies, actions and decisions. By being reactive we set out to put the MPS point of view to the media when asked to respond to a situation or issue in which we are involved or have an interest.

It is our policy to be open and honest in dealing with the media and respond to their enquiries within their deadlines as far as possible. We will tell the media things which:

- are in the best interests of the public to know about;
- help to show the public the way in which the police go about their work; and
- help to build public confidence in the police.

Categories of information

The information provided will be in one of the following categories:

- **For offer:** This is information we want the media to use.
- **If asked:** This is information we release if asked specifically about something.
- **Non-attributable:** This is information that we give to the media and which may be published, but the MPS is not quoted as the source.
- **Not for publication:** This is information that we give to the media and which they are not expected to publish, as it is for their guidance only.

Who speaks to the media?

The question of who speaks to the media often differs depending on the subject or issue but, as a general rule, the first point of contact between the media and the MPS is through the DPA Press Bureau or one of its area press offices. However, many journalists have direct contact with police stations and individual officers.

Whenever and wherever possible steps are taken to put the media in direct contact with the officer who is directly responsible for the item of interest. When this is not possible the DPA will seek to gather the facts and ensure that a suitable response is provided to the media within their deadlines.

Divisional press liaison officers have been developed with the aim of providing a better, more effective service to the local media. As well as meeting a local responsive need they are encouraged to take a proactive approach and develop positive relationships with the media serving their area.

Corporate Communication Strategy - *Continued*

Annex D

Corporate identity guidelines

All internal and external communication should be presented in an effective, consistent and professional style. The logo is the primary visual means by which someone or something can be identified as part of the MPS. Whenever the logo appears it can be instantly recognised as the symbol of the attitude and the personality of the Service. The public know that they can seek assistance from a place or person bearing the logo. Its instant recognition helps to generate pride and confidence. It confers our ownership of the property or service which is branded with the logo.

The logo comprises two elements, the Coat of Arms and the words 'Metropolitan Police'. These have been designed to fit together in two formats, portrait and landscape, which provide differing emphases on the Coat of Arms or the words.



Landscape



Portrait

The preferred version for general use is landscape, especially where it will be seen by external audiences.

The portrait version provides an alternative where, due to design limitations, the landscape version does not sit comfortably on the item to which it is being applied. The MPS stationery is an example. The use of this alternative version is strictly controlled and permission must be sought from DPA Public Relations Branch before proceeding.

Corporate slogan

The corporate slogan 'Working for a Safer London' has been introduced to form part of the landscape logo for use only in appropriate circumstances.



It has been designed in a handwriting style and its size, format and juxtaposition to the logo are also strictly controlled. The words cannot be amended in any way.

Guidance

To ensure that the corporate identity, the logo and slogan, is reproduced in a consistent style and within an agreed context the DPA is producing guideline documents which will be made available to all MPS branches with a direct responsibility for commissioning of designing materials. This will also cover the use of the MPS Armorial Bearings. Copies will also be made available to outside suppliers who need them. Advice on the appropriate use and application of logos and the slogan can be obtained from DPA 5 (Public Relations) on extn 62351.

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Cancelled by [Item 4 of Notices 26-06 of 8 July 2006](#)

See also [Item 2 of Notices 6-01 of 7 February 2001](#)

See also [Item 5 of Notices 17/03 of 23 April 2003](#)

Special Notice 19-00

Friday 22 September 2000

A new policy for relations with the media

A new policy for relations with the media

When I launched my policing pledge for Londoners I made it clear that we needed to improve our relationship with the media. As an organisation we have so many good stories to tell but far too many fail to reach the viewers, listeners and readers or those who report on the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).

We therefore, need to take a new approach to our working with the media by developing more effective and positive relationships with journalists. This is a job for us all, not just the Directorate of Public Affairs (DPA).

Over the years, I have seen the Met become increasingly cautious in its media relations and become far too reactive. **This cautiousness can breed suspicion and contempt, while an open approach tends to breed confidence and respect.** If we are to gain the goodwill, confidence and support of the general public and achieve our aim of making London a safer place, we need to re-engage with the media and seize every opportunity to be much more proactive.

I want to see Metropolitan Police officers and civil staff representing the Service through the media, speaking up about their achievements, correcting inaccuracies and just as importantly, explaining why things may not have gone as we would have liked.

Our policy

The public has a huge interest in law and order issues and the media pays significant attention to matters that involve policing and crime and therefore we must be both proactive and reactive.

By being proactive we intend to gain maximum media coverage and understanding of MPS policies, actions and decisions.

By being reactive we set out to put the MPS point of view to the media when asked to respond to a situation or issue in which we are involved or have an interest.

It is our policy to be open and honest in dealing with the media and respond to their enquiries within their deadlines as far as possible. We will tell the media things which:

are in the best interests of the public to know about;

help to show the public the way in which the police go about their work; and

help to build public confidence in the police.

We have a duty to let the media know things that should be in the public domain. In the course of our work we gather information which can be released to the media for policing purposes, such as crime and road accident prevention. However, in doing so we need to balance the policing benefit against protecting the rights of any individual or victim and ensuring the successful conclusion of any investigation.

Providing information and talking to the media

Our aim must be for staff to provide the media with factual information about incidents, cases, investigations or issues they are involved in, providing that an embargo would not be broken or disclosure would compromise an investigation, operation or the judicial process.

There will be situations when it would be inappropriate for officers and civil staff to comment, such as *with issues of security, terrorism and other critical incidents* where there are procedures in place and/or a dedicated spokesperson will be appointed.

However, as a general rule, unless specific instructions exist the principles are:

Operational information

Inspectors and above are authorised to speak to the media about their own areas of responsibility.

Where appropriate, officers below the rank of Inspector may speak to the media but only with the approval of a senior officer.

Support staff and general matters

Support staff should only talk about their role in a specific investigation or operation with the agreement of the officer-in-charge.

Heads of civil staff branches or departments should determine at what level it would be appropriate for their own staff to comment.

General matters such as personnel, financial costs, contracts, matters of commercial sensitivity and so on should be referred to the lead support department.

Policy matters

Any media requests for information or comment regarding *lifetime* issues, policy matters or events that could bring the Service into disrepute or dispute should be referred to operational command unit (OCU) senior management, branch or departmental heads, the local DPA press office or 24 hour Press Bureau at Scotland Yard.

Implementation

Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) officers, chief superintendents and detective chief superintendents in charge of OCUs, and heads of branches and departments, must ensure that officers under their command are fully briefed as to the extent to which factual information may be supplied and by whom.

When confidence and trust is established there may be occasions when senior officers will feel able to talk to reporters on an 'off the record' basis – *dealing with matters not for public disclosure, explaining reasons for maintaining confidentiality and specifying what might be published.*

It will be for OCU commanders and heads of branches to decide at what levels within their own areas of responsibility such discretion may be exercised. If there is any doubt about this, advice must be sought from the DPA or enquiries referred direct to them.

This approach in dealing with the media will involve risks, disappointments and anxieties, but officers

who act and speak in good faith may be assured of my support. I fully accept that if these measures are to succeed some mistakes will be made in the process. But I will not tolerate any officer who discloses information to the media for financial gain or favour. They can expect to be dealt with through the criminal or disciplinary process.

Supply of information to the Press Bureau and local Directorate of Public Affairs press officers

I would like to see the flow of information to the DPA speeded-up. On many occasions points of fact can be dealt with at a lower level and it is not necessary for OCU commanders or investigating officers to be contacted, if there are legitimate reasons why information should not be disclosed to the media, press officers should be informed.

Those officers who speak direct to reporters should always tell the DPA. This will allow for statements to be prepared to deal with any follow-up enquiries following publication or broadcast.

Database of lines to take

The DPA has put together a database of 'lines to take' on current issues and subjects. These can be found on the DPA intranet site.

Liaison with the local press

Many borough OCUs have their own dedicated press liaison officers whose role it is to brief local newspapers. I would encourage officers who have dealt with cases or issues that would benefit from local media coverage to tell their OCU press liaison officer.

Taking the media on police operations

I am keen to see more media being taken along on police operations. This will give a good insight into policing and how we are tackling crime. Officers planning such operations should always consider the media as part of their overall strategy. The ultimate decision will rest with OCU commanders but it is important that the DPA are consulted and the appropriate guidelines followed.

Electronic media

Many people access our website, including the media who use it to obtain news and research material. I would ask those OCUs who have their own sites to ensure that information is current and regularly updated.

Training

I want to see this new policy being re-enforced at every level. Basic training should touch on the general concept of the new policy, while intermediate and higher training should stress the advantages to be derived from the avoidance of unnecessary secrecy and the achievement of mutual trust between the Service and the media.

Those officers whose role may involve giving broadcast media interviews should contact their local DPA press office about specific training courses.

Press identification card

The bona fide media should carry a 'press identification card' that is recognised by ACPO. The card does not carry an automatic right of access to scenes of incident or authority to pass police lines. However, I would encourage officers to be helpful to cardholders and where possible try to accommodate their needs.

Foreign journalists based in London may not hold the ACPO press card but the same level of co-operation should be extended to them.

Making progress

The success of this policy will depend on everyone being more open and flexible with the media. At times, this will be challenging, but I am keen to see it progressed and implemented at every level throughout the Service.

John Stevens
Commissioner

I look forward to seeing the results.

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Taking the media on police operations gives the public a good insight into policing and how the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) is detecting and preventing crime and disorder in London. The new media policy (see Special Notice 19/00 of 22 September 2000) encourages officers to consider the media when planning police operations.

Following the implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), changes have been made to the guidelines for taking the media on police operations and filming with the MPS.

Whilst there is merit for considering a media presence, officers need to be aware of an individual's human rights when considering allowing the media to accompany them.

The ultimate decision for taking the media on police operations will rest with the operational command unit commander, in consultation with the Directorate of Public Affairs (DPA). Officers must consider and clearly record the reasons why it was felt to be beneficial for allowing the media to accompany police, before any operation takes place.

Taking the media on police operations should be considered where it would:

- ☐ be of significant public interest;
- ☐ help to prevent disorder or crime (for example, by acting as a deterrent to criminals or that informing the public of police action could lead to greater public confidence and co-operation); and
- ☐ improve the media/public understanding of police practices and procedures.

The media *must not* be taken on any operations involving juveniles.

Officers should consider whether there is likely to come a time when a media presence could:

- ☐ interfere with an individual's right for their private and family life, their home and correspondence; or
- ☐ interfere with an individual's right to a fair trial.

(Both rights are protected by the ECHR.)

The officer-in-charge of the operation is responsible for ensuring that the media are not permitted to act in a way which breaches the rights of an individual contained in the ECHR.

Where the media are invited to attend police operations, their involvement must be strictly controlled, with appropriate support from a DPA representative. The officer-in-charge will have a duty to ensure that there is no:

- unjustifiable distress or harassment to those being investigated;
- prejudice to the innocent;
- distress to members of the public; and
- interference with the right of an individual to a fair trial.

You should also:

- consider and record why the attendance of the media was felt justified;
- allow the media to attend relevant briefings to give them a good understanding of the event;
- expect those attending to sign and abide by the conditions of the relevant MPS Indemnity Agreement (see Annex A) and Notes to Media Representatives (see Annex B);
- remind the media that under the ECHR they must not broadcast or publish any material, photographs or film that would interfere with an individual's right to a fair trial;
- remind the media, under the ECHR that:
 - the broadcasting or publishing of any material, photographs or film of an individual, their family and private life, their home or correspondence could interfere with a person's right to privacy;
 - entering private property without permission could interfere with a person's right to privacy;
 - taking film or photographs on private property without permission could interfere with a person's right to privacy;
- disclose to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) that there was a media presence during the operation; and
- remind the media that any material, photographs or film that they produce as a result of the operation may be required by the CPS as evidence.

