In this edition

Welcome to the second edition of the Thames Valley Police Journal. We have been overwhelmed by the support and recognition the TVP Journal has received since publication. The TVP Journal is the product of two years’ work to turn an idea into a reality and share the excellent academic work of officers and staff in TVP.

Initially the journal was an internal publication only. However, feedback and interest from our staff was overwhelming. They were proud to have their work shared and also the interest taken by the organisation. As a result the decision was made to publish the journal externally, with the first edition made public on the 31st October 2018 and launched at the NPCC and APCC Partnership Summit in London. With the help of the Society of Evidence Based Policing and the College of Policing it has been shared widely across the UK and beyond. We have had excellent feedback from Trinidad & Tobago in the Caribbean, the USA, Australia, Turkey and Iceland to name a few!

This second version again holds a variety of articles on a number of different topics that will interest those who work in policing and academics alike.

A case study by Chief Inspector Cecilia Agger on her secondment to the United Nations mission in South Sudan highlights the wicked problems of trying to protect civilians with no executive powers or judicial system and puts into context the differing policing regimes across the world and how lucky we are to work in the environment we do.

In contrast, Dario Galasso’s discussion piece describes the use of structured analytic techniques to effectively manage the risk surrounding the release of a convicted terrorist. Consideration of how increased foresight can inform tactical planning and in essence reduce demand in the longer term is a very interesting concept that I personally think could be used more widely in the future.

There are engaging reviews of how Police deal with Mental Health and Child Exploitation cases and a literature review calling for crime to be measured using an index of harm rather than a simple count of the frequency with which it occurs. All in all, some excellent pieces of research which encompass the breadth of policing issues we deal with at tactical and strategic level every day.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity in my first editorial to thank all the authors who submitted articles for their support, and also to Chief Superintendent Rob France, Chief Inspector Lee Barnham and Michelle Campbell from Corporate Communications in Thames Valley Police, without whom this would still just be an idea!

Superintendent Katy Barrow-Grint
Head of Criminal Justice
Joint Editor of the Thames Valley Police Journal
Chief Superintendent Robert France

Rob joined Thames Valley’s Oxford Local Police Area having completed his undergraduate and doctoral degrees in Chemistry at St John’s College, Oxford and fell in love with policing as a whole new aspect of a city he thought he knew opened up in front of him. He has performed a wide variety of roles across the force area in response, neighbourhood and investigative policing, particularly enjoying his time as a detective inspector. Most recently he was the Local Police Area Commander for Wokingham (and latterly Bracknell and Wokingham) for over four years, overseeing the merger of those two areas. He has always been interested in organisational development, and was part of the small team which delivered the force’s Local Policing Model in 2011. He currently leads the Governance and Service Improvement department, which is committed to using and developing the best available thinking to guide and develop the organisation and maintains his operational exposure as an active Public Order Silver Commander.

In 2011 Rob completed a master’s degree in police leadership and management at the University of Leicester, with the emerging culture of Police Community Support Officer’s the focus of his dissertation. He has a particular interest in the challenge of translating research into practical operational change, and how the practical wisdom that has been developed over many decades can not only inform but also drive that work. He sees the journal as a fantastic opportunity not only to share the huge range of fantastic research that is being conducted across the organisation but also to explore that core question: how can we use the growing body of research to make practical day to day policing better?

Superintendent Katy Barrow-Grint

Katy joined Thames Valley Police in 2000 having studied Sociology at the London School of Economics and developed an interest in crime and policing from her dissertation work on girl gangs. She has worked in a variety of roles and ranks including uniform patrol, CID, neighbourhood policing, child abuse investigation, surveillance and strategic development.

As a Detective Chief Inspector, Katy oversaw the Oxfordshire Protecting Vulnerable People Unit, and introduced the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) into Oxfordshire. Katy’s domestic abuse team were the subject of the BBC1 documentary ‘Behind Closed Doors’ and she has a keen academic interest in domestic abuse, having recently published an academic journal article on domestic abuse attrition rates.

More recently Katy worked on the project team to introduce the Operating Model to front line Local Police Areas, and in 2017 was promoted to Superintendent and is now Head of Criminal Justice for Thames Valley Police. In this role she has encouraged the academic review of a pilot scheme to fast-track domestic abuse cases in the crown court by implementing a research project with Huddersfield University, the PCC’s office, the CPS and Aylesbury Crown Court. She is keen to join academic research with operational policing and the criminal justice system and sees the value of both academics and police officers and staff working together.

Katy’s academic interest amplified when she completed her Masters in Police Leadership and Management at Warwick Business School in 2015.

She was keen to develop the Force’s understanding of the academic work being completed by officers and staff, and as a result, the TVP Journal has emerged. She is really pleased that TVP will now have a fantastic gateway to recognise the academic work of its officers and staff, and there is significant national interest in the journal which will encourage other forces to progress similarly.

You can contact Katy by email: katy.barrow-grint@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or follow her on Twitter: @ktbg1
**Articles appearing in the Thames Valley Police Journal**

The purpose of the Thames Valley Police Journal is to ensure the diverse range of academic work undertaken within the organisation is captured and shared to inform the evidence based development of policy and practice. It is also intended that the Thames Valley Police Journal will support the development of discussion about a variety of policing issues which are not necessarily related to formal pieces of academic work.

