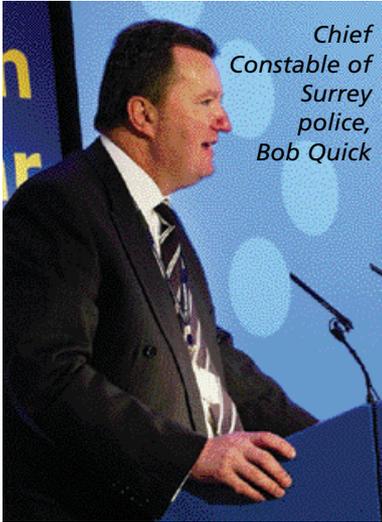


# Mixed economy of policing Proving the concept"



Chief  
Constable of  
Surrey  
police,  
Bob Quick

In March 2005 Surrey police hosted a major national seminar on police workforce modernisation, which attracted 165 chief officers, directors, senior strategists and programme managers from 37 forces across England and Wales. A host of police authorities, several government organisations including the Home Office, HMIC, and the Police Federation were also in attendance. The purpose of the event was to provide a forum for national debate about police workforce modernisation and to share Surrey police's own experience in this field with colleagues around the country.

By Errol  
McGrath  
FMS

The seminar was introduced and facilitated by the chief constable of Surrey police Bob Quick, and the keynote speaker was Hazel Blears MP minister of state, Home Office. Key speakers also included the Metropolitan Police commissioner Sir Ian Blair, Stephen Rimmer, director of policing policy at the Home Office, Chris Fox, president of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), who all gave their individual perspective on modernisation and reform.

## Background

Workforce modernisation is a term used to describe a range of initiatives being carried out by a number of forces across the country, which seeks to improve how a police force uses its personnel. One key element is for forces to make the best use of staff, particularly new roles introduced under the Police Reform Act such as community support officers, detention officers and investigating assistants. These roles are not police officer roles, but they do have a number of limited powers to assist officers in their work. Surrey police have projects running which address different aspects to policing, for example, the 'Reassurance' project which involves professionalising neighbourhood policing by ring-fencing dedicated resources to tackle local problems and work closely with partner agencies and communities.

However, one initiative that Surrey police introduced which yielded major

successes and was presented at the police modernisation seminar is the 'mixed economy of policing' project.

## Mixed economy of policing (MEP) project.

It has long been recognised that a major part of a police officer's time is taken up with paperwork and other administration tasks which to some extent undermine their role and responsibilities and affect their operational capacity. In order to address these issues a project team was set in place to review the current working practices in crime investigation of police officers in Surrey, and develop a solution towards professionalising the police officers' roles to be more aligned to their skills and warranted powers.

A consultant 'expert' in business and process analysis was commissioned to design a framework which could be used to 'proof the concept' of a 'mixed economy' approach to policing. This paper sets out the methodology and approach taken in achieving the objective.

It was made clear from the start that this project was not about saving money, but more about identifying areas of work which could be done by people other than police officer rank and thus releasing the police officers to focus more on tasks associated with their professional training and warranted powers, in other words increasing the capacity of the police force.

## Objective

The aim of the MEP project was therefore to:

*"Develop, pilot and evaluate a strategic integration model to deliver a mixed economy workforce".*

This would include designing a framework which if successful, would result in the concept being introduced initially to one of the four divisions within Surrey police.

The initial scoping and analysis would require an understanding of the cost of policing resources, building new 'optimal' capabilities and re-engineering the staff mix and supporting processes.

## The main outcomes

- To develop a model of employment structure configured around key capabilities: volume crime, reassurance, major crime;
- To pilot and evaluate this model on a live BCU command area;
- To ensure the model is fully costed, planned and has been widely consulted upon;
- To have tested the concept of the Surrey workforce modernisation model;
- The development of new working practices that improve efficiency and performance.

## Evaluation

There would be an evaluation review carried out to assess the success (or otherwise) of the project.

The evaluation process would need to

set clear baselines and targets for all agreed outcomes and in particular consider the following:

- The project methodology and outputs;
- The amount of additional capacity realised;
- Changes in performances.

### Methodology

The approach involved two distinct pieces of work: understanding the current 'working practices' of the police officer in crime investigation and determining the true cost related to policing which includes salaries, training etc.

### The approach:

- Analysis of key business processes;
- Identification of current tasks and skills required;
- Identification of realistic split of current processes;
- Estimate of impact of tasks split such as delays etc.