Enquiries about this Notice should be made to Chris Webb, Deputy Director, DPA on extn 62675.

Write the item number and date of this Notice against Special Notice 19/00 of 22 September 2000.

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Public Affairs)*

Since the Commissioner launched the new policy for dealing with the media in September 2000, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) has seen a considerable improvement in its relationship with the media and, in turn, greater and more positive coverage of what we do to make London a safer place.

However, there is more to be done, because there are so many good news stories that still fail to reach the viewers, listeners and readers or those who report on the MPS.

We therefore need to refresh our approach to working with the media by developing effective and positive relationships with journalists from the wide range of news organisations that cover our work. This remains a job for everyone, not just the Directorate of Public Affairs (DPA) and should encompass the national, local, minority-ethnic and specialist media that serve the capital and its residents.

It is recognised that some people are cautious about dealing with the media, but over-caution can breed suspicion and contempt, while an open approach tends to encourage confidence and respect. If we are to gain the goodwill, confidence and support of the public we serve and achieve our vision of *making London the safest major city in the world*, we need to engage with the media and seize every opportunity to be far more proactive.

A wide range of Metropolitan Police officers and civil staff should represent the Service through the media, promoting achievements, correcting inaccuracies and just as importantly, explaining why things may not have gone as we would have liked.

This updated policy restates our commitment to building productive dialogue with all sections of the media and reflects the experience gained by the organisation, as well as individual comments and feedback since it was last issued.

Our Media Policy

The public has a huge interest in law and order issues and the media pays significant attention to matters that involve policing and crime and we must therefore be both proactive and reactive.

By being proactive we intend to gain maximum media coverage and an understanding of MPS policies, actions and decisions.

By being reactive we set out to put the MPS point of view to the media when we need to respond to a situation or issue in which we are involved or have an interest.

It is our policy to be open and honest in dealing with the media and respond to their

enquiries within their deadlines as far as possible

We will tell the media things which:

- are in the public interest to know about;
- help to show the public the way in which the police go about their work; and
- help to build public confidence in the police service.

We have a duty to let the media know things that should be in the public domain. In the course of our work we gather information that can be released to the media for policing purposes, such as crime appeals and road accident prevention.

However, in doing so we need to balance the policing benefits against protecting the rights of any individual or victim and ensuring the successful conclusion of any investigation. Our media handling must not compromise or prejudice any live investigation or the principles of natural justice, including the Data Protection Act or European Convention on Human Rights.

Talking to the Media

The aim must be for staff to provide the media with factual information about incidents, cases, investigations or issues they are involved in, providing that an embargo would not be broken or disclosure would compromise an investigation, operation or the judicial process.

There will be situations when it would be inappropriate for officers and civil staff to comment, such as with issues of security, terrorism and other critical incidents, where there are procedures in place and/or a dedicated spokesperson appointed (see later section on disclosure of information to journalists). Likewise, the MPS has firm guidelines concerning the identification of individuals who feature in police investigations but who have not been charged with any criminal offence (see the Borough Press Liaison Officers Media and Internal Communications Guide on the DPA intranet site).

However, as a general rule unless specific instructions exist the principles are:

■ Operational information

Inspectors and above are authorised to speak to the media about their own areas of responsibility.

Where appropriate, officers below the rank of inspector may speak to the media but only with the approval of a senior officer of inspector rank or above. An example of this may be when there is a sergeant or constable with a specialist role, responsibilities or knowledge.

■ Support staff and general matters

Support staff should only talk about their role in a specific investigation or operation with the agreement of the officer-in-charge.

Heads of civil staff branches or departments should determine at what level it would be appropriate for their own staff to comment about matters that relate to the unit's responsibilities and functions.

General matters such as human resources, financial costs, contracts, matters of commercial sensitivity and so on should be referred to the lead support department.

B Policy matters

Any media requests for information or comment regarding Met wide issues, policy matters or events that could bring the Service into disrepute or dispute, should be referred to the operational command unit (OCU) commander, head of branch or department, the local DPA press office or the 24 hour Press Bureau at New Scotland Yard (NSY).

B Letters for publication

On occasion newspapers and magazines may publish articles that are inaccurate or misleading about the MPS. Officers and support staff who wish to respond in writing to correct such inaccuracies should consult with their appropriate DPA press office before submitting letters for publication to ensure there is no duplication or that the matter is not being addressed in some other way by the DPA or a senior officer.

Disclosure of information to journalists

There will be occasions, for investigative and evidential purposes, when investigating officers will want to withhold putting certain information into the public domain. Whilst the publication or broadcast of this information may not necessarily be in breach of the Contempt of Court Act 1981, it could nevertheless disadvantage the investigation or subsequent prosecution.

Where officers or civil staff become aware that a media organisation is planning to print or broadcast material that could impact on an investigation or subsequent prosecution, they should seek advice from DPA.

In high profile investigations, there must be an identified spokesperson and an appointed DPA press officer. It is unlikely in such cases that the senior investigating officer (SIO) would wish any officer or support staff to divulge information without his/her express permission.

SIOs in such cases must make their media handling policy for the investigation clear to their teams through briefings and recording entries in their decision logs. This must include clearly identifying to all staff the appointed DPA press officer/s and other named officer/s who are authorised to speak to journalists.

If inappropriate or unauthorised disclosure to the media is believed to have occurred, the Directorate of Professional Standards (DPS) may conduct an investigation that could lead to criminal or disciplinary proceedings.

Off the record

In order to build better understanding and closer working relationships with journalists, there may be occasions when police officers wish to speak 'off the record' – dealing with matters not for public disclosure, explaining reasons for maintaining confidentiality and specifying what might be published. When doing so, officers must stick to the facts of the case and should not speculate or let their own personal views or prejudices influence the discussions.

It will be for the OCU commanders and heads of branches to decide at what levels

within their own areas of responsibility such discretion may be exercised. If there is any doubt about speaking off the record, advice must be sought from the DPA or enquiries referred direct to them.

Supplying information to DPA press officers

Those officers who speak direct to reporters should always tell the DPA – either the 24-hour Press Bureau at NSY or their local DPA press office. There are likely to be follow-up calls from other media organisations following publication or broadcast of news stories. Making DPA aware will allow for appropriate statements to be prepared in advance to deal with subsequent enquiries.

There are occasions when points of fact required by DPA can be dealt with at a lower level and it is not necessary for OCU commanders or investigating officers to be contacted. If there are legitimate reasons why information should not be disclosed to the media, press officers should be informed.

The 'Good News Box'

Despite the considerable amount of proactive work undertaken by the DPA and the MPS generally there are still many items of good news that are not reaching colleagues within the Service or – through the media – the wider public.

To enhance the gathering of positive news, for both an internal and external audience, an e-mail account with the internal address GoodNews @ NSY has been set up. All MPS staff are encouraged to e-mail details of good news that they consider warrant publicity. DPA will assess this information and pass it to the relevant member of our staff to pursue – for instance, one of the Area Press and Publicity Officers or The Job newspaper.

The Good News Box is designed to capture positive news and stories that may otherwise go unreported. Most boroughs and MPS departments already liaise with their relevant press office or DPA unit and pass on positive results and the Good News Box is designed to be an additional line of communication, not a replacement.

Media advice and database of lines to take

The DPA has an established set of instructions for Press Bureau staff that provide advice on what can and cannot be said to journalists on a wide range of subjects and issues. These – together with the latest Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) media guidelines and a database of 'the official line' to take on current topics can be found on the DPA Intranet site.

Liaison with the local press

Many borough OCUs have their own dedicated press liaison officers whose role it is to brief local media. Officers who have dealt with cases or issues that would benefit from local media coverage should make sure they inform their OCU press liaison officer.

Taking the media on notice operations

Taking the media along on police operations gives a good insight into policing and how

we are tackling crime. Officers planning such operations should always consider the media as part of their overall strategy. The ultimate decision will rest with OCU commanders, but it is important that the DPA is consulted, the guidelines followed and the appropriate *indemnity agreement* and *note to media representatives* (attached at Annex A and Annex B) are completed and signed.

When the media contact police officers direct for access to police operations the caller should be referred to the local area press office or the Press Bureau at NSY who will co-ordinate such requests and ensure that appropriate guidelines are followed.

There will be occasions when it will not always be possible to allow the media access on police operations, for example, for security reasons or where firearms are likely to be involved. In such cases, the request should be politely declined and an explanation given as to why access is being refused, for example, for security reasons or because firearms could be present and so on.

Television documentaries and dramas

The MPS receives numerous approaches and requests from television production companies for co-operation with the making of television documentaries and dramas. While many of these provide opportunities to project the work and achievements of the MPS and possibly generate income, they can be time-consuming and require considerable resources to enable them to proceed. There can also be occasions when the proposals may be in conflict with one another.

All approaches from television documentary or drama programmes should be filtered through the DPA who will consult with the relevant units and officers to decide whether to pursue the proposal. Where there is a potential for income generation, negotiations with the television production company will be conducted through the Sponsorship Manager in DPCS.

Electronic media

An increasing number of people regularly access our Internet website (including the media) and use it to obtain news and research material. The MPS Intranet is also a valuable source of news and information for MPS employees. All OCUs must therefore ensure that information on their sites is accurate, current and regularly updated. Advice on this can be obtained from the Directorate of Information e.comms Team in Room 1317 at NSY on extn 63537.

Training

This media policy must be reinforced at every level. Basic training should touch on the general concept of the media policy, while intermediate and higher training should stress the advantages to be derived from the avoidance of unnecessary secrecy and the achievement of mutual trust between the Service and the media.

DPA press officers can provide media training to officers from units and boroughs who have to give media interviews as part of their normal operational duties.

Strategic media training, in particular for SIOs, is delivered by members of the DPA Senior Management Team. External media specialists are contracted to provide

training for OCU commanders and ACPO officers.

Further details of media training opportunities can be obtained from your appropriate DPA press office or from the Chief Press Officer at NSY.

Press Identification Card

The bona fide media should carry a 'UK Press Card' that is recognised by ACPO. The card does not carry an automatic right of access to the scene of an incident or authority to pass police lines. However, officers are expected to be helpful to cardholders and where possible try to accommodate their needs.

Foreign journalists based in London may not hold the ACPO recognised card. Where possible co-operation should be extended to them on production of appropriate/current ID and, if necessary, following consultation with DPA.

Making progress

Relations between the police and the media in London are inevitably complex and at times difficult. An approach that seeks to be as open and helpful as constraints allow will inevitably involve risks and sometimes disappointments. To minimise this ACPO officers, chief superintendents and detective chief superintendents in charge of OCUs, heads of branches and departments, must ensure that officers under their command are fully briefed as to the extent to which factual information may be supplied and by whom.

It is accepted that if these measures are to succeed, some mistakes may be made in the process. The MPS will, however not tolerate any officer who improperly discloses information (either deliberately or recklessly) to the media (for example, for personal gain or contrary to the media handling policy set out by an SIO).

The success of this policy depends on everyone being open and flexible with the media. Nevertheless, MPS staff must always be mindful of the effect that disclosure of information could have on an investigation or subsequent prosecution.

Whilst at times this approach will be challenging, it will ultimately be of benefit to us as individuals, to our OCUs, our departments and the MPS as a whole.

Enquiries

Enquiries about this Notice should be made to Chris Webb, Deputy Director, DPA on extn 62675.

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METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE

MEDIA RELATIONS STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURES

Policy Contact: Chris Webb, extn 62675

Foreword

Policing in general and the MPS in particular, operate under intense media scrutiny and engaging with journalists can be daunting for those unfamiliar with the way the media operates.