There are three levels of submission to the Thames Valley Police Journal:

1. **Full article** emanating from academically rigorous work undertaken as part of a formal qualification.
2. **Research/practice note** which is not completed as part of a formal qualification, but is of high quality and evidence based. This could include papers from those seeking to undertake future academic work, but who have not yet gained a qualification.
3. **Comment/discussion piece** relating to evidence-based policing but that does not increase the evidence base per se. This could include sharing experiences of trying to implement a practice locally and what was learnt from the experience.

**Criteria for the inclusion of articles in the Thames Valley Police Journal**

It is important that whilst the articles in this journal support evidence based policing the content cannot compromise operational activity or undermine the public trust and confidence in Thames Valley Police.

In order to determine this, the following criteria will be considered and articles will not be included where they:

- Contain information capable of identifying victims in any circumstances. This goes further than data protection legislation as it also covers individuals who are deceased.
- Disclose information about an ongoing investigation, covert tactics or affect proceedings undertaken by any other public body.
- Deter victims or witnesses having the confidence to speak to the police.

In addition any information published must:

- Comply with legal requirements, court restrictions and media law.
- Be subject to Parliamentary Privilege.

Further consideration must be given to the impact that may be caused by those affected by reading previously unknown detail about the case.

**Process for reviewing articles**

Each article is reviewed by one internal peer reviewer and the editorial team prior to publication. In order to ensure the criteria for inclusion are met, the editorial team will also seek specialist advice from other departments where necessary. Where recommendations are made articles are sent to the Head(s) of Department for the business area for consideration against the wider evidence base and any limitations of the research.
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Managing risk through the use of structured analytic techniques

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Abstract

This discussion piece describes the use of structured analytic techniques to effectively manage the risk surrounding the release of a convicted terrorist. Force field analysis, scenario generation and analysis of competing hypotheses were among the techniques successfully used to increase foresight, inform tactical planning and guide intelligence collection both before and after the prisoner’s release.

While this specific case relates to counter-terrorism, the robust and evidence-based approach can be replicated in any area of policing and the analytical techniques can be used to tackle any problem type. The overall approach blends strategic and tactical planning and forms an instructive example for risk holders and for those managing intelligence or analytical functions. The combined and complimentary application of structured analytic techniques at both strategic and tactical levels highlights important methodological points for intelligence analysts.

Key words: Counter-terrorism; intelligence analysis; planning; prisons; risk management; structured analytic techniques.

Background and context

At the time of his arrest, Paul—as we will call him—was involved in the radicalisation of other young Muslims culminating in the overt encouragement of travel to Syria in support of ISIS. He had been groomed by a close relative: a subject of interest in his own right who led extremist discussions with local Muslims. Once radicalised, Paul began travelling outside Thames Valley to deliver extremist speeches of his own in other parts of the country to young and impressionable audiences. Following a long-running operation, Paul was successfully arrested and convicted under the Terrorism Act 2000.

Years later, an uneventful prison term had generated little new intelligence about Paul, as a result of which his mind-set and intentions were unknown. The nature of his offence suggested that he may still pose a risk to the community, and there were safeguarding concerns related to the fact that Paul had a young family. However, the intelligence picture offered little insight into what the future might hold once Paul was released.

The question faced was therefore: how would Paul behave once he was released, and how could we use this knowledge to manage the risk he posed? In essence, what was required was the ability to envision plausible future states for Paul against which we could plan. Achieving this would permit proportionate contingency planning to manage the risks relating to each future state.
However, while this approach recognises an element of proactivity it remains, at heart, reactive – because police would simply be responding (albeit proactively) to the future scenarios identified, rather than actively shaping them. The real objective was therefore, not only to envision plausible futures for Paul and to plan for them, but also to determine what police and other stakeholders could do to steer Paul away from undesirable, high-risk futures and guide him towards desirable, low-risk futures. It was determined that the most effective way to do this was through the use of structured analytic techniques.

**Why structured analytic techniques?**

Structured analytic techniques (SATs) provide analysts with a means of externalising their thoughts and thought processes so that they are apparent, understandable and open to critique by others. By promoting collaboration, transparency and discussion, SATs reduce the risk of ‘getting it wrong’.¹

In contrast to the nine analytical techniques specified in the National Intelligence Model, SATs aim less at pattern identification and more at identifying and developing alternative explanations and outcomes. This makes them especially well-suited to dealing with issues about which there is no prevailing wisdom, or about which there are conflicting views. Questions about the future are model examples of such issues.

A further important reason for using SATs is that they recognise the risks that our cognitive limitations bring to analysis, and make strong attempts to mitigate or avoid them. In this sense, they promote what Daniel Kahneman (2011) calls “System 2” thinking – a self-conscious (but not infallible) state of mind that is more deliberative, logical and controlled.² When engaged in System 2 thinking, analysts are more open to alternatives, more able to recognise bias and more willing to question themselves.

**Force field analysis**

The first step towards envisioning plausible futures for Paul was to understand the various forces impacting upon his future choice of lifestyle and the relative weight of each force. ‘Force field analysis’ was used to achieve this. The use of a structured analytic technique to identify the relevant forces was crucial to avoiding the bias that ‘once a terrorist, always a terrorist’ and to facilitate a full and fair assessment of Paul’s situation.

Force field analysis is a structured method of identifying and evaluating all the forces acting for or against an individual, situation or outcome. It promotes a full understanding of all the relevant factors and helps to avoid unjustified emphasis on only one side of the argument (a key advantage over other, more generic brainstorming techniques). Scoring each force or factor helps analysts to pinpoint those carrying the most weight and to make appropriate recommendations to strengthen forces that tend in a positive direction and to weaken those tending towards undesirable ends.