### Process mapping

Initially a sample of 100 crimes, made up of different category types such as burglary, motor theft, violence, and so on were analysed. Each crime was process mapped in 'schematic' format to show the activities undertaken during the life of the crime. Volumetrics were applied to each element and variable to determine 'time frames', 'frequencies' and 'delays' in the process.

Each process map was analysed and the activities were authenticated by ranking officers. A pattern of activities emerged which were constant in most crime investigations like statement taking, seizing CCTV video, interviews, updating the crime investigation system (CIS) and arrests. However, what was also evident was the

amount of administrative duties undertaken by the officers.

Time frames for each activity were determined and applied to all the activities on all the crimes; this allowed the analysts to determine the total amount of time spent on each task.

### Redesigning crime investigation roles

The current system of crime investigation involves crimes being allocated to police officers who then undertake all the tasks associated with the crime. Many of these tasks involved contacting witnesses and/or victims to arrange a convenient time to take statements, taking the statements, contacting businesses to arrange a time to view and/or seize

**'A major part of a police officer's time is taken up with paperwork and other administration tasks'**

CCTV video/cameras, then travelling to the site to pick up the CCTV videos, or property management. Many officers can have 10 to 15 crimes in their book to investigate at any one time.

It was quite apparent that very few of the activities in the studies actually required police powers to execute. The range of tasks varies from administrative tasks, to tasks which could be done by investigative assistants and those which require police officer warranted powers. The tasks were segregated into three distinct job roles – detective constable (DC), investigative assistant (IA) and administrative/allocators (AD). Existing tasks have been re-apportioned to the new job roles.

Results indicated that only 7% of the work required the DC to undertake, 57% of the tasks could be undertaken by the IA and 36% of the work was administrative (AD). The same approach was applied to the other crimes under the review and the results were consistent across the board. The aggregated task breakdown over all the crimes showed that 32% of the tasks were administrative, 60% required 'tactical' focused skills with designated powers and 7% requiring 'strategic' high skill full police powers.

### Investigation time

Analysing the process maps showed the amount of 'active investigation' time was very low and there were

massive delay periods between activities over the 'crime life cycle' and this resulted in crime investigations going on for many months. Many of these crimes were still ongoing at the time the analysis was carried out.

### Delay periods

Each 'crime life cycle' overall days (start date to finalised date) were recorded, as were the delay periods between activities. The legitimate delay period was recorded as 'required days'. Analysing all the crime's activities showed that the 'active investigation' time was only 4% of the crime life cycle, with legitimate delays being 29%. However, 67% of the delay periods were deemed to be avoidable delays.

Whilst there are legitimate delays, including 'bail returns', the amount of delays became an issue of concern to Surrey police, so much so that the chief constable was concerned that Surrey police might be falling behind other forces in crime investigation. An approach was made to two other forces to see if they would allow us to process map and analyse a series of their crime investigation patterns. The business analysts took a cross section of crimes being handled by another force and using the same methodology as applied in Surrey police, process mapped each crime, applying volumetrics to all the elements. The results of this exercise indicated that the other forces experienced the same delay patterns as Surrey police.

### Re-engineering the processes

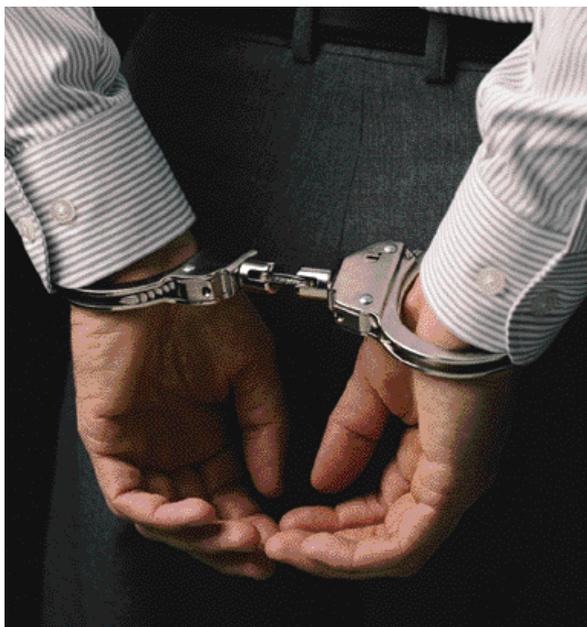
It was clear from the analysis that the whole process of handling crime investigation would need to be re-engineered to realise a more efficient police investigation system within Surrey police. As stated earlier, the object was to pilot the MEP in one BCU within Surrey police. The division chosen was Waverley 'C' Division – West Surrey.