I am committed to openness, improving the way in which we communicate - internally and externally - and to ensuring that everyone knows and understands our work, our key messages, aims and achievements.

Whilst we recognise that some people are understandably cautious about dealing with the media, an open approach is more likely to encourage confidence and respect. If we are to continue gaining the goodwill, confidence and support of the communities we serve and succeed in *working together for a safer London*, we need to engage with the media from an early stage. We must seize every opportunity to be proactive, whilst recognising that we also need to react to situations in a measured and balanced way.

This remains a job for everyone, not just the Directorate of Public Affairs (DPA) and must encompass the national, local, minority ethnic and specialist media that service the capital and its communities.

This updated document re-enforces our commitment to building effective dialogue with all sections of the media and takes into account organisational changes as well as feedback, since it was last issued. Interaction with journalists and reporters should be seen as the norm rather than the exception to the rule

Sir Ian Blair

Commissioner

**This document sets out standard operating procedures in support of the
MPS Media Relations Policy**

Talking to the Media

The aim must be for staff to provide the media with factual information about incidents, cases, investigations or issues they are personally involved in, providing that an embargo would not be broken or disclosure would not compromise an investigation, operation or the judicial process.

There will be occasions when it would be inappropriate for officers and police staff to comment, such as with issues of security, terrorism and other critical incidents, where there are procedures in place and/or a dedicated spokesperson appointed (see later section on disclosure of information to journalists). Likewise, the MPS has clear guidelines concerning the identification of individuals who feature in police investigations but who have not been charged with any criminal offence (see the Borough Press Liaison Officers Media and Internal Communications Guide on the DPA Intranet site).

However as a general rule, unless specific instructions exist, the principles are:

Operational information

Inspectors and above are authorised to speak to the media about their own areas of responsibility.

Where appropriate officers below the rank of inspector may speak to the media, but only with the approval of a senior officer of inspector rank or above. An example of this may be when there is a sergeant or constable with a specialist role, responsibilities or knowledge or Safer Neighbourhood teams, where the team Sergeant should be encouraged to build links with local newspapers on a regular basis.

Police staff and general matters

Police staff should only talk about their role in a specific investigation or operation with the agreement of the officer-in-charge.

Heads of police staff branches or departments should determine at what level it would be appropriate for their own staff to speak about matters that relate to the unit's responsibilities and functions.

Contractors and Consultants

Consultants or contractors who are approached by the media should initially refer requests to their employing Operational Command Unit (OCU) or Branch. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for a contractor or consultant to talk to the media about their role, but this must only be

undertaken following permission from the OCU commander or the Head of Branch.

OCU commanders and heads of branches must ensure that all contractors and consultants are aware of this policy.

Policy matters

Any media requests for information or comment regarding Met-wide issues, policy matters or events that could bring the Service into disrepute or dispute, should be referred to the OCU commander, head of branch or department and either the local DPA press office or the 24-hour Press Bureau at New Scotland Yard (NSY).

Responding to Inaccuracies

It can be extremely frustrating when the media publish or broadcast a story that is either inaccurate, misleading or gives an unfair interpretation of the facts. Sometimes a response is needed to clarify the situation or the Met's position.

Officers or members of police staff who wish to respond to an unfair article about a particular OCU or an individual should always seek advice from their relevant DPA press officer. Where it is felt appropriate to submit a letter for publication, the relevant Head of Branch, OCU commander or line manager will be asked to correspond with the news organisation concerned. This approach ensures a co-ordinated corporate response

Individual officers or police staff wishing to write their own letters for publication should seek advice from their OCU commander about whether it is appropriate for them to do so

Disclosure of investigative information to journalists

There will be occasions, for investigative and evidential purposes, when investigating officers will want to withhold putting certain information into the public domain. Whilst the publication or broadcast of this information may not necessarily be in breach of the Contempt of Court Act 1981, it could nevertheless disadvantage the investigation or subsequent prosecution. Where officers or police staff become aware that a media organisation is planning to print or broadcast material that could prejudice an investigation or subsequent prosecution, they should seek urgent advice from DPA.

In high profile investigations, there must be an identified spokesperson and an appointed DPA press officer. It is unlikely in such cases that the senior investigating officer (SIO) would wish any officer or police staff to divulge information without his/her express permission.

SIOs in such cases must make their media handling policy for the investigation clear to their teams through briefings and recording entries in their decision logs. This must include clearly identifying to all staff the appointed DPA press officer/s and any other named officers who are authorised to speak to journalists.

'Off the record'

In order to build better understanding and closer working relationships with journalists, there may be occasions when police officers wish to provide guidance. This is commonly known as speaking 'off the record'¹ - dealing with matters that are not for public disclosure, explaining reasons for maintaining confidentiality and specifying what might be published. When doing so, officers must adhere to the facts of the case and should not speculate or let their own personal views or prejudices influence the discussions.

Misunderstandings can sometimes occur about what 'off the record' means. Some journalists interpret it as being completely non-reportable, whilst others believe that they can report what is said but not attribute it to the individual who said it. It is therefore advisable that before giving guidance of this sort, the officer/police staff member clarifies the basis on which it is being provided.

It will be for OCU commanders and heads of branches to decide at what levels within their own areas of responsibility such discretion may be exercised. If there is any doubt about offering *off the record* guidance, advice should be sought from the DPA or enquiries referred direct to them.

Promoting our Work

Liaison with the local press

Many borough OCUs have their own dedicated press liaison officers (BPLOs) whose role it is to brief local newspaper about local issues and events. Officers who have dealt with cases or issues that would benefit from local media coverage should make sure that they inform their BPLO.

Taking the media on police operations

Taking the media on police operations gives a good insight into policing and how we are tackling crime. Officers planning such operations should always consider the media as part of their overall strategy. The ultimate decision to take them will rest with the OCU commander, but it is important that the DPA is consulted, the guidelines followed and the appropriate *indemnity agreement* and *note to media representatives* (attached at Annex A and Annex B) are completed, signed and retained. In addition, DPA press officers and journalists must be included in any health and safety risk assessment.

When the media contact police officers directly for access to police operations, the caller should be referred to the local DPA press office or the Press Bureau at NSY who will co-ordinate such requests and ensure that appropriate guidelines are followed.

If it is not possible to allow the media access on a police operation, a clear and straightforward explanation should be given as to why access is being refused or restricted.

Television documentaries and dramas

The MPS receives numerous approaches and requests from television

production companies for co-operation with the making of television documentaries and dramas. While many of these provide opportunities to promote the work and achievements of the MPS and possibly generate income, they can be time-consuming and require considerable resources to enable them to proceed. There can also be occasions when the proposals may be in conflict with one another.

All approaches from television documentary or drama programmes should be filtered through the DPA, who will consult with the relevant units and officers to decide whether to pursue the proposal. Where there is a potential for income generation, negotiations with the television production company will be conducted through the Events and Income Development Unit in the Resources Directorate.

The 'Your News Box'

Despite the considerable amount of proactive work undertaken by the DPA and the MPS generally, there are still many items of good news that are not reaching colleagues within the Service or - through the media - the wider public.

To enhance the gathering of positive news, for both an internal and external audience, an e-mail account with the internal address YourNews@NSY has been set up. All MPS staff are encouraged to e-mail details of good news that they consider warrants publicity. DPA will assess this information and place details on the MPS Intranet site as well as passing it on to The Job magazine.

The Your News Box is designed to capture positive news and stories that may otherwise go unreported. Most boroughs and MPS departments already liaise with their relevant press office or DPA unit and pass on positive results. The Your News Box is designed to be an additional line of communication, not a replacement.

Public Scrutiny

Internal Investigations and Discipline

The DPA follows a clear and consistent approach to communicating information about professional standard issues. A potentially high profile internal investigation or discipline case should be brought to the attention of the DPA at the earliest opportunity.

A clear media policy already exists for handling these cases and this has recently been refined in light of the Morris Inquiry findings.

Following notification of a potentially high profile case the DPA will prepare a media statement in consultation with the senior investigating officer (SIO) from DPS. The individual under investigation or facing discipline (and any victim) will be provided with a copy of the media statement by either the SIO handling the investigation or other appropriate officer and informed when it is likely to be released to the media.

Advice and support on how to deal with intrusive media attention as a result of publicity surrounding the case will be provided to the individual under investigation by the Human Resources press office.

Whilst we believe that it is in the public interest to release information about how we are tackling corruption and wrongdoing amongst officers and staff, the rights and needs of those under investigation or facing discipline, must always be taken into consideration.

We should not disclose any information that could prejudice the outcome of any proceedings or comment on an individual's guilt or innocence before the appropriate body has made its decision.

Employment Tribunals

High profile employment tribunals (ETs) should be brought to the attention of the DPA at the earliest opportunity. Although it is unusual for the MPS to comment on ETs until they have been heard, in circumstances where the person bringing the ET publicly criticises the MPS, then the Service may need to respond.

In such cases the individual bringing the action will be provided with a copy of the statement released through their line manager or the MPS ET unit.

The MPS would not disclose any information that could prejudice the outcome of any proceedings.

Criminal Cases

The criteria used in relation to information released to the media about police officers or police staff charged with a criminal offence is the same as for other members of the public.

Details released will include name, age, rank, occupation and the nature of the charge. A home address will not be given but the location of where the individual is based will be.

The individual charged (and any victim) should be provided with a copy of the statement by either the SIO handling the investigation or other appropriate officer and informed when it is likely to be released to the media.

Advice and support on how to deal with intrusive media attention as a result of publicity surrounding the case will be provided by the Human Resources press office.

We should not disclose any information that could prejudice the outcome of any proceedings or comment on an individual's guilt or innocence before it has been established by the appropriate, decision-making body.

Pre-Trial and Pre-Verdict Press Briefings

The DPA adheres to the guidelines laid down by the Association of Chief

Police Officers (ACPO) when deciding whether or not to hold a pre-trial or pre-verdict briefing. The decision to hold a briefing rests with the DPA and the SIO (in consultation with the CPS) who will consider whether or not the case meets the relevant criteria.

The over-riding principle when considering a briefing is that nothing should be done to prejudice a forthcoming or on-going trial. For instance, there should be no discussion with the media pre-verdict of the relative weight or value of elements of the prosecution case or comment on an individual's guilt or innocence.

Freedom of Information Act

The Act provides a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities including the MPS (subject to conditions and exemptions).

If a reporter asks how to apply to the MPS for information under the Act, they should forward their request to PublicAccessOffice@met-police.uk and every effort should be made to release the information as soon as possible.

There will be occasions when a journalist's request can be dealt with as a legitimate media enquiry rather than an FOI request. This should be the preferred and encouraged option.

Working Together

Supplying Information to DPA press officers

Those officers who have direct dealings with a reporter over a news story, should always tell the DPA - either the 24-hour Press Bureau at NSY, or their local or specialist DPA press office. There are likely to be follow-up calls from other media organisations following publication or broadcast. Making DPA aware will allow for appropriate statements to be prepared in advance to deal with subsequent enquiries.

Media advice and database of lines to take

The DPA has an established set of instructions for its staff that provide advice on what can and cannot be said to journalists on a wide range of subjects and issues. These, together with the latest Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) media guidelines and a database of 'the official line' to take on current topics can be found on the DPA Intranet site.

Electronic media

An increasing number of people regularly access our Internet website (including the media) and use it to obtain news and research material. The MPS Intranet is also a valuable source of news and information for MPS employees. All OCUs must therefore ensure that information on their sites is accurate, current and regularly updated. Advice on this can be obtained from the Directorate of Information e.comms Team in Room 1317 at NSY on extn 63537.