Forces impacting upon Paul were identified through a thorough and systematic review of the intelligence, brainstorming against the PESTELO mnemonic³, and engagement with colleagues with prior knowledge or experience of Paul and his index offence. In total, 34 distinct forces were identified as relevant to determining the kind of futures towards which Paul may gravitate.

In order to weight the various factors, seven colleagues were selected to score each one based on how influential it was deemed to be in determining Paul’s future. Participants comprised police staff as well as police officers, and included those with direct experience of Paul as well

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¹ These points are made throughout Heuer and Pherson’s *Structured analytic techniques for intelligence analysis* but particularly in Chapter 1.

² See Part 1 of Kahneman’s excellent *Thinking, fast and slow* for an explanation of the System 1/System 2 distinction.

³ ‘PESTELO’ is an acronym used to denote the political, economic, social, technological, environmental, legal and organisational. It is often used as a guide during environmental scanning.
as those with little or no knowledge of him. Factors of only minimal influence received a score of one, and those judged to have a very strong influence received a score of five.

When the exercise was complete, scores were aggregated and the competing forces ranked according to the strength of their influence. This gave rise to two shortlists (or opposing ‘force fields’) consisting of highly influential forces tending either towards or away from desirable future scenarios.

A key outcome

A pivotal discovery was that the numbers of positive and negative forces and the scores they received were almost equally balanced. This indicated that Paul was as likely to move towards a positive future (from a counter-terrorism perspective) as he was to move towards a negative one. To put this another way, there was as much of an opportunity to assist Paul to lead a stable and law-abiding lifestyle as there was a need to manage the threat he posed. This insight played a key role in the intelligence manager’s subsequent decision-making process.

Scenario generation

The results of the force field analysis directly fed a scenario generation technique, known within government as the ‘cone of plausibility’ (so-named based on the shape of the template commonly used to complete it). The technique involves identifying key drivers affecting an outcome, making explicit assumptions about each one, and then using them to generate plausible scenarios to guide understanding, planning and response.4

The highest scoring forces from the force field analysis provided the key drivers for scenario generation. These drivers were:

- Employment
- Internet usage
- Religious understanding
- Travel
- Family and peer group

Explicit assumptions were made about each one, based upon which plausible future scenarios were generated. For example, it was assumed that Paul’s state of unemployment would persist (driver 1), and that planned license conditions restricting Paul’s movements would in fact be applied post-release (driver 4).

By considering likely interactions between the drivers and experimentally changing the assumptions made about each one, four plausible future scenarios were developed. The essence of each scenario is summarised below:

- **Scenario A**  Paul abides by his license conditions but does so with resentment, secretly looking for ways to breach his conditions undetected (baseline scenario).
- **Scenario B**  Paul’s mind-set gradually changes as a result of stable employment and regular meetings with a theological mentor (best-case scenario).
- **Scenario C**  Paul rejects authority and breaches his license conditions as he seeks to re-engage with extremist associates and terrorist activity (worst-case scenario).
- **Scenario D**  Paul turns his back on his extremist past and devotes his full attention to rebuilding his relationship with his family (wild card scenario).

4 The cone of plausibility was selected as the most appropriate scenario generation technique to use based on the number of key drivers selected, and the high volume of different assumptions that could be made about each. Other scenario generation techniques (while useful in other contexts) offer less flexibility in this regard.
Scenarios A and C represented undesirable futures from a police perspective; scenarios B and D represented desirable outcomes. Scenario B was judged to be the ideal scenario and was that to which efforts were primarily directed. Scenario C was the worst-case scenario away from which we sought to manoeuvre Paul.

Key outcomes

The development of tangible, evidence-based future scenarios promoted awareness and understanding among analysts and officers alike of the range of futures that could develop. Those involved acknowledged that this helped to focus thought and action on the areas of greatest risk, and helped to avoid speculative planning for an assumed (but unfounded) future. Importantly, the acknowledgement of several alternative futures mitigated the risk of confirmation bias, as there was not just one future upon which we were focused.5

Most significantly, the prioritised list of influencing factors (generated through force field analysis) and resulting scenarios acted as the basis for an operational planning meeting during which risk holders authorised targeted action designed to mitigate negative forces—those tending towards undesirable scenarios—and amplify positive ones.

For example, to counteract Paul's weak understanding of Islam he was recommended and supported for inclusion in a government deradicalisation program; to mitigate the risk of online contact with extremists or extremist media, stringent license conditions were imposed on Paul's internet usage; and to promote stability in Paul's life, viable employment options were identified.

In addition to helping to manage the risk Paul posed to the community, these actions (and others) met statutory safeguarding duties by proactively promoting desirable futures for Paul upon his release and directing him away from malign influences. The intelligence manager highlighted this as a key outcome.

Indicators of the future

Before continuing with Paul's story, it is instructive to consider an important complimentary analytical activity that was carried out following the generation of future scenarios: the identification of scenario indicators.

There is only limited value in attempting to increase foresight by developing scenarios if we have no way of recognising these scenarios ahead of time. For this reason, a series of brainstorming sessions were conducted, centred on each of the four scenarios, to identify a comprehensive list of indicators—or signposts—that would provide early warning that a particular scenario (e.g. the worst-case scenario) was coming into view. This would allow us to take timely and remedial action to steer Paul from undesirable scenarios to desirable ones and, most importantly, reduce the risk of surprise. In total, approximately 100 indicators of one or more of the four scenarios were identified.