The pilot project would seek to improve performance by working smarter, using mixed teams of police officers and police staff, ultimately developing police expertise, by freeing up officers to use their knowledge, skills and powers on the most crucial tasks.

### Optimal mix

Before implementing the pilot the first task was to determine the 'optimal mix' required in the new MEP structure whilst ensuring Surrey police crime investigation standards would not be compromised. The current





structure had 18 police constables, six detective constables and two investigative assistants.

The new system would re-configure the resources and involved setting up five special teams headed by two detective sergeants (DS), with each team consisting of one detective constable (DC), one allocator/admin (AA), one police constable (PC) and three investigative assistants (IA).

#### New roles

The new roles were defined identifying the skills, knowledge, experience and tasks/activities related to each role. The department was managed by the DS and the main role changes involved the DC reviewing each crime allocated to their team and setting the 'Investigation Strategy' for that crime, outlining the actions/tasks to be taken on the current 'crime investigation system' (CIS). The AA reviews the tasks on CIS for allocating and using the new diary system which shows the teams availability, allocates the tasks (on the new 'tasking system') to the appropriate PC or IA within their team. The AA is also responsible for making appointments thereby saving time. All tasks allocated are recorded to the 'tasking system' which also includes time frames in which to carry out the tasks. The main benefit here is that many tasks can be carried out simultaneously on the same crime thus greatly reducing the delay periods. For example the IA can seize the CCTV video whilst another is taking a victim/witness statement and/or another carrying out house to house enquiries.

#### Cost benefits

As stated in the initial scoping there is a need to understand the cost of

policing related to this project. A detailed study of annual costs comparable with the current 'crime investigation unit' in Waverley Division was undertaken and compared with the proposed new mix.

This showed that there was a cost benefit of £613,948, which is approximately a cost saving of 32.5%. The main purpose here was not to save money, but to create a more efficient crime investigation system. However, the cost savings related to this approach and the enabling of a more focused approach to policing, increases the capacity of the police officers to work more effectively.

#### Testing the concept

A simulation test of crime investigation was carried out on a number of crimes which had already been through the investigation process. This test with the aid of experienced officers involved redesigning the investigative strategy and assigning tasks with realistic time frames under the new 'mixed economy' system.

The results were quite encouraging and indicated that if crime investigation was 'dynamically managed' the effect would result in a faster turn around to crime resolution.

The results have been quite dramatic and indicate that nearly all the crime investigation could have been concluded in a quarter of the original time frame under the mixed economy approach.

#### Proof of concept

A 'proof of concept' document was produced outlining all the analysis, identifying the costs and key issues, and the design of the framework for a 'mixed economy' approach to policing in Surrey. This was presented to the Home Office.

#### Implementation

The pilot was launched in September 2004 with police staff training. Implementing the new system had many facets to it which became mini projects in their own right. Standard operating procedures would need to be documented, recruiting and training set in place, a new tasking system was designed and installed. An implementation team would oversee the project to ensure a smooth transition and minimal disruption to crime investigation in the Waverley Division. The PCs and investigation assistants were issued with mobile phones, laptops and mini-printers which would enable statements and so on to be recorded and printed at

source without having to return to the office after completing each task.

#### Results

Although the new system has only been running for a short time a review was carried out approximately six months into the project to see what progress was being made. However, the results so far have been amazing. The statistics show that the investigation period was significantly reduced by approximately 50% and the delay periods reduced by 75%.

#### Conclusion

The 'mixed economy' approach has proved to be a huge success and there are plans currently being developed to introduce the concept to the other divisions in Surrey.

#### Feedback

DC Team Leader: *"It's a breath of fresh air. Under the old system police officers were overstretched and delays were inevitable. But with this pilot scheme I have a team of investigating officers who can deal with most of the evidence gathering such as taking witness statements, doing house to house enquiries and monitoring CCTV footage and that's really speeding up investigations."*

*"The new system is allowing team leaders to focus on the main lines of enquiry while the investigating officers are out collecting evidence. In fact, we're dealing with investigations so quickly that we're getting a backlog of arrests as there's only one PC per team. However, it is early days and we are working on improving the way we structure the PC's workload."*

**Errol McGrath is head of Eagles Management Systems Ltd and has been involved in major business rationalisation projects in both industry and commerce. Over 35 years he has worked in precision engineering, automotive, public sector (both police and CPS), county councils and had ten years in the finance sector (banking). His expertise is in business and process analysis and designing and implementing quality management systems which realise major cost and efficiency gains for his clients. He is a firm believer that there are three kinds of people in this world: "Those who watch things happen, those who make things happen and those who wondered what happened".**  
**Information: 0777 555 8691.**