Press Identification Cards

The bona fide media should carry a 'UK Press Card'¹ that contains the individual's photograph. This card is recognised by ACPO. The card does not carry an automatic right of access to the scene of an incident or authority to pass police lines. However, officers are expected to be helpful to cardholders and where possible try to accommodate their needs. UK Press Cards can be authenticated by calling 0870 8376477.

Foreign journalists based in London may not hold the ACPO recognised card. Where possible co-operation should be extended to them on production of appropriate/current ID (e.g. a passport and a letter from the news organisation they represent) and, if necessary, following consultation with DPA.

Media Access

Members of the media have a right to report and photograph public events and film on the public highway, unless they are causing a serious obstruction or genuine operational concern. In such cases, officers should seek to accommodate their presence at an alternative location near-by e.g. a Media RVP. It is not the role of police officers or police staff to censor what photographs or film the media can take. This includes putting yourself or your hand in front of a camera lens.

When press photographers and film crews arrive at the scene of an incident or a crime scene, officers should politely direct them to an appropriate vantage point and seek advice from DPA. Being unhelpful or telling them to go away does not foster positive police/press relations.

Guidelines on dealing with media reporters, press photographers and television crews at the scene of incidents have recently been published and are available on the MPS Intranet site or from your local or unit press office.

Training

This media policy should be reinforced at every level. Basic training should touch on the general concept of the media policy, while intermediate and higher training should stress the advantages to be derived from the avoidance of unnecessary secrecy and the achievement of mutual trust between the Service and the media.

DPA press officers can provide basic media awareness and broadcast training to those officers and police staff who have to give media interviews as part of their normal duties. Any officer or member of police staff who feels that they would benefit from such training should contact their DPA press office for further information. External media specialists are contracted to provide training for OCU commanders and ACPO officers.

Further details of media training opportunities can be obtained from your appropriate DPA press office or from the Chief Press Officer at NSY.

Making Progress

Interactions and relations between the police and the media are inevitably complex and at times difficult. An approach that seeks to be as open and helpful as constraints allow, will inevitably involve risks and sometimes disappointment.

To minimise this, ACPO rank officers, chief superintendents and detective chief superintendents in charge of OCUs and heads of branches and departments must ensure that officers under their command are fully briefed about the extent to which factual information may be supplied and by whom.

It is accepted that if these measures are to succeed, some mistakes may be made in the process. The MPS will not however, tolerate any police officer or police staff who improperly discloses information (either deliberately or recklessly) to the media (for example, for personal gain or contrary to the media handling policy set out by an SIO). The unofficial disclosure of information could not only have an impact on an investigation it could also damage the credibility and reputation of the MPS and its staff.

The success of this policy depends on everyone being open and flexible with the media. Nevertheless, MPS staff must always be mindful of the effect that disclosure of information could have on an investigation or subsequent prosecution.

Whilst at times this approach will be challenging, it will ultimately be of benefit to us as individuals, to our OCUs, our departments and the MPS as a whole.

Associated Documents

Media Relations policy

Accessible Formats Guidance

Corporate Identity Guidelines

Directorate of Public Affairs

Enquiries

Further enquiries should be made to **Chris Webb**, Deputy Direct of Public Affairs, on extn. **62675** or **Bob Cox** on extn **62475**

Metropolitan Police Authority

MPA scrutiny of MPS media and communications

Introduction

1. Members of the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) have become increasingly concerned about the approach taken by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to managing communications and the media particularly during the so-called 'Forest Gate' incident in June 2006. As a result, Members agreed to conduct a short scrutiny of the approach taken by the MPS in this area.

2. The terms of reference, agreed by committee, included:

- establishing the current strategies, staffing and structures in place within DPA and its relationship with other parts of the MPS with regards services and support;
- assess how DPA engages with other parts of the MPS to manage communication to the media, Londoners and stakeholders, particularly during sensitive operations, and how DPA strategies are influenced or controlled internally or externally; and
- identify the media and PR needs of senior officers and others as seen appropriate and identify any gaps in current delivery or ways in which its services could be more effective.

3. A panel of Members, chaired by Len Duvall (Chair of the MPA), was convened. This panel heard evidence from a number of senior MPS officers including the Director of DPA. Members also heard from a Partner of a large PR firm, who has extensive experience of managing large media functions within politically sensitive public sector organisations. MPA officers also sought evidence from other stakeholders including a number of journalists who have regular contact with the MPS. "How the MPS Communicates" was the focus item at the September 2006 meeting of the MPA Equal Opportunity and Diversity Board (ECDB). This focused specifically on how the MPS communicates with its diverse stakeholders. The information provided by the MPS and the minutes of the subsequent discussion, were used by the Panel in its deliberations.

Summary of findings

4. There is no doubt that the MPS faces significant challenges when it comes to managing media and communications. The demands of news organisations operating 24 hours a day have to be balanced against the need to maintain public trust and confidence in the police service and to protect the rights of individuals who may be involved in particular incidents.

5. Our scrutiny found an organisation that is, for the most part, committed to an open and transparent relationship with the public and the media. However, we also found an organisation that tends to react to external factors, rather than one that proactively manages its external image. Whilst the organisation inevitably needs to be able to react quickly and positively to events, we have concluded that there is more the MPS can do to ensure correct information is being used by the media.

6. We also heard about the changing nature of the media with the increased use of eye-witness sources, the development of the internet and the increasing need for media organisation to meet the demands of 24 hour news scheduling. The MPS will need to reflect on these developments and consider how it can respond more effectively. A key challenge will be how they develop their current media monitoring function in order to

monitor and analyse coverage of the MPS and react appropriately.

7. We also found that there is a reluctance in some parts of the organisation to share information with the media. While there may be good reasons for this, an unwillingness to communicate openly within the organisation could be harmful in the longer term.

8. The MPS has a network of communications resources available to it, but it is our view that best use is not being made of these. We have recommended a number of structural changes that should enable a more consistent and comprehensive approach to managing internal and external communications.

9. We considered the Forest Gate incident in detail. We recognise that this presented a unique set of circumstances for the MPS. We found that although significant thought had been given to how the communications element of this operation should be managed (including some innovations to standard practice that will be adopted nationally), the service struggled to respond appropriately to circumstances that had not been anticipated. We have also concluded that there could have been better community engagement at the beginning of the incident.

10. The panel considered a number of examples of (what the MPA considered) poor reputational management. Many of these included the repeated use of information that was untrue or misleading by the media. We found that the MPS does not routinely refute or rebut stories in these circumstances. It is our view that this approach should be revised.

11. Many MPS officers are invited to comment on events in the national press, often as a result of involvement in national organisations. There is scope to improve the guidance to these officers about how these instances should be managed.

Recommendations

As a result of our investigations, we recommend that the MPS:

1. **Brings all media and communication resources under the professional direction of the Director of Public Affairs.**
2. **Revises media policies to reflect:**
 - Protocols for counter-terrorism activity
 - Officers speaking in non-MPS capacity
 - Use of 'not prepared to discuss'
3. **Develops more comprehensive media monitoring facilities.**
4. **Develops a more robust approach to rebutting misleading or untrue stories.**
5. **Develops proactive management of the reputation of the MPS.**
6. **Develops mechanism to provide regular reminders to staff about their obligations under the MPS media policy.**
7. **Considers mechanisms for sanctioning officers who fail to comply with MPS media policy.**
8. **Develops the use of a 'talking head' during extended critical incidents.**
9. **Updates the media training provided to all senior officers to improve awareness of the political sensitivities surrounding the MPS and to provide advice and guidance on how to deal with such issues.**

Detailed findings

Resources, structure and function

12. The MPS has a Directorate of Public Affairs that has primary responsibility for communications within the organisation. It is budgeted to employ 67 staff, across four functions – corporate press office, news branch, internal communication and e-communications and publicity branch.

13. For the purposes of the scrutiny, the panel were particularly interested in the role of the news branch. The news branch is structured to provide support to the operational business groups such as territorial policing, specialist crime and special operations. It also provides a limited media monitoring function. The news branch responds to media enquiries, provides professional advice and support to the rest of the MPS including through membership of gold groups, and using information from the business groups, drafts press lines to be used in response to requests from the media for information. They also provide specialist support to Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) officers. They provide 24-hour cover. DPA also has four regional offices that provide support to the boroughs.

14. The structure of the news branch has varied in the last few years, reflecting wider organisational changes, although some changes have had to be made in order to meet year-to-year budget reductions. The panel heard the current structure remains appropriate but there are gaps, particularly in supporting the organisation in meeting the Citizen Focus agenda and in working with the increasing diversity of news organisations in London. Another significant gap is the ability to monitor and respond to the 24 hour news agenda. These are issues that need to be addressed. The Panel is particularly concerned about the lack of capacity to monitor and respond effectively to the news agenda and the impact this has on the MPS's ability to protect its reputation and retain the trust and confidence of Londoners.

15. Given the current financial climate and the limited opportunities for growth, careful thought needs to be given as to how this could be achieved. This should include consideration of whether DPA currently undertakes activity that could be discontinued, reduced or delivered differently, and a full assessment of the impact of the work of the different parts of the directorate and their value to the MPS.

16. DPA's budgeted workforce is currently 67 full time equivalents, a number that has steadily reduced over time, as the directorate has had to contribute to service wide budget reductions. At the same time, the media environment has changed significantly, increasing the level of demand on DPA from the media, with the rise of 24 hour rolling news, increased internet based news, the use of 'blogs' and the increased use of 'citizen' journalists and eye-witnesses. A further challenge is the development of a huge number of minority media organisations, catering for distinct communities in London with whom the MPS needs to communicate. In this context we would caution against any further budget reductions.

17. There are considerable communication resources within the organisation, which have no direct links with DPA, including borough press officers and specialist teams supporting various parts of the organisation, such as the property team in the resources directorate and the safer neighbourhoods team in territorial policing. Most of these teams have been developed in response to local need that could not be met by DPA. Although DPA have tried to support the development of these resources through the creation of template job descriptions, provision of information about the competences required and involvement in the recruitment process, these are not always used. Furthermore, once these resources are established there are limited mechanisms in place to ensure that local activity supports corporate policies.

18. The MPA accepts the rationale for having this network across the MPS and we are aware of the good work they do in many cases but we believe that current arrangements present a risk to the organisation. It is our view that links between DPA and local communications functions need formalising and that the director of DPA must have professional responsibility (if not day to day line management) for all communications resources. The external stakeholders we consulted during this process,

told us they found the current arrangements confusing, and would support this move to consolidate resources.

19. We also recommend that mechanisms are established to allow performance management and quality assurance of these resources so that consistent standards are developed and maintained across the service.

20. There is a formal communications strategy in place and DPA have published policies and standard operating procedures. An annual business plan is also produced. Whilst this is positive, it is our view that the strategy is not sufficiently proactive or focused on building and managing the reputation of the organisation. We believe this could be achieved in part with the development of a forward plan of activity (linked to key milestones such as the implementation of key operational initiatives, and the external environment) which both seek to promote the good work of the MPS and influence key stakeholders.

21. The MPS media policies are influenced by the ACPO media policy, but there are a number of areas that are not covered by this policy, for example counter-terrorism and officers speaking to the media on behalf of staff associations or in a private capacity.

22. DPA's role is to provide professional advice and support to the rest of the organisation but ultimately, in respect of policing operations, it is the senior investigating officer who decides what information is put into the public domain. In order for this relationship to work, operational officers need to have trust in DPA. The panel probed the culture within the organisation in this respect and found a mixed picture. There is an increasing acknowledgement of the importance of communications and the impact they can have on an operation, but there is in some parts of the organisation, a reluctance to share information. It was suggested that this is partly historical, but also in part due to a widespread nervousness that the operation will be compromised. Clear leadership is needed from MPS management board to challenge this reluctance.