Imagine that Paul was approached by extremist associates and invited to re-engage with them, and that he rejected the invitation. This would be inconsistent with the worst-case scenario (scenario 3), in which he seeks to re-engage with terrorism. If he sought involvement in terrorist acts, it is unlikely that he would turn down the opportunity to re-connect with his old associates. However, a rejection of extremist contact would be consistent with scenarios 2 and 4, and offer hope that Paul was heading in a reassuring direction.

Similarly, it could be argued that were Paul’s wife to fall pregnant with his child this would act as an accelerator pushing Paul towards the (desirable) wild card scenario, in which he rejects

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5 Confirmation bias is the tendency to look only for information that supports a favoured theory, and to ignore or under-estimate the strength of information that undermines it. The range of cognitive biases to which intelligence analysts (and, indeed, all humans) are prone is demonstrated by Richards Heuer in his seminal work *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*. 

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extremism in favour of family life. A pregnancy would not be inconsistent with scenarios 1-3, but it would be highly consistent with scenario 4.

This second example hints at an important concept in indicator development: **diagnosticity**. An indicator that is equally consistent with all scenarios has no diagnostic value, because it does not help us to choose between them. Furthermore, an indicator that does distinguish between scenarios may do so to different extents – the pregnancy indicator, for example, clearly distinguishes scenario 4 from the others but does not distinguish between scenarios 1-3.

Other key characteristics of indicators that were taken into account were **observability** and **timeliness**. An indicator may be highly diagnostic but also highly unlikely to be observed (or perhaps impossible to observe through available resources) – such an indicator is of little use. Other indicators may be highly observable but by their nature be observed too late to take remedial action. For example, the observation that an individual has just removed their jacket to reveal a suicide vest has very likely come too late for us to do anything to stop its detonation.

**Key outcomes**

By filtering on the key characteristics of diagnosticity, observability and timeliness to remove undiagnostic, unobservable and untimely indicators, the initial list of 100 indicators was reduced to a manageable shortlist of just 34. Each of these indicators acted as a practical signpost to one or more of the four scenarios identified.

This outcome formed the basis for tactical intelligence gathering, as efforts could now be focused on collecting the types of information most diagnostic of the future. Understanding which indicators were signposts of which scenarios also allowed for balanced and proportionate data collection to ensure that each scenario was given an equal chance of revealing itself.

The key indicators were shared with investigative teams, probation officers and other partners to raise awareness and understanding, and to maximise opportunities for meaningful intelligence gathering.

**Analysis of competing hypotheses**

Fast-forwarding several months, Paul had now been released and targeted intelligence gathering was yielding varied and useful diagnostic information. Having given ourselves the best possible chance of achieving early recognition of high-risk futures, the question now became: based on the intelligence, towards which future was Paul in fact heading?

To answer this question, the ‘analysis of competing hypotheses’ (ACH) technique was used. ACH employs a matrix format to evaluate the intelligence and any underlying assumptions against a series of hypotheses or scenarios to determine which can be refuted.

The orientation towards refutation is crucial. Similar to the way that a scientist tests the ‘null hypothesis’ (i.e. the opposite of a favoured theory), ACH is directed towards disproving—and not proving—hypotheses. The most likely hypothesis or scenario is that with the least information against it (not the one with the most information for it), as well as information consistent with it. Setting out to try and prove a hypothesis invites confirmation bias by encouraging unwarranted focus on ‘pet theories’ and causing us to underestimate the impact of information that is inconsistent with these theories.

Each item of intelligence was evaluated against each future scenario to determine whether it was: highly inconsistent with it; inconsistent; neutral or irrelevant; consistent; or highly consistent. Based on the answer, each scenario received a score from -2 for ‘highly inconsistent’ to +2 for ‘highly consistent’. Totalling the scores for each scenario revealed the one least inconsistent with the intelligence and therefore most likely to be emerging.
Key outcomes

The surprising outcome of the ACH was that the future scenario in fact emerging was the wild card scenario, in which Paul appeared to be dedicating himself to family life, and not one of the scenarios initially judged to be much more likely.

This is significant because, had we not sought to foresee a range of potential futures and only focused on one, it is unlikely to have been this scenario. We may have expended valuable resources preparing for something that would not happen, and may have wrongly interpreted the intelligence to fit a pre-determined and erroneous conclusion.

Nonetheless, all other scenarios remained on the table and everyone involved maintained an awareness that the situation could change at any time: an unforeseen trigger event (such as the death of a loved one) could quickly and unexpectedly divert Paul from one future to another.

Understanding the future towards which Paul was heading allowed stakeholders to take action to amplify forces that would continue to shepherd Paul in this positive direction, and to mitigate specifically those forces acting as an obstacle to him reaching this destination.

For example, during Ramadan Paul’s curfew was extended to allow him to break the fast and spend quality time with his family. This allowance demonstrated respect for Paul's Islamic heritage while implicitly promoting the development of a strong family unit. Similarly, in recognition of the importance of stable employment it was recommended that any unnecessary obstacles to Paul’s completion of an online course of study be removed so that he stood the best chance of finding rewarding work.

Both of these actions proactively shaped the future in a way that simply reacting to events would not have. Use of ACH provided early warning of the future before it had fully emerged enabling us to accelerate the development of that future through targeted, proportionate and supportive action.

Implications for policing

Paul’s story goes on, and it remains possible that the positive future towards which he seems to be heading may morph into another, quite different state. However, a number of key learning points relevant to both risk holders and intelligence staff can be discerned from his case.

