

Minutes

Policing Plan working group

Friday 30th November 2012, 2.00pm
at The Forum, 74-80 Camden Street

The Forum
5th Floor North
74-80 Camden Street
London NW1 0EG

T: 020 7383 0259
F: 020 7383 2655
E: general.enquiries
@btpa.police.uk

www.btpa.police.uk

Present:

Mr Michael Holden (Chair)
Ms Liz France
Mr Lew Adams

Apologies:

Mr David Franks

In attendance:

Mr Paul Crowther, Deputy Chief Constable BTP
Mr Alan Pacey, Assistant Chief Constable Territorial Policing
BTP
Mr Mike Furness, Head of Strategic Development BTP
Mr Jamie McDougall, Performance and Analysis Manager BTP
Mrs Sam Elvy, Research and Policy Manager BTPA
Mr Jon Newton, Performance Analyst BTPA (Minutes)

13/2012 Welcome and apologies

Non Agenda

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the Policing Plan Working Group (PPWG) meeting. Apologies were received for Mr David Franks.

14/2012 Minutes of meeting 4.10.2012

Agenda Item 1

Proposed corrections for the minutes were noted. These were to remove Brian Phillpott from the minutes and to change the references to the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) to the National Task Force (NTF).

15/2012 On-train disruption - Overview of the London South pilot

Agenda Item 2

Mr Furness informed the Group that this project was not completed as expected. This was because the main people responsible for driving this project, both at BTP and Network Rail, left the respective organisations.

The project had looked at Problem Solving Plans (PSPs) regarding disruption; however these were not specific to on-train disruption.

The force received data, from Mr Holden, showing the extent of on-train disruption on East Coast. ACC Pacey stated that this had been informative in terms of its extent and impact. BTP is making progress in reducing disruption due to cable theft and fatality management, and on suicide and mental health issues. The next area to look at will be disruption caused by minor on-train disorder. These types of issues would be picked up by the proposed target to reduce overall disruption minutes.

There was discussion about whether to include a specific reduction metric for the disruption target. DCC Crowther informed the Group that the force was not ready to do this until there was a better understanding of the data. The Area Commanders had stated that this year has seen some very good reductions for cable theft and fatalities, and although it may be possible to achieve slightly further reductions, it will be a challenge to maintain this level. It was proposed that a metric be left out at this stage, but that if one could be included later on during the year as understanding of the data improved it should be added.

Mr Holden agreed that the percentage disruption reduction target could be a work in progress and be looked at again later in the year. He also emphasised that BTP had bought itself an enormous amount of credit and a lot of goodwill from the industry because of its efforts to reduce disruption in the current year.

16/2012 Draft national targets 2013-14

Agenda Item 3

DCC Crowther gave an overview of the agenda item 3 report, which outlined the proposed National Policing Plan targets for 2013-14. There was extensive internal consultation on how the targets should look under the themes discussed in the last PPWG meeting; there would be fewer national targets that were reflected more clearly in the local targets.

Reduce police-related disruption minutes from the 2012-13 figure

The first target, to reduce police-related disruption from the 2012-13 figure, will be disaggregated to the force areas. The aim will be for the areas to liaise with stakeholders to agree locations, crime types, etc. The force, at a national level, will look at each area and expect them to reduce delay by whatever quantum is agreed, but it is up to the area to agree the locations and crime types at a local level.

Ms France stated that the Authority is concerned with the national target, but it should be for the force to decide how it delivers the performance against the target.

DCC Crowther stated that he was conscious of the increasing demand, footfall and throughput on the network and how this will impact on the demand placed on BTP to reduce disruption.

The force has had Force Management Team (FMT) discussions about including a quantum for the disruption reduction target. A lot of progress has been made, the majority of delay minutes have been caused by fatalities and theft or attempted theft of cable, including much of the vandalism/theft disruption being caused by attempted theft of cable. The force can push for some improvement with regard to fatality management, but there was some nervousness regarding cable related disruption.

Members asked whether the end of the £5 million funding for the National Metal Theft Taskforce would result in a gradual increase in cable theft rather than a sudden change. BTP explained that this has happened before; when metal theft reduced people moved onto different issues and, as a result, crime increased again. Although metal theft is still a focus for BTP, other forces have now moved their focus onto other issues. Although there will be some legacy as a result of this work, resources have now moved elsewhere.