Responding to critical incidents

23. As noted above, this scrutiny was convened in response to concerns raised by members about how the MPS had managed the media during the Forest Gate incident and as such we have used this as a probe. We recognise that this incident provides a unique set of circumstances, however in our view it provides an acute example of the changing nature of policing operations in London ('the new normality') and highlights a number of issues to which the MPS will need to respond.

24. On 2nd June 2006, the MPS entered two adjoining properties in the London suburb of Forest Gate to execute a search warrant, in response to 'specific and credible' intelligence indicating that there was a chemical explosive device at this location. During the execution of the warrant, one of the residents was shot and injured. Two residents were arrested and held for a number of days. No chemical device was found during the search. The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) was called in to investigate the shooting shortly after it happened. [1]

25. The press interest in this story was considerable for a number of reasons:

- the speculation about the type of device allegedly hidden in the house and that subsequently, nothing was found
- the shooting of one of the residents
- the number of officers involved in the search
- the use of CRBN [2] trained officers
- the size of the cordon around the houses and the potential need to evacuate up to 200 houses in the immediate vicinity
- the willingness of the lawyers involved in the case to speak to the media.

26. This operation was mounted within a very short timeframe, but nevertheless, a sophisticated communication strategy was developed, informed by a full risk assessment. The MPS recognised the potential impact this operation could have on the local community and the interest the operation would receive from the media, and as a result two strands of work were developed to ensure effective responses to both. A briefing for key local stakeholders was arranged for the morning of the operation and a leaflet was prepared, to be delivered to residents affected by the activity. In the event however, there were delays in getting the leaflet cleared, which led to unnecessary anxiety for many Forest Gate residents. The MPS recognise it missed an opportunity in this respect.

27. During any police operation, care needs to be taken about the information that is put into the public domain. When deciding what information can be shared, officers need to consider the consequences this may have for future criminal proceedings. There are also sound reasons for not publicising operational tactics. However, in the case of counter-terror operations, the tendency is to say as little as possible, a strategy that was used during Forest Gate. A series of press lines were developed by DPA in conjunction with the gold group, [3] but it was agreed that there would be no comment in response to many of the issues arising. In making decisions about what information is shared with the public, particularly in these sorts of situations, senior investigating officers have to balance the needs of the investigation with the long-term impact such operations can have on local communities.

28. The operation attracted significant media interest both nationally and locally, fuelled by eye-witness reports, speculation about the alleged device, the large number of police deployed and because of the shooting. The reluctance of the MPS to engage with the media and to share any information, created an information vacuum, which was subsequently filled with rumour, much of which was untrue, but damaging to the MPS. The ACPO media protocol notes that "to offer 'no comment' surrenders the opportunity to influence media coverage".

29. As noted above, there was considerable speculation during the raid about the tactics used by the police. Such raids occur in very difficult circumstances. Officers enter premises with very limited knowledge of what they will find, and as events elsewhere have shown, [4] this can be at great personal danger. The tactics used are tried and tested but in high profile incidents, it may be appropriate to better explain why they are used, so that public confidence isn't undermined. For example, there were media reports over a number of days that 250 officers entered the house, which were very damaging to the MPS.

30. The MPA recognises the challenge faced by the MPS, we are also aware that being too quick to put information into the public domain can be just as problematic. However, we do believe that in circumstances such as these, it is imperative that the MPS is aggressive and quick to challenge incorrect information because the long term consequences for the MPS's reputation in the local community (and wider) can be significant and damaging. We recommend that regular press briefings are held, in order to respond to the rumours and where possible to explain the approach being taken. This would help counter incorrect speculation provided to the media by 'experts', which can be equally damaging to the MPS's reputation. It is our view that the MPS should provide a 'talking head' of sufficient rank and appropriate authority who can provide information to the media at regular intervals, challenge untrue assertions and respond to media queries.

31. There was a view that MPS officers or others close to the investigation were doing 'off the record' briefings to journalists during Forest Gate. Although this hasn't been substantiated, our scrutiny found that there were weakness in protocol, including ensuring that all officers involved (either directly in the investigation, manning cordons or providing community reassurance) are clear about what information can be shared. This could include for example ensuring all officers are provided with the press lines

(notwithstanding the conclusions in the paragraphs above). Providing officers with examples of 'holding responses' could also be considered.

32. In their report to the MPA full authority at the end of June 2006, the MPS recognised that there were a number of shortcomings in the approach they took during this operation, particularly in the way that they engaged with the wider community. We were also told during our panel meetings that although there had been extensive planning, the involvement of the IPCC had not been anticipated and the MPS were unable to react to these changing circumstances. We were told that although they had developed a strategy for not finding the device in their planning process, they felt unable to provide some of the context they might otherwise have provided, had the IPCC not been involved. We were also told there had been a lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities as events developed and they were not revisited and revised at regular intervals. We are aware that a protocol has been developed as a result of the learning from Forest Gate, and we welcome this initiative.

33. In the weeks following the Forest Gate incident, neither the MPS or the IPCC were willing to comment on the increasingly fevered speculation in the press and in the community about the circumstances surrounding the shooting. Whilst we accept the constraints facing both organisations in ensuring a full and proper investigation was carried out, and the potential consequences should this not happen, we are also concerned about the long-term impact this has on the confidence of the local and wider community. It is our view that many of the myths that have developed in relation to the Forest Gate incident are as a result of the reluctance of both the MPS and IPCC to challenge the inaccurate information that was in the public domain. We believe it is possible to do this without pre-empting (or jeopardising) the findings of any investigation. We acknowledge that a protocol has now been developed between the IPCC and the MPS. Should such circumstances arise again, we would urge both organisations to recognise the importance of reassuring communities in the aftermath of an incident.

34. In considering a number of other incidents that became long-running media stories, the panel believes the MPS would benefit from more robust scenario planning, so if events do take an unexpected turn, the organisation is better placed to react quickly and appropriately.

Reputational management

35. The reputation of the MPS has come under considerable pressure in the last eighteen months because of incidents such as Stockwell and Forest Gate. A number of news stories have also developed as a result of malicious leaks.

36. One theme that rose during the hearings was the lack of awareness within the MPS of the political sensitivities of some of these stories. We would therefore recommend the media training provided to all senior officers is updated to improve awareness of this dimension. We were also told the MPS is sometimes caught unawares by these stories, suggesting more effective scanning processes are necessary. DPA need to be prepared to respond to stories, even if the media does not pick them up, rather than reacting after the event as is the case now.

37. As noted above the panel was concerned many of the misleading and untrue comments made in connection to Forest Gate were not denied or rebutted by the MPS. We found during our investigations this is indicative of a wider reluctance to deny or refute stories. We were told a decision is made on a case by case basis, but in general there is an unwillingness to challenge the stories. We also found when the decision is taken to refute speculation, it is often taken too late. In our view this is damaging and cumulative impact for the organisation will be significant for the reputation of the MPS.

38. We found relationships with the media are generally good and the journalists we spoke to as part of this scrutiny recognised the MPS does provide a responsive press

service, compared to other police forces. There are regular meetings with the Crime Reporters Association, providing an opportunity to discuss current issues and influence stories in the news. There were concerns about the lack of press facilities at New Scotland Yard, but we recognise that recent changes to security mitigate against reopening the press room.

39. The panel considered about how the media gets its information. We were told unless it comes through official channels, it is very difficult to identify who is responsible and therefore to take action. Nevertheless the MPA recommends there is more proactive promotion of the MPS media policy which states officers may not speak to the press about spheres of operation that are outside their personal responsibility or which represents gossip or rumour.

Communicating with London's diverse communities

40. London is the most diverse city in the UK, and home to half of England's minority ethnic population. It is important for public sector organisations to develop communications channels that respond to these developments. The MPS also has a responsibility to make information accessible and to provide it in appropriate formats where possible.

41. We were told much of the engagement happens at a local level, which may well be appropriate, but there is a need to ensure there is consistency in the messages being disseminated centrally and locally.

42. DPA with the diversity and citizen focus directorate, has been developing relationships with the black Asian and minority ethnic media. The MPA welcomes this development but recognises there is a significant challenge ahead, given the number of media outlets across the city and beyond. The MPS also recognises the need to expand this exercise to consider how it communicates with all minority media consistently and appropriately.

43. The learning from the Forest Gate operation indicated the need to use existing community links, for example, local independent advisory groups and local community groups to provide advice and support at the planning stage of operations, and then as events develop to ensure the messages are getting through to the relevant audiences. This will represent a challenge for the organisation but is one that the MPA endorses.

Next steps

44. As a result of our deliberations, we have made a number of recommendations. We shall monitor the implementation of these through our Co-ordination and Policing Committee on a regular basis.

Footnotes

1. This is standard practice. [\[Back\]](#)
2. Officers trained and equipped to detect Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear devices/substances. [\[Back\]](#)
3. i.e. the senior officers managing the operation. [\[Back\]](#)
4. Such as the death of DC Stephen Oake in Manchester in January 2003 during a counter-terrorism operation. [\[Back\]](#)

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Directorate of Public Affairs Policy

Directorate of Public Affairs : Media Relations Policy

Protective marking:	Not protectively marked
Publication scheme Y/N:	Yes
Title:	Media Relations Policy
Version:	Version 2
Summary:	This policy sets out the MPS stance in all communications with the Media.
Branch/ OCU:	Directorate of Public Affairs
Review date:	June 2011
Notice reference/ date:	Item 1, Notices 23 / 08, 4th June 2008

Policy Contact: Chris Webb, extn 62675

Commissioner's Foreword

Why is our relationship with the media important?

We are all involved in the demanding and complex policing challenge that is London, and that challenge brings with it extensive and daily media interest in our work.

At times what the Met does dominates the news agenda, not only in London, but nationally and even across the world. In the midst of this it is vitally important that we get our message across to the people we serve.

One of our key priorities is building community confidence in the Met's commitment to policing London. We need to demonstrate to Londoners that we are on their side, working for them, getting the results they want to hear about - and the media is an important channel among many for letting them know about this commitment and what we achieve.

We won't always get things right, and even when we do, that won't always be reflected as we might wish by the media. That's the nature of the relationship. It is right that we

as public servants should be held up to media scrutiny and that we should honestly answer the questions they raise. That is all part of the process of public accountability and we should not avoid engaging with the media.

By following the principles reflected in this policy we as an organisation can maintain a professional relationship with the range of media channels out there - avoiding unnecessary pitfalls while effectively communicating our many achievements. In doing so we will help to increase Londoners' confidence in the work we do.

Sir Paul Stephenson
Commissioner

Introduction

This updated policy reflects the Met's continuing commitment to be open and to improve the way in which we communicate – internally and externally – whilst ensuring that we operate within a broader media management framework.

The policy and associated standard operating procedure (SOP) have been produced taking into account the views and recommendations from the Morris Inquiry (2005), the MPA Scrutinies of MPS Communication, the Counter Terrorism Operation in Forest Gate (2006) and the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) Stockwell Reports (2007).

The Directorate of Public Affairs (DPA), and the Director of Public Affairs in his position as head of profession for communication, takes the lead in managing our day-to-day engagement with the media. However, with over 50,000 employees across London, it is not always possible for the DPA to deal with every media interaction with MPS staff. Therefore, this policy has been developed to provide clarity and assist police officers and members of police staff who may have dealings with journalists, photographers and film crews.

Application

This policy applies with immediate effect.

All police officers and police staff, including the extended police family and those working voluntarily or under contract to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPC) or the Commissioner must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) policy and associated procedures.