Foresight, not forecasts

Traditionally, attempts to forecast the future have focused on correctly identifying, with as much certainty as possible, the one future that will occur. There can be, after all, only a single future. Forecasting a single future focuses attention and action upon it. A forecast will be either right or wrong.

The SAT-based approach described in this discussion piece takes forecasting one step further. Instead of forecasting a single future, it increases awareness and foresight of multiple, alternate futures. Instead of directing recommendations towards a single end, it encourages consideration of how we can bend, shape and influence an uncertain but pliable threat landscape to bring about the end most favourable to a subject’s welfare. For the SAT practitioner, it is not a question of right or wrong but of better or worse.

The approach is of direct relevance to risk holders. The development of alternate future scenarios encourages greater open-mindedness, both to what may in fact transpire and to acceptable alternatives. The ability to recognise diagnostic evidence primes police and partners to recognise signposts to desirable and undesirable futures, helping to defuse risk early on. And, crucially, proactively taking evidence-based action to help a desirable future emerge demonstrates the intelligence-led ethos in its purest form: one can truly be said to be taking control of the future and not simply responding to it.
Tactical planning

Analytical outputs from the SAT process can provide a visual and impactive agenda for tactical planning meetings. The prioritised list of forces acting for and against Paul, the clear and provocative statement of alternate futures and the identification of observable signposts each encourage discussion and consideration of the most appropriate and proportionate action. In the words of the intelligence manager, the application of SATs to Paul’s case was a ‘forward thinking’ approach that ‘allowed me as an intelligence manager to make informed decisions to focus limited resources’.

As tactics are implemented, the results can be fed back into the ACH allowing for a continual evaluation of whether they are having the desired effect (i.e. whether they are successfully promoting the favoured future scenario). This evaluation will show that each potential future is constantly emerging and receding, jostling for position with other potential futures, in response to our tactics. The ability to recognise this allows intelligence managers to fine-tune strategy and tactics. Tactical activity is both a consequence and a cause of strategy.

Analytic good practice

Paul’s case demonstrates that intelligence analysts can play a tangible and influential role in risk assessment and risk management. This role goes far beyond simply identifying threats and their likelihood (a common analytical contribution to the risk assessment process). Rather, it encompasses the entire breadth of what is possible, how to recognise it, what it implies and what we can do to shape it.

Taking a collaborative approach to the analysis—involving officers, managers and partners in scoring exercises and brainstorming sessions—increases the credibility of the results as there will be greater collective confidence that alternatives and counter-arguments have been considered. Involving customers in the analytic process also serves to demystify it for some and to increase the buy-in of all: customers recognise their own ideas and insights in the final product and are more invested in its tactical application.

Most significantly, SATs produce stronger analysis because they increase resilience to bias and assumption, and improve the ability to identify and evaluate alternative explanations and outcomes. These alternatives enhance the evidence base upon which decisions are made and increase the likelihood that these decisions are appropriate, proportionate and timely.

Conclusion

Imaginative and systematic use of SATs can give police a competitive advantage over criminals and terrorists by foreseeing and shaping futures of which even the latter are unaware. In doing so, SATs reduce the risk of surprise or of simply ‘getting things wrong’. They create a cognitive openness to alternative explanations and prime us to recognise diagnostic events when they occur, promoting proactivity and responsiveness. The use made of structured analysis was identified by the intelligence manager as a ‘gold standard’ that should be replicated in future cases.

While this specific case relates to counter-terrorism, the robust and evidence-based approach can be replicated in any area of policing and the analytical techniques can be used to tackle any problem type. The overall approach blends strategic and tactical planning and forms an instructive example for risk holders and for those managing intelligence or analytical functions. The combined and complimentary application of SATs at both strategic and tactical levels highlights valuable methodological points for intelligence analysts.
References


Measuring crime using an index of harm: A brief review of the existing literature

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Abstract

Typically crime is reported and police activity is organised around the raw frequency of crimes. Although this remains important, the simple summation of crimes by the number of times they occur fails to make distinctions between levels of harm caused by different types of offences. In official statistics using a simple count means that a theft by shoplifting carries the same weight as a sexual assault. Other attempts to measure crime have focused on the concept of 'harm'. This article reviews attempts made to measure harm using three metrics: (1) public opinion; (2) cost and (3) sentencing in court. It is argued that using sentencing as the basis for an index of crime harm is the most promising because it is democratic and reliable. The article identifies two methodologies that use sentencing to form an index of harm: the Cambridge Crime Harm Index (CHI) and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) crime severity score. It is argued that whilst the ONS crime severity score is methodologically more sophisticated it is potentially less cost effective because of complexities in maintaining it. The article considers the results of research that have used an index of crime harm and the benefits of using such an approach in the Thames Valley.

Key words: Measurement, crime harm, frequency.

Introduction

The success (or otherwise) of the police in managing crime has typically been measured by reference to a simple count of the number of crimes recorded. Whilst this is an important measure because the police cannot ignore those who are repeatedly victimised to any extent, the problem of traditional counts of crime is that every offence carries the same weight when reported in official statistics. For example, an incident of theft by shoplifting carries the same weight as sexual assault when, by any standard of interpretation, they are clearly not equal in their gravitas. Moreover, the crime figures are presented in broad categories of offence type which takes no account of the severity of the offence within a category or the level of demand placed on the police (ONS 2016).