There was a discussion about the forthcoming scrap metal dealers legislation and the effect it could have on reducing crime. The Group was informed that this will change the outlets for the stolen metal and that offenders would likely find a way of directly disposing of the metal; this is an area that the force is currently looking at. There have already been big reductions in cable crime. There had been a 72% sign-up to Operation Tornado, the 28% not signed up are getting frequent visits, funded by the £5 million. The new legislation will come in and have an effect from April, there will be an implementation period. It was highlighted that the £5 million funding for the National Metal Theft Taskforce has had a £100 million impact.

Mrs Elvy informed the Group that the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) have now been elected and that a survey on their priorities as set out in their manifestos had over 100 mentions of community engagement while metal theft, in comparison, was mentioned only once. Although a few PCCs had previously been on police authorities, many had not. It was suggested that the issue of metal theft should be communicated to the PCCs.

There was further discussion about coming back to this target later in the year in order to identify a metric. Concern was raised this would then not

be a SMART¹ target and that it might be better to have something that is clear and measurable, this could be to have a target of less than a set number of minutes. DCC Crowther proposed including a narrative that highlights the percentage reduction achieved by the force in the past, and stating that BTP will not be complacent. Mr Holden suggested also including commentary on the national context and saying that any further reduction is a good outcome based on recent achievements and a growing railway.

There was discussion about whether there could be a specific reduction outcome target if the industry were to sign-up to work in partnership with BTP. Members felt that there may be value in having a conversation about whether it would be possible to convert a set number of minutes delay into a cash value; it was felt that the delay would equal a large sum of money, as well as damage to passenger perception. Members stated that it is rare to have an impact as demonstrable as this and this opportunity should be explored. It was proposed that the impact to Network Rail of the £5million funding be demonstrated.

Action: It was proposed that this be a reduction target that could be reviewed in January or February, by which date the force will have a better picture, to introduce a metric.

Non-suspicious and unexplained fatalities to be cleared within an average of 90 minutes

The only category not to be included within this target would be suspicious fatalities; however the force will monitor these. BTP has, so far this year, achieved an average clearance time of 84 minutes for suspicious and unexplained fatalities. It is, however, more difficult for some areas to achieve a time as low as this, particularly in larger more rural areas. The Group was also informed that each of BTP's response units deal with an average of 17 fatalities per year.

Mr Holden questioned whether the clearance time could be reduced to 85 minutes. ACC Pacey stated that the current 90 minutes time was well understood both internally and nationally; if the unexplained fatalities could be brought within this target that would be a big achievement. Mrs Elvy suggested that the narrative that goes with this target would be important. Members agreed that there was a clearance time below which it would not be right to go, as this could lead to criticism on ethical grounds, suggestions of corner cutting and people being rushed. If the force can keep to this time that will be good.

Reduce overall crime (excluding police generated) from the 2012-13 figure

¹ Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely

DCC Crowther highlighted the tables, contained within the BTP report to the Group, which showed that good crime reductions that had already been achieved. He explained that this is core business for the force. There should be a straight reduction target, with the context of further reducing crime. If a metric is set this could drive people to focus on volume crime. Ms France stated that whenever a focus is placed on a particular area of crime this can result in an increase in those crime types; the need to keep detection rates up even if crime increases was highlighted. The difference between police generated and non-police generated crime was queried. Police generated offences generally tend to be drugs related offences and travel fraud.

DCC Crowther highlighted the large crime reductions this year, which have primarily been due to metal theft. He explained that it will be difficult to further reduce these offences.

Maintain the notifiable crime detection rate

There was a question about whether this target will exclude police-generated offences, as with the previous target. It was explained that this was not the case, this is because catching offenders is a good thing, and is not in order to manipulate the statistics. Mrs Elvy proposed that for the purpose of presenting this to stakeholders that the wording is changed to at least maintain.

Action: The wording for this action be amended to at least maintain.

Increase the percentage of budget spent on frontline resources

This target was about having a sustained review of back-office functions and altering the balance to frontline resources.

The Members discussed the HMIC definitions of front, middle and back office roles. Mr Holden stated that the bullet points under the HMIC definition seemed sensible but they do not quite align with the definition sentence. It was questioned how open to manipulation the middle office definition is. Mr Furness suggested aligning the BTP categories to the CIPFA categories and that once agreed these would be fixed. Mr Holden stated that this seemed the right thing to do. Mr Holden suggested that there was still a little room for improvement, over the 59% figure outlined in the agenda item report, but that he liked this target as it supports the efficiency agenda. DCC Crowther stated that there was potentially still room for improvement over this figure.