However, this policy applies in particular to officers and staff in the following roles:

- Directorate of Public Affairs staff
- Other unit media / marketing officers
- All Borough Media and Communication Officers, including Borough Press Liaison Officers (BPLOs)
- Officers of Association of Chief Police Officer (ACPO) rank
- Borough and Operational Command Unit Commanders

- Heads of Branches
- Senior Investigating officers and their teams
- Safer Neighbourhood Teams
- Borough and Operational Command Unit police officers and police staff
- Events and Income Development Unit
- Public Access Office

NB: This list is not intended to be exhaustive

Purpose

This policy aims to improve public confidence and goodwill and to enhance the image and reputation of the organisation by:

- proactively seeking to inform public debate on policing matters
- informing the media about matters which are in the public interest
- responding to criticism about the MPS
- explaining to the public how the police go about their work.

Scope

This policy deals with the communication of information by MPS staff to the media, whether it is in response to enquiries or through proactive publicity. The provision of information to the media must be balanced against protecting the rights of any individual and the reputation of the MPS.

Policy Statement

The public has a huge interest in the policing of London and the media pays significant attention to how the MPS deals with matters that involve law and order and we must therefore be both proactive and reactive in our approach.

By being proactive we seek to gain maximum positive media coverage and an understanding of MPS policies, actions and decisions.

By responding reactively, we seek to put across in the media the Met's point of view and to explain or clarify our position on issues we are involved with or have an interest in.

It is our policy to be open and honest in dealing with the media and as far as possible respond to their enquiries within their deadlines.

We will tell the media things which:

- are in the public interest to know about
- help to show the public the way in which the police go about their work
- are in the public interest to know about

We have a duty to inform the media about matters that should be in the public domain. In the course of our work we gather information that can be released to the media for

policing purposes, such as crime appeals and road safety messages.

However, in doing so we must consider the impact of providing the media with information that could compromise or prejudice:

- policing benefits when balanced against protecting the rights of any individual or victim,
- the successful conclusion of any investigations, criminal or civil proceedings,
- the reputation of the MPS as a whole, or specific parts of the organisation, or any individual MPS police officer or police staff,
- the principles of natural justice, including the Data Protection Act 1998, equalities legislation and the European Convention on Human Rights.

While advocating greater openness and contact with the media, this policy does not authorise any police officer or member of police staff to divulge information which is beyond their own area of personal responsibility, or authority, or which represents gossip or rumour. Such activity is contrary to the values of the organisation.

The MPS will initiate criminal or disciplinary investigations where there is evidence that information has been provided to the media that deliberately contravenes the principles contained within this document.

Benefits

- The MPS will be demonstrably more accountable to the people its serves
- Improved public confidence in services provided by MPS
- Increased willingness of the public to interact with the MPS.

Responsibilities

- The ownership of this policy rests with the Directorate of Public Affairs,
- This policy will be implemented corporately by the Directorate of Public Affairs and locally by (B)OCU Commanders and Heads of Branches,
- The monitoring and review of this policy rests with the Directorate of Public Affairs.

Associated Documents and Policies

This policy is supported by the Media Relations Standard Operating Procedures.

Other documents to consider include:

- Information Management Policy
- Borough Press Officers Media and Internal Communications Guide
- ACPO Media Guidance
- Accessible Formats Guidance
- Corporate Identity Guidelines

Directorate of Public Affairs website

Equality Impact Assessment for this Policy.

The following Notices are cancelled by this policy:

- Item 4 of Notice 26/06, of 25 July 2006
- Item 5 of Notice 17/03, of 23 April 2003
- Item 2 of Notice 06/01, of 7 February 2001
- Special Notice 19/00, of 22 September 2000

Inquiries about this policy should be made to Chris Webb, Deputy Director of Public Affairs on extension **62675**

Feedback

The owner of this policy and the MPS Strategy Unit are interested in your views and therefore comments you may have regarding this document. Your suggestions and comments will make our policies, processes and services relevant to you the service user. Your comments and suggestions will be taken alongside others submitted and considered in part of the redevelopment of this policy. The next scheduled review is shown at the top of the document

Click the link to open the FEEDBACK FORM

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Directorate of Public Affairs SOP (Standard Operating Procedure)

Directorate of Public Affairs SOP : Media Relations Standard Operating Procedures

Protective marking:	Restricted
Publication scheme Y/N:	No
Title:	Media Relations Standard Operating Procedures
Version:	Version 2
Summary:	This SOP sets out the stance in all communications with the media
Branch/ OCU:	Directorate of Public Affairs
Review date:	June 2011
Notice reference/ date:	Item 1, Notices 23 / 08, 4th June 2008

Policy Contact: Chris Webb, extn 62675

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1. Introduction

This updated standard operating procedure reflects the Met's continuing commitment to be open and to improve the way in which we communicate – internally and externally – whilst ensuring that we operate within a broader media management framework.

These guidelines have been produced taking into account the views and recommendations from the Morris Inquiry (2005), the MPA Scrutinies of MPS Communication, the Counter Terrorism Operation in Forest Gate (2006) and the IPCC Stockwell Reports (2007).

The DPA and the Director of Public Affairs in his position as head of profession for communication, takes the lead in managing our day-to-day engagement with the media. However, with over 50,000 employees across London, it is impossible for the DPA to deal with every media interaction with MPS staff. Therefore, this policy has been developed to provide clarity and assist police officers and members of police staff who may have dealings with journalists, photographers and film crews.

2. Application

This SOP applies with immediate effect.

All police officers and police staff, including the extended police family and those working voluntarily or under contract to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPC) or the Commissioner must be aware of, and are required to comply with, all relevant Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) policy and associated procedures.

However, this policy applies in particular to officers and staff in the following roles:

- Directorate of Public Affairs staff
- Other unit media / marketing officers
- All Borough Media and Communication Officers, including Borough Press Liaison Officers (BPLOs)
- ACPO Officers
- BOCU and OCU Commanders
- Heads of Branches
- Senior investigating officers and their teams
- Safer Neighbourhood Teams
- BOCU and OCU police officers and police staff
- Events and Income Development Unit
- Public Access Office

3. Implementation

(B)OCU Commanders and Head of Branches should decide how these guidelines are to be implemented at a local level. They must ensure that officers and police staff under their command are fully briefed about this policy, who can have contact with journalists and the extent to which factual information may be supplied to the media and by whom.

It is accepted that if these measures are to succeed, some genuine mistakes may be made in the process and where this occurs the individual concerned will be supported by the organisation. Any lessons learnt will be recorded by the DPA and if appropriate incorporated into their media training programmes.

But the MPS will not tolerate any officer or member of police staff who deliberately discloses information to the media that impacts negatively on the reputation of the MPS or where information is disclosed for personal gain or contrary to the media handling policy set out by a GOLD Commander or an Senior Investigating Officer (SIO).

Where deliberate or reckless breaches of this policy by police officers are identified disciplinary or criminal action will be taken by the Directorate of Professional Standards (DPS). Any member of Police Staff found to be in breach of this policy will be subject to the Police Staff Discipline Policy.

Whilst at times our interactions with the media will be challenging, an open and positive relationship is to be encouraged and will ultimately bring considerable benefit to us all.

It is important that DPA (either directly or through (B)OCU press officers) are made aware of any dealings with the national and London regional press and TV and radio news programmes. This will enable statements to be prepared so that we can deal properly with any follow up media enquiries.

4. Engaging with the media

By being proactive and offering the media good news stories or opportunities to show them what we are doing we can gain positive media coverage and increase the public understanding and confidence of MPS policies, actions and activity.

By responding reactively we seek to put across in the media the Met's position and to bring clarity on issues that we are involved with or have an interest in.

When dealing with the media we need to be open and honest, and as far as possible respond to their enquiries within their deadlines.

We will tell the media things which:

- proactively seek to inform public debate on policing matters
- are in the public interest to know about
- help to show the public the way in which the police go about their work
- help to build public confidence in the MPS and the police service.

We have a duty to inform the media about policing and crime matters that should be in the public domain. In the course of our work we gather information that can be released for policing purposes, such as crime appeals, arrests and charges.

However, in doing so we need to balance the policing benefits against protecting the rights of any individual or victim and ensuring the successful conclusion of any investigation and subsequent prosecution. Our interactions with the media must not compromise the integrity of the MPS or prejudice any live investigation or the principles of natural justice, including the Data Protection Act, equalities legislation and the European Convention on Human Rights.

The aim must be for staff to provide the media with factual information about incidents, cases, investigations or issues that they are personally involved in or have responsibility for. Saying 'no comment' or 'not prepared to discuss' to journalists can be just as detrimental as saying too much. Equally commenting on an incident or a case when all the facts are not known can be just as damaging.

Whilst we must be mindful of not breaking any embargo or compromising an investigation or the judicial process, what we say and when we say it needs to be balanced around the wider public reassurance and the need to redress any unfair criticism about MPS activity and actions.

Therefore, as a general rule, unless specific instructions exist, the principles are:

4.1 Routine operational incidents/investigations

Inspectors and above are authorised to speak to the media about their own areas of responsibility unless there is a specific media strategy in-place or dedicated spokesperson identified (see below).

Where appropriate, officers below the rank of inspector may speak to the media, but only with the approval of a senior officer of inspector rank or above. An example of this may be when there is a sergeant or constable with a specialist role, responsibilities or

knowledge or Safer Neighbourhood teams, where the team Sergeant should be encouraged to build links with local newspapers on a regular basis.

The 24 hour Press Bureau at New Scotland Yard (NSY) or your local (B)OCU press officer must be made aware of any interviews given to national newspapers, TV and radio or regional media. [REDACTED]

4.2 High profile cases and operations

In certain cases such as serious crimes, security, terrorism and major incidents etc plans and procedures already exist or strategies will be developed to deal with the intense media interest. This will include the appointment of a dedicated police spokesperson. In such situations it is unlikely that the GOLD Commander or SIO would want other police officers or members of police staff to divulge information that goes beyond the agreed media strategy without his/her express permission.

In such cases/operations the media handling strategy must be made clear to police officers and members of police staff involved from the outset through team briefings and recording entries in decision logs. This must include clearly identifying to all staff the appointed DPA press officer/s and any other named officer/s who are authorised to speak to journalists.

4.3 Police staff and general matters

Police staff should only talk about their role in a specific investigation or operation with the agreement of the GOLD Commander or the SIO.

Heads of police staff branches or departments should determine at what managerial level it would be appropriate for their own staff to speak about matters that relate to the unit's responsibilities and functions having assessed the competence and ability of the staff member concerned to deal with the media.

4.4 ACPO, Police Federation, Trade Unions and Staff Associations

The media will sometimes contact MPS representatives from the Police Federation, trade unions or staff associations for comments about policing issues and activity.

Whilst it is up to the individual concerned (in consultation with their relevant staffing body) to decide whether or not to issue a statement or take part in any interviews, it must be made clear to the reporter that statements or comments are given in the capacity as Federation, union or staff association representative and not as a representative of the MPS.

To this end any interviews that are given on camera must not be undertaken in uniform and name captions must make it clear which union or staff association the individual is representing.

A number of senior officers and senior police staff within the MPS look after ACPO policy and business areas and are sometimes asked to undertake media interviews on behalf of ACPO. Whilst officers may undertake interviews in uniform, as they are representing the police service, it must be made clear to reporters that statements or comments are given in the capacity as an ACPO representative.

It would also be helpful if the 24 hour Press Bureau at NSY could be notified of any statements released or interviews given to assist them in dealing with any follow-up

media enquiries. [REDACTED]

4.5 Policy matters

Any media requests for information or comment regarding Met-wide issues, policy matters or events that could bring the Service into disrepute or dispute, should be referred immediately to the (B)OCU Commander, Head of Branch or Department, the local DPA press office or the 24 hour Press Bureau at NSY. [REDACTED]

4.6 Releasing photographs / CCTV Images

Clear guidelines exist for the release of images, photographs and CCTV footage of suspects to the media. Before releasing any photographs or CCTV Images to the media, MPS officers and staff are required to seek the appropriate level of authority, as stated in the guidelines, attached at Appendix A.