Other methods for measuring seriousness or severity have focused on the concept of 'harm', which developed as a more meaningful way of reporting crime than traditional counts. Sherman et al. (2016) argue in favour of an index based approach yielding a single bottom line of value. Whilst the concept of crime harm is not new, it has hitherto struggled to gain any real traction in its operationalisation in policing to enable more effective targeting of police resources or, more widely, in portraying the nature of crime in the community.

Notwithstanding this lack of progress, there has been greater interest in crime harm in recent years. Perhaps most notable is the Office for National Statistics (ONS 2016) development of a...
crime severity score which attracted widespread media interest when its results were published in 2016. Sherman et al. (2016) cite three main reasons for this renewed vigour around the measurement of crime harm: (1) the philosophical desire to find a better way of reflecting the levels of harm experienced by victims; (2) the climate of austerity and cuts to criminal justice budgets coupled with changing crime patterns which have forced police forces to reassess their focus on more familiar types of crime and look for new ways to identify priorities and (3) emphasis on the importance of harm reduction as a goal for law enforcement in itself.

This literature review examines attempts to measure the harm caused by crime and recommends an approach that could be easily adopted by Thames Valley Police to improve the targeting of resources and that could complement the existing approach to counting crime. The potential benefits and opportunities are articulated with reference to studies that have already used this approach in measuring crime harm.

**Methods for measuring crime harm**

Attempts to measure the harm caused by crime have drawn on three metrics: (1) seeking public opinion about the seriousness/severity of particular offence types; (2) the financial costs of crime and (3) sentencing in court.

**Public opinion**

Sellin and Wolfgang (1964) and Wolfgang et al. (1985) tested public opinion using panel and public surveys in which they asked respondents to rank the seriousness of a range of crimes to create a severity index. Their research found general agreement amongst those surveyed when ranking seriousness. This approach is severely limited because the rank ordering does not distinguish how much more serious (or harmful) one offence is over another. In the UK, Ignatans and Pease (2016) suggest this could be achieved by asking respondents to the annual CSEW for their judgements of crime seriousness. There are limitations in using any victimisation surveys for the purposes of creating an index of harm. Firstly, they do not capture the most serious events such as murder (Sherman et al. 2016) and, secondly, changes in public opinion would make long term comparisons unstable (Sherman et al. 2014).

**Calculating cost**

Equally fluid are estimates of the average financial costs of individual crime types which require annual readjustment (Ratcliffe 2015; Sherman et al. 2014). In England and Wales, Dubourg and Hamed (2005) calculated the costs of each crime type according to the physical and emotional consequences to the individual as well as the costs to a range of public services. These calculations are so complex that costs are provided for very broad offence categories that do not take account of the variations between discrete crime types thereby limiting the usefulness and practicality of adopting such a method (Ratcliffe 2015; Sherman et al. 2014).

**Sentencing**

This last point has been addressed by scholars who have used court sentencing as a metric for an index. In Canada, a Crime Severity Index was developed with each offence being assigned a seriousness ‘weight’ determined by the actual sentence handed down by the court (Wallace et al. 2009). This method, however, also fails to provide a consistent baseline. Sentencing is a more complicated decision made on the basis of a number of factors, including the prior conviction history of the defendant, point at which they were convicted and any mitigation, rather than the harm caused by the offence (Sherman et al. 2016). Ratcliffe (2014) proposed the use of offence gravity scores provided to judges across Pennsylvania. This method is independent of the police and allows the weighting of specific categories of offence. However, Ratcliffe’s (2015) proposal is based on a very narrow score ranging from 1 for a
misdemeanour to 14 for murder. This ordinal scale does not address the need to have a consistent ratio that measures the difference in harm between the various offences.

Sherman et al. (2014; 2016) propose an alternative index using the sentencing starting point for an offender convicted for the first time. Each offence is given a value equivalent to the number of days imprisonment imposed on offenders with no prior criminal history. This is referred to as the Cambridge Crime Harm Index (CHI). Using the sentence starting point has the advantage of avoiding the consideration of other factors when sentencing. However, Ignatans and Pease (2016) argue this approach is limited in that it removes judgements about severity from the victims of crime because the guidelines are prepared by a group of experts with experience of higher courts and detected crimes. Ignatans and Pease (2016) also suggests that sentence starting points might not be a true reflection of harm if the judiciary exercise their power to routinely adjust sentence length according to aggravating and mitigating factors.

Nevertheless, the Cambridge CHI can be translated into practice cheaply, quickly and with no requirement for additional funding (the 'cost' test). In addition, the Cambridge CHI would require minimal updates and could be reviewed every 5 years. The Cambridge CHI is democratic in the sense that UK Parliament passes the decision on sentencing to a Council of judges and other experts (the 'democracy' test) and reliable in providing a consistent measure that can be applied to each unit of analysis be it time, place, victim or suspect (the 'reliability' test) (Sherman et al. 2016). Furthermore, the intention of using this method is to apply it purely to incidents reported to the police which could enable more effective targeting of victims and places experiencing the most harm as well as perpetrators inflicting the most damage within the community. In applying the Cambridge CHI, the reported levels of harm are based on an objective measure using a consistent ratio that measures the difference in harm between the various offences.

The Cambridge CHI is also versatile enough that it has the capability to measure actual harm experienced by the community by excluding proactively generated crime detection by officers (such as possession of drugs and shoplifting reported by store detectives). This is because such cases do not measure the harm experienced by the population providing instead a measurement of resources invested in apprehending suspects involved in predictable offending at predictable times and places which do not necessarily originate from a concern within the community (Sherman et al. 2016). Whilst this proactive policing has its place, it also has the effect of highlighting an increase in crime because the police make a higher number of arrests (Sherman et al. 2016).