Action: The force will look at a potential value to be used as a metric for this target.

Increasing the availability of staff

The aim is for this target to improve on the current sickness target by also including other measures. There was discussion about temporary duty restrictions (TDR) and sickness; this is an area which the force is still looking at. Force areas may say that TDR can be a good thing if someone is not fit so it was necessary to strike a balance. Ms France suggested that the figure for all those on TDR is included even when reporting on performance if they are not included within the target. It would be useful to have visibility of these people to further understand the figures. The figures do not include those who are pregnant and at the moment they do not include any other categories. DCC Crowther, however, remained open to others being included. Mrs Elvy queried whether it would be worth checking to ensure that there would not be any risks with regard to equality legislation, for example if someone was brought back sooner than they should have been if absent or on TDRs for a disability related illness.

Action: BTP to check equality legislation for any potential risks relating to this target.

Action: BTP will continue to develop this target, with the aim to keep sickness included.

Increase/Maintain late night visibility from the 2012-13 figure

The Group was informed that people within the force are not particularly satisfied with the current visibility target. The people who are within the scope of this target have now been identified; the force is monitoring their availability and is developing a new definition. The target has been extended to 3am due to the timing of shifts and there currently being some inconsistencies in the way that hours are counted. The force areas, over previous years, have picked up slightly different ways of telling the centre which officers to count when calculating officers on duty. The force wants to get tighter on the definitions and better at monitoring this.

Mr Holden queried whether the data could be easily extracted from the force IT system. The Group was informed that planned duty figures can be easily extracted but that if the duties change then this can require some effort.

There was agreement that this approach improved on the current method.

Increase the number of detections for public order offences for the 2012-13 figures

This target will focus on the mid-level disorderly behaviour that can be caused by people who are drunk, late at night, and who may be assaulting staff and acting in a nasty manner. It does not aim to unnecessarily criminalise those who have committed minor offences.

Mr Holden queried why the target excludes cleared, other and prosecutions. DCC Crowther explained that this should read 'cleared and by other than prosecution'. The detections have to satisfy a number of criteria and that they did not want to include administrative detections.

The changes in the numbers for the crime categories Z72 (breach of the peace) and Y79 (threatening or abusive behaviour) were queried. The Group was informed that breach of the peace was primarily used in Scotland, and that a change in practice in Scotland is the likely reason for this. It was queried whether these detections, for public order offences, would already be included within the crime reduction target. It was explained that these detections would primarily be police-generated and so many would not be included. This should be explained in the supporting narrative when sent out for consultation.

Other

Mr Holden informed the Group that there has, in the Strategy Group, been discussion about getting more involved with industry with regard to designing out crime. It was queried whether this should be reflected in the policing plan. It was explained that although this is not explicitly stated in the plan, this work is going on with regard to the metal theft and disruption strategies. The policing plan focuses on BTP's operational delivery and the design out crime work is reflected in the strategic plan as it is part of the force's departmental goals, and as such performance would be picked up in the departmental targets and would be visible in reporting progress against the strategy. Partnership working and planning for metal theft, suicide planning and cycle crime reduction could be covered in the narrative for the policing plan but it was not known how there could be a target for this. DCC Crowther stated that he would give this some thought.

17/2012 Agreed next steps for meeting 3

Agenda Item 4

Mrs Elvy informed the Group that an updated paper needs to go to the full Authority meeting on 13th December to be presented with the minutes from this meeting. The Deadline for Authority meeting papers is 6th December.

Following the full Authority meeting there will be an external consultation starting the week commencing 17th December. There is expected to be

some engagement from ATOC, as such it would be useful to have someone from BTP to attend the ATOC Policing Forum meeting with Mr Holden in January.

Action: ACC Pacey and Mr Furness to discuss who from BTP should attend this meeting with a BTPA representative.

It was agreed that subject to further amendments the targets are to be recommended to the full Authority as suitable for further consultation.

18/2012 AOB

Agenda Item 5

There was no other business

19/2012 Date of next meeting: 21st February 2013, 10-12pm

Agenda Item 6