4.7 Withholding information

Wherever possible we should try and assist the media in answering their enquiries and questions recognising that saying no comment or not prepared to discuss to journalists can be as detrimental as saying too much. However, there may be occasions for sound operational, investigative or judicial reasons when we do need to withhold certain details and data.

Whilst the publication or broadcast of this information may not necessarily be in breach of the Contempt of Court Act 1981, it could, if it got into the public domain, compromise police action and/or proceedings. In such cases advice must be sought at the earliest opportunity from the DPA. However it should be noted that the withholding of information just because it is embarrassing to an individual or an organisation cannot be justified.

Where officers or police staff become aware that a media organisation is planning to print or broadcast material that could compromise or prejudice an operation, investigation or subsequent prosecution, they should contact DPA immediately.

4.8 'Off the record'

There may be occasions when police officers wish to provide guidance to journalists on a specific case or issue they are dealing with. This is commonly known as speaking 'off the record' – dealing with matters that are not for public disclosure, explaining reasons for maintaining confidentiality and specifying what might be published. When doing so, officers must adhere to the facts of the case and must not speculate or let their own personal views or prejudices influence the discussions.

Police officers or members of police staff must not express views or give off the record guidance on cases/issues that they are not involved in as this could compromise an operation or investigation. Such action could lead to disciplinary action being taken.

Misunderstandings can sometimes occur about what 'off the record' means. Some journalists interpret it as being completely non-reportable, whilst others believe that

they can report what is said but not attribute it to the individual who said it. It is therefore essential that before giving guidance of this sort, the officer/police staff member clarifies the basis on which it is being provided. It is good practice to keep a written note of any off the record briefings given.

It will be for (B)OCU Commanders and Heads of Branches to decide at what levels within their own areas of responsibility such discretion may be exercised. If there is any doubt offering guidance, advice should be sought from the DPA or enquiries referred to them

4.9 Pre-trial and pre-verdict press briefings

Many police forces across the UK undertake pre-trial briefings for high profile and serious crimes cases. There are clear guidelines, which are available on the DPA website, laid down by the by ACPO for handling pre-trial or pre-verdict briefing, which the MPS adheres to. The decision to hold a briefing rests with the DPA and the SIO, in consultation with the CPS, who will consider whether or not the case meets the relevant criteria.

The over-riding principle when considering a briefing is that nothing should be done to prejudice a forthcoming or on-going trial. For instance, there should be no discussion with the media pre-verdict of the relative weight or value of elements of the prosecution case or comment on an individual's guilt or innocence.

4.10 Responding to inaccuracies

It can be extremely frustrating as well as damaging to the organisation or an individual when the media publish or broadcast a story that is inaccurate, misleading or gives an unfair interpretation of the facts. In such cases a response should be considered to clarify the situation or the Met's position.

Officers or members of police staff who wish to respond to an unfair article about a particular (B)OCU or an individual should always seek advice from the DPA or their (B)OCU press officer. Where it is felt appropriate to submit a letter for publication, the relevant Head of Branch, (B)OCU Commander or line manager should correspond with the news organisation concerned. This approach ensures a coordinated corporate response.

Individual officers or police staff wishing to write their own letters for publication should seek advice from their OCU commander about whether it is appropriate for them to do so.

It is common practice now to place letters of rebuttal addressing Corporate and Metwide issues on both the Intranet and Internet sites.

Letters of rebuttal for inclusion on the Intranet should be emailed to DPA Mailbox – Internal Communication or via the Internet site on Internal.Communication@met.police.uk given.

4.11 Media protocol during elections

Crime and policing have become an increasingly important part of the political agenda, particularly during election campaigns. It's incumbent on all officers and staff that they refrain from undertaking any activity that could call into question the political neutrality of the MPS.

During elections (i.e. General, Mayoral, London Assembly and London Borough Councils) the MPS issues specific protocols to assist staff in providing information to candidates, managing requests for facilities and guidance on media management - [Link to election protocols](#).

5. Promoting ourselves, our work and achievements

5.1 Liaison with the local press

Local newspapers thrive on local policing stories and give us a valuable opportunity to promote our work and achievements. Many (B)OCUs have their own dedicated press liaison / communication officers (BPLO) whose role it is to brief the local media about local crime and policing issues and to update (B)OCU Intranet sites, etc. Officers who have a good story to tell or who have dealt with cases or issues that would benefit from local media coverage should make sure that they inform their BPLO.

5.2 Taking the media on police operations

Taking the media on police operations gives a good insight into policing and how we are tackling crime. Officers planning such operations should always consider the media as part of their overall strategy. The ultimate decision to take them will rest with (B)OCU Commanders, but it is important that the DPA is consulted, the guidelines followed and the appropriate *indemnity agreement* and *note to media representatives* (attached at Appendix B and Appendix C) are completed, signed and retained. In addition, DPA press officers, BPLOs and journalists must be included in any health and safety risk assessment. If it is felt necessary due to operational activities being carried out, a member of the Safety and Health Risk Management Team (SHRMT) is available to provide advice. They are also on call 24/7 via Central Communications Command.

When the media contact police officers directly for access to police operations, the caller should be referred to the local DPA press office or the 24 hour Press Bureau at NSY who will co-ordinate the request and ensure that appropriate guidelines are followed. If it is not possible to allow the media access on a police operations a clear and straightforward explanation should be given as to why access is being refused or restricted. **Press Bureau can be contacted on extension 6300. This number is for MPS staff only and must not be disclosed.**

5.3 Television documentaries and dramas

The MPS receives numerous approaches and requests from television production companies for co-operation with the making of television documentaries and dramas.

While many of these provide opportunities to promote the work and achievements of the Service and possibly generate income, they can be time-consuming and require considerable resources to enable them to proceed. There can also be occasions when the proposals may be in conflict with one another.

All approaches from television documentary or drama programmes should be filtered through the DPA, who will consult with the MPS Film Unit, other relevant units and officers to decide whether to pursue the proposal. All filming within MPS premises and the use of police property for documentaries and dramas, must be approved by Property Services, unless it is linked to operational activity.

Where there is a potential for income generation, negotiations with the television production company will be conducted through the Events and Income Development Unit (EIDU).

5.4 Reality TV shows

On occasions police officers and members of police staff may be asked to participate in reality TV shows or quiz programmes. Appearances in such programmes as a *private citizen* are a matter for individual's to consider, but such appearances should not bring the Service into disrepute. Whilst mention can be made that the person works for the police, individuals must not appear in uniform.

Police officers or members of police staff who are taking part in non-MPS related TV programmes or articles should always make their line manager aware.

Officers and members of police staff who are approached to take part in a programme as a *Met police team* must get agreement from their (B)OCU Commander or Head of Branch, in consultation with the DPA, before agreeing to take part.

5.5 Contractors and publicity

The MPS works with many external contractors who may on occasions want to gain publicity for their working relationship with the MPS. MPS officers and staff working with contractors must not agree to any publicity about the product or service provided without first consulting with the DPA and their local (B)OCU/Departmental communication advisor.

Any agreed publicity should be purely factual and avoid making any endorsements of the suppliers/contractor's product, abilities or quality of service. If there is any doubt as to whether the publicity is appropriate a protocol has been developed by the Directorate of Information. -please see attached.



Publicity Protocol

If publicity is used as a negotiating tool in the contract awarding process, the DPA should be consulted on the obligation before contract signature and any resulting publicity must abide by the principles above.

5.6 Writing articles

Police officers and members of police staff may be approached to write articles on policing issues for newspapers and magazines. In such cases advice must always be sought from the DPA and authority obtained from the (B)OCU Commander or Head of Branch. Staff must not seek to profit from their experiences of working in the Met and therefore should not accept payment for anything they write or produce. Staff who are asked to write an article should have a firm understanding of the subject area they have been asked to comment on. Otherwise the request should be declined or passed on to a more appropriate officer or unit.

Individual's should not pass comment on MPS policy or practices and the content of any article should not bring the Service into disrepute or divulge information, which

could compromise operations, investigations, the judicial process or which breaches the Official Secrets or Data Protection Acts.

5.7 Writing books

It is not standard practice for serving police officers or members of police staff to be given permission to write a book about their policing experience. In exceptional circumstances permission may be granted. In all cases a business interest request must be made to the (B)OCU Commander and/or Head of Branch and the DPA consulted.

5.8 Internet publishing (Blogs, Websites etc)

Over recent years the number of web-logs or blogs has increased. Whilst there is nothing to stop any serving police officer or member of police staff from 'blogging' or putting material on websites, like other organisations the MPS has developed guidance which staff should familiarise themselves with before taking part in such activity.

- Police officers and members of police staff taking part in web-logs should consider the impact of expressing views and opinions that are damaging to the organisation or could bring the Service into disrepute.
- Staff must not seek to profit from their experiences of working in the MPS and therefore should not accept payment for anything they write or produce.
- The web-log author should make clear that the views expressed are theirs alone and do not represent those of the MPS.
- The content of any web-blog should not divulge information, which could compromise operations, investigations, the judicial process or which breaches the Official Secrets or Data Protection Acts.
- The contents of any web-blog should not contain material that is racist, homophobic, sexist, defamatory, offensive, and illegal or is otherwise inappropriate. If any member of staff is identified as contributing such material to a web-log they may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.
- Any photographs or other material placed on blogs must be the copyright of the author and must not bring the Service into disrepute. Officers and police staff need to be extremely careful of placing any photographs or images of themselves on sites in uniform and consent must be obtained from all people shown in photographs or in images before they are published.
- The author should ensure that any blogging activity does not interfere with work commitments and staff are reminded that they are prohibited from accessing the Internet for personal purposes through the AWARE system.
- Remember that material that appears on blog sites can be picked up and used by the wider media.

5.9 Intranet - the "Your News" Box

There are many items of good news that are not reaching colleagues within the Service or – through the media – the wider public.

To enhance the gathering of positive news, for both an internal and external audience, an e-mail account with the internal address Your News – NSY has been set up. All MPS staff are encouraged to e-mail details of good news that they consider warrant publicity. DPA will assess this information and place details, as appropriate on the MPS Intranet site.

The Your News Box is designed to capture positive news and stories that may otherwise go unreported. Most boroughs and MPS departments already liaise with their relevant press office or DPA unit and pass on positive results. The Your News Box is designed to be an additional line of communication, not a replacement.

Items for the other five static boxes that appear on the Intranet Homepage: Corporate News; Operations News; Briefing Digest; Police Gazette and appeals; and What's New on the Intranet – should be sent to: DPA Mailbox - Intranet News.

6. Public Scrutiny

As a publicly accountable organisation, the media is constantly scrutinizing our actions and behaviours. The following guidelines have been developed to assist in addressing the criminal investigation of police officers and police staff, internal investigations and discipline, Independent Police Complaints Commission led investigations and employment tribunals.

6.1 Criminal cases

The criteria used in relation to information released to the media about police officers or police staff charged with a criminal offence is the same as for other members of the public.

Details released will include name, age, rank, occupation and the nature of the charge. A home address will not be given but the general location of where the individual is based will be.

The individual charged (and any victim) should be provided with a copy of the statement by either the SIO handling the investigation or other appropriate officer and informed when it is likely to be released to the media.

The Human Resources press office will provide individual police officers and members of police staff with advice and support on how to deal with intrusive media attention as a result of publicity surrounding the case.

We should not disclose any information that could prejudice the outcome of any proceedings or comment on an individual's guilt or innocence before it has been established by the appropriate, decision-making body.