In 2016, the ONS developed a crime severity score which was also based on sentencing6. However, the ONS crime severity scores were calculated using average sentencing data for a 5 year period between the year ending December 2011 to the year ending December 2015, rather than the sentence starting point. This approach allows weights to be calculated from a large quantity of data to minimise the impact of fluctuations in low volume offences as well as using up to date sentencing data (ONS 2016). In constructing the weightings, custodial sentences, community orders and fines have been included to account for the fact the courts have the whole range of sentencing options open to them and some do not carry a custodial penalty at all (and would therefore not have any weighting). The weights have been calculated:

"as the proportion of offenders receiving the type of punishment multiplied by the average sentence length in days; for custodial sentences this is the average custodial sentence length, for community orders and fines this is a prison length equivalency." (ONS 2016, p. 5)

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6 The Crime Severity Score data tool is freely available to download.
The fine equivalency has been calculated based on the length of time it would take to earn the fine amount using median pre-tax earnings as established by the Survey of Personal Incomes for 2013. Community order equivalences were calculated based on the length of the unpaid work, or equivalent, an offender receives. The ONS propose to re-run the crime severity scores every 5 years and apply the latest weightings retrospectively to measure comparisons over time.

Whilst the ONS crime severity score is a more methodologically sophisticated index for severity than the Cambridge CHI, it is far more complex in its construction. If the ONS continues to make the crime severity score freely available it would be easy for Thames Valley Police to apply the scores. However, without the work of the ONS, it is unlikely that developing and using this matrix in future will be feasible for Thames Valley Police. As such, the ONS crime severity score passes the 'democracy' test and 'reliability' test but only partially meets the 'cost' test. The Cambridge CHI is far more straightforward to maintain and the methodology easily replicated within the Thames Valley.

Potential benefits and opportunities for applying harm scores in the Thames Valley

The measurement of crime harm as a way of setting police priorities has already been applied to a number of operational issues, particularly to the three key targets for allocating resources: locations, victims and perpetrators (Dudfield et al. 2017). These analyses have repeatedly uncovered highly concentrated distributions of crime harm in a small number of units at risk from people to places to times and situations (Sherman 2007; 2013).

In Suffolk, Bland and Ariel (2015) found that rank ordering couples known to the police for domestic abuse using severity of crime harm revealed that under 2% of all couples accounted for 80% of the total crime harm. In the Thames Valley, Barnham et al. (2017) found that 3% of perpetrators of intimate partner abuse were responsible for inflicting 90% of crime harm in a two-year follow-up period.

Dudfield et al. (2017) used the Cambridge CHI to measure the distribution of harm across all victims and repeat victims of a total of 30,2245 crimes reported over a one year period between June 2015 to May 2016 in Dorset. The results showed small concentrations of high levels of harm with just under 4% of victims suffered 85% of the total crime harm with sex offences and robbery accounting for almost two thirds of the harm (63%). Almost one third (29%) of the harm was perpetrated against repeat victims. Just 256 victims (representing 1% of the total number of victims) experienced 26% of the total victim harm. Crucially, the research did not find such concentrated victimisation when only a count of crime was used.

The Police and Crime Plan for the Thames Valley 2017 - 2021 puts reducing crime and preventing harm at the centre of the force’s strategic priorities. A crime harm index can be used to complement counts of crime which will enable the force to assess the extent to which it is meeting this strategic objective. The results of a crime harm index could also enable the organisation to develop operational and strategic practice that targets a reduction in crime defined by the total harm suffered by victims and locations as well as harm inflicted by perpetrators. Rank ordered lists of victims, locations and perpetrators provides a focus for resource allocation and could also encourage greater professional curiosity about the plight of people and places in the Thames Valley leading to renewed efforts to intervene and problem solve.

Ultimately, the premise of an index is to identify harm and take steps to prevent further harm from occurring. Increasing the use of an index of harm could lead to further work to establish whether it is possible to determine how much more predictable harm is than crime counts are (Dudfield et al. 2017). At its most ambitious further use of an index could lead to the
development of a forecasting model using the ‘random forests’ statistical method. Although development of this method would require further research in order to identify additional variables and sources of data for inclusion in the prediction model to make predictions, statistically validated forecasts have consistently been shown to be more accurate or at least as good as clinical predictions (Barnes and Hyatt 2012; Berk et al 2009; Sherman 2012; Sherman 2013).

Conclusion

There is a need in policing to move beyond using a simple count of crimes in terms of reporting, measuring performance and allocating resources. Not all crimes are equal and with a desire to better conceptualise that nature of crime, increasing fiscal pressure to find new ways of prioritising police activity and the importance of harm reduction there is fertile ground on which to develop an index of harm. The use of a crime harm index should not replace traditional counts of crime but complement them in order to give a rich picture of crime in the Thames Valley. This article has identified that the most cost effective, reliable and democratic way is to use an index of harm that is based on sentencing guidelines. The Cambridge CHI and ONS crime severity score represent two methodologies that Thames Valley Police could employ. However, the ONS methodology is more complicated and its utility very much depends on the commitment of the ONS to develop, amend and share the crime severity score in a way that can be easily adopted by police forces. A review of studies that have employed a harm index have identified small concentrations of high harm that could provide the police with a new focus and, ultimately, reduce harm in our communities. Further development of a harm index could lead to new ways of forecasting who might be further victimised, who might re-offend, where and when.
References