6.2 Internal Investigations and discipline

The DPA follows a clear and consistent approach to communicating information about professional standard issues. A potentially high profile internal investigation or discipline case should be brought to the attention of the DPA at the earliest opportunity.

A DPS Media Strategy, which available on the DPA website, exists for handling these

cases and this was refined in light of the Morris Inquiry findings in 2005.

Following notification of a potentially high profile case the DPA will prepare a media statement in consultation with the SIO from DPS. The individual under investigation or facing discipline (and any victim) will be provided with a copy of the media statement by either the SIO handling the investigation or other appropriate officer and informed when it is likely to be released to the media.

Advice and support on how to deal with intrusive media attention as a result of publicity surrounding the case will be provided to the individual under investigation by the Human Resources press office.

Whilst we believe that it is in the public interest to release information about how we are tackling corruption and wrongdoing amongst officers and staff, the rights and needs of those under investigation or facing discipline, must always be taken into consideration.

We should not disclose any information that could prejudice the outcome of any proceedings or comment on an individual's guilt or innocence before the appropriate body has made its decision.

6.3 IPCC led investigations

A protocol exists between police forces and the IPCC for dealing with the media during IPCC led investigation e.g. a death in custody or a police shooting. In such cases the DPA will co-ordinate all MPS press statements and any media requests for interviews. Although we are limited in what we can say whilst an investigation is ongoing, we will issue statements in relation to the broader operational aspects and to address any community concerns or tensions. Any press enquiries re IPCC led investigation should immediately be referred to the 24 hour Press Bureau at NSY, who can be contacted on extension 63600 – this number is for MPS staff only and must not be disclosed.

6.4 Employment tribunals

High profile employment tribunals (ETs) should be brought to the attention of the DPA at the earliest opportunity. Press lines will be prepared by the MPS ET Unit for all full hearings and hearings for high profile cases. This will be done in consultation with the DPA and any press lines agreed must be approved by the DPA before being released to the media. Although it is unusual for the MPS to comment on ETs until they have been heard, other than to set out the nature of the claim, in circumstances where the person bringing the ET publicly criticises the MPS, then the Service may need to respond.

In such cases the individual bringing the action will be provided with a copy of the statement released through their line manager or the MPS ET unit.

If required, advice and support on how to deal with intrusive media attention as a result of publicity surrounding the case will be provided to the individual under investigation by the Human Resources Press Office.

The MPS must not disclose any information that could prejudice the outcome of any proceedings.

6.5 Freedom of Information Act

The Act provides a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities including the MPS (subject to conditions and exemptions).

If a reporter asks how to apply to the MPS for information under the Act, they should forward their request to PublicAccessOffice@met.police.uk and every effort should be made to release the information as soon as possible. The DPA must be made aware of any information before it is released to journalists or media organisations so that they can prepare statements to deal with any follow up media enquiries.

There will be occasions when a journalist's request can be dealt with as a legitimate media enquiry rather than an FOI request. If possible, this should be the preferred and encouraged option.

7. Working Together

7.1 Supplying information to DPA Press Officers

Those officers who have direct dealings with reporters or journalists over a news story, should always tell the DPA – either the 24 hour Press Bureau at NSY, or their local or specialist DPA press office. Press officers are likely to be the first point of contact for journalists and they will need detailed and thorough briefings from police officers as to what information can be released and what guidance can be given. There are likely to be follow-up calls from other media organisations following publication or broadcast. Making DPA aware will allow for appropriate statements to be prepared in advance to deal with subsequent enquiries.

The DPA will share press statements with the MPA Press Office and keep them informed of breaking news stories to assist Police Authority Members who may have to respond to media enquiries.

7.2 Training

Training plays a key part in giving staff the confidence to deal with the media effectively. Basic training should touch on the general concept of the media policy, while intermediate and higher training should stress the advantages to be derived from the avoidance of unnecessary secrecy and the achievement of mutual trust between the Service and the media.

DPA press officers can provide basic media awareness and broadcast training to those officers and police staff who have to give media interviews as part of their normal duties. External media specialists are contracted to provide training for (B) OCU Commanders and ACPO officers. The Crime Academy also provides media training to detective officers on a number of their training courses.

7.3 Media advice and database of lines to take

The DPA has an established set of instructions for its staff that provide advice on what can and cannot be said to journalists on a wide range of subjects and issues. These, together with the latest ACPO media guidelines and a database of 'the official line' to take on current topics can be found on the [DPA Intranet site](#).

7.4 Electronic media

The MPS Internet site is very much the organisation's shop-window to the general public – and clearly extends way beyond London. An ever increasing number of people regularly access our Internet website (including the media) and use it to obtain news and research material.

The MPS Intranet is also a valuable source of news and information for MPS employees. DPA - Internal Communication manage the day-to-day content of the Homepage, and the items that appear under the main headings: Corporate News; Operations News; Your News; Briefing Digest; Police Gazette and appeals; Your News; and What's New on the Intranet.

For both the Internet and Intranet, Local Website Managers are responsible for keeping the pages on their individual site/s up to date.

All (B)OCUs must therefore ensure that information on local Internet and Intranet sites is correct, current and regularly updated - to ensure the MPS consistently presents accurate material to both its internal and external stakeholders.

Advice on this can be obtained from the Directorate of Information E.comms Team in Room 1317 at New Scotland Yard on extension 63537.

7.5 Press Identification cards

The bona fide media should carry a 'UK Press Card' that is recognised by ACPO. The card does not carry an automatic right of access to the scene of an incident or authority to pass police lines. However, officers are expected to be helpful to cardholders and where possible try to accommodate their needs. Foreign journalists based in London may not hold the ACPO recognised card. Where possible co-operation should be extended to them on production of appropriate/current ID and, if necessary, following consultation with DPA.

7.6 Media access to public events, scene of incident or crime scene

Reporters, photographers and camera crews have a right to report on public events and photograph and film on the public highway. However, if they are causing a serious obstruction or there are genuine operational concern officers should seek to accommodate their presence at a near-by alternative location. It is not the role of police officers or police staff to censor what photographs or film the media can take. This includes putting yourself or your hand in front of a camera lens, removing film or deleting photographs.

When press photographers and film crews arrive at the scene of an incident or a crime scene, officers should politely direct them to an appropriate vantage point and seek advice from DPA. Being unhelpful or telling them to go away does not foster positive police/press relations.

Responsibilities

- The ownership of this policy rests with the Directorate of Public Affairs.
- This policy will implemented corporately by the Directorate of Public Affair and by (B)OCU Commanders and Heads of Branches.

- The monitoring and review of this policy rests with the Directorate of Public Affairs.

Associated Documents and Policies

This SOP supports the Media Relations policy.

Other documents to consider include:

- Information Management Policy
- Borough Press Officers Media and Internal Communications Guide
- ACPO Media Guidance
- Accessible Formats Guidance
- Corporate Identity Guidelines

Appendix A: Authority for Release of Still & Moving Images



App. A - Authority for
Release of Still & Moving
Images

Appendix B: MPS Media Indemnity Agreement



App B - MPS Media
Indemnity Agreement

Appendix C: MPS Note to Media Representative/s



App C - MPS Note to
Media Representative(s)

Directorate of Public Affairs website

The following Notices are cancelled by this policy:

- Item 4 of Notice 26/06, of 25 July 2006
- Item 5 of Notice 17/03, of 23 April 2003
- Item 2 of Notice 06/01, of 7 February 2001
- Special Notice 19/00, of 22 September 2000

For further enquiries about this SOP please contact Chris Webb, Deputy Director of Public Affairs on extension **62675**.

Feedback

The owner of this policy and the MPS Strategy Unit are interested in your views and therefore comments you may have regarding this document. Your suggestions and comments will assist in making our policies, processes and services relevant to you the service user. Your comments and suggestions will be taken alongside others submitted and considered in part of the redevelopment of this policy. The next scheduled review is shown at the top of the document

Click the link to open the FEEDBACK FORM

IN THE MATTER OF THE INQUIRIES ACT 2005

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE INQUIRY RULES 2006

THE LEVESON INQUIRY

EXHIBIT “*DF/3*”

WITNESS STATEMENT OF DICK FEDORCIO

I attach to this statement (as exhibit “*DF/3*”) a copy of a document entitled “*Management Board and the Media*”.

Management Board and the Media

It is important that Management Board members set the standard to the organisation in how we deal with the media.

With the introduction of the new, updated, version of the media policy each Management Board member should make it obvious that their own dealings with the media are within both the spirit and the letter of the policy.

Furthermore, they should:

- ensure that any interviews with the media are facilitated by the DPA or their own departmental media officers, who should be present and record and log any interviews within the DPA Press Bureau system,
- ensure that all OCU/departmental/divisional heads within their directorate consider how the revised policy should apply to them and their staff
- make sure that all their staff are aware of the policy and its implementation within their directorate
- put in place appropriate local measures to monitor its implementation and, if necessary, take steps to identify those who may have breached the policy and consider whether advice should be given or misconduct action initiated
- represent the corporate position on issues and positions when asked to comment to the media whether the matter is within or beyond their personal area of responsibility
- project the corporate values through their dealings with the media and put the interests of Met first and their business group second
- ensure any conversation of significance with journalists is notified to the DPA
- utilise the hospitality register fully to record any social meetings with a journalist
- avoid being too accessible to journalists in any way that could compromise their position or lead to accusations of favouring any particular media outlet or providing unauthorised information to them.

First issued February 2008, amended January 2009

IN THE MATTER OF THE INQUIRIES ACT 2005

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE INQUIRY RULES 2006

THE LEVESON INQUIRY

EXHIBIT "*DF/4*"

WITNESS STATEMENT OF DICK FEDORCIO

I attach to this statement (as exhibit "*DF/4*") a copy of an email sent by Lucy Panton on 18 February 2010.

300606

From: Panton, Lucy
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2010 4:37 PM
To: Edmondson, Ian; Mellor, James; Mcleod, Neil
Subject: Fw: BENT cop Ali Dizaei refused to hand over his Armani suit telling prison staff

Had 2 use dicks computer 2 file and can't seem 2 delete the original msg details. Would not be helpful 2 him for people 2 know I was using his office so pls delete that. Mff

From: Dick Fedorcio <[redacted]>
To: Panton, Lucy
Sent: Thu Feb 18 16:14:08 2010
Subject: BENT cop Ali Dizaei refused to hand over his Armani suit telling prison staff

BENT cop Ali Dizaei refused to hand over his Armani suit telling prison staff "don't you know who I am" just hours after he was convicted of corruption.

The arrogant Commander was devastated when he was told to give up his designer suit and expensive Rolex watch, as he was booked into Wandsworth prison last week.

But when he was handed the prison issue uniform the remorseless top cop found it hard to accept his fall from grace.

A prison source said: "All prisoners are asked to hand in their belongings with reception when they arrive. For Dizaei handing over his designer suit and flashy watch was a realisation to him that his Godfather days were over and he was now just another con.

"It was too much for him to take and he blurted out "don't you know who I am".

"He got the very quick reply yes we do. Hand over your clothes and put this on."

Dizaei, 47, arrived at the South London nick last week after being jailed for "fitting up" an innocent man he owed money to.

After reluctantly handing over his belongings he was moved to solitary cell where he was heard sobbing and begging to be moved as jeering lags threatened to beat him up.

Insiders say that since then he has been quiet and appears to be contemplating his next move.

Our source added: "There has been some discussion on when we get the first request from him to purchase a batch of 'Just for Men' hair dye.

"It's all about image and keeping up appearances for him and he clearly doesn't want to let go of his luxuries.

"However prison life is very different to the privileged lifestyle he has been used to.

"The days of preening and getting freebies are over."

Dizaei, one of Britain's most senior ethnic officers, was convicted of perverting justice and misconduct at London's Southwark Crown Court.