A Panacea for Policing… Or Just Another Failed Reform?
An assessment of the implementation of evidence-based policing within Thames Valley Police

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Abstract
Evidence-based policing (EBP) whilst gaining traction within the UK Police service will never be the panacea for police reform as advocated by many. There is however hope that it will contribute to a more intelligent and defensible delivery of service to the public. The research conducted on experienced police officers educated in the principles of EBP demonstrated that education alone is insufficient to promulgate and implement the principles of evidence-based practice. Moreover, cultural inhibitors with complexities and language associated with the world of academia do not help its cause. However, despite the critics the research highlighted the clear use of both professional judgment and EBP principles within the practical setting. So too did it uncover EBP’s breadth of application beyond crime prevention tactics. However whilst applicable across a multitude of areas, the research highlighted that its widespread implementation may just be too politically unpalatable for some areas of policing.

Key words: Evidence-based Policing, culture, practitioner, professional judgement, Evidence-based practice.

Introduction

“Though none but a fool or madman will ever pretend to dispute the authority of experience, or to reject that great guide of human life” (David Hume 2007/1748 cited in Willis and Mastrofski 2014)

As the Scottish 18th Century philosopher suggests, to disregard the experience and expertise of life is to do so at your peril. With the advent and subsequent rise of evidence-based practice within policing, there are however increasing concerns that the skills and professional experience of officers is being undermined (Sparrow 2011). The use of scientific methodologies within evidence-based policing (EBP) to inform decision makers regarding the most effective tactic or efficient allocation of resources, has been heralded by many as the future of both US and UK policing (Lum et al 2012, Weisburd and Neyroud 2013 and Sherman 2015). However, despite increasing numbers of police professionals being educated in EBP, and randomised-control trials (RCT) in policing numbering over 100 worldwide, (Lum et al 2011) there remains a stubborn lack of widespread uptake amongst practitioners (Ibid). The purpose of this paper is to examine this phenomenon: that despite decreasing public sector budgets and increasing calls for police legitimacy, the use of science within policing has been slow.
As a serving police officer of twenty years, exposed to the world of academia and the strategic decision making of senior ranks, there is a disappointing lack of evidence-base practice amongst the police. For example, despite the well known evidence relating to hot-spot policing, with Sherman (2013) describing hot-spots as ‘small enough to stand in’, much of officers’ time is still spent patrolling large, unfocussed geographic areas. Tracking officers’ movements is also significantly inhibited. A major player in the ‘targeting, testing and tracking’ (Ibid) principles of EBP whereby officers are tracked to ensure compliance of a tactic, it is largely overlooked as either too time consuming or technologically too difficult.

Thames Valley Police, (TVP) where the research will be conducted, has however made real headway into the education of EBP with its staff. The organisation has played host to Professor Sherman who originally coined the term EBP, (Sherman 1998) held evidence-based seminars and conferences, and for a period of two years had a specialist EBP analyst sitting within the Neighbourhood Policing Unit. Moreover, TVP have sent nineteen senior police officers and staff (primarily officers of Chief Inspector rank up to and including Chief Constable) to Cambridge University to study a Masters in Applied Criminology and Police Management. Known as the Police Executive Programme it is financially supported by the College of Policing and the home force. Open to officers from around the world the two year course involves residential sessions costing a total of £20,000 (TVP and the College of Policing share the costs) and is the study of crime and harm reduction centred on the principles of evidence-based practice and of understanding ‘what works’ within policing.

Over the last five years the course has produced over 250 senior police officers, highly trained and coached in the strict principles and implementation of evidence-based policing. Given the generous investment in both time and costs (almost £200,000 over the past 5 years) from TVP, one could argue that the force is well positioned for widespread implementation. Small but perceptible changes are occurring, mostly in the terminology. Officers talk about the ‘evidence base’ for their decisions and the term evidence-based policing is at least common amongst the senior and middle management. However, whilst there are promising signs, widespread implementation is still some way off.

The primary focus of this research will be on these Cambridge Students7. Evidence-based practice is an innovative and radical way of policing, the author is therefore advocating that the Cambridge students have taken the position of ‘thought leaders’ within TVP. Whilst many of them carry traditional positions of leadership, thought leaders are those who’s ideas influence the thinking and actions of others, (Mizell 2010). McCrimmon (2005) points to the difference between traditional leadership which carries the responsibility of management, and thoughts leaders, who focus on the championing of new directions both upwards, laterally to their peers and downwards to subordinates. Integral to changing the way people think Hamel, (2001 cited in McCrimmon 2005 p1065) describes them as “revolutionaries, employees who challenge the status quo and press for change.”

A review of the literature will first be conducted in order to ascertain any gaps in previous research and to refine the focus of the study. Once established, the thought leaders will be questioned using semi-structured interviews in order to probe their feelings and attitudes towards implementing evidence-based practice. Thematic analysis will be utilised during the discussion in order to interpret and understand some of the barriers to implementation across the force. Whilst the masters at Cambridge was the mechanism for learning, this paper is not a critique of the design and delivery of this education. More importantly it is an attempt to understand the epistemological limitations of EBP and its implementation within the cultural and political setting of the police.

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7 Although nineteen attended the course, 15 are currently still serving in TVP.
Literature Review

This literature review will focus on 3 key areas: firstly, the origins, nature, methods and limits of evidence-based policing will be discussed. Put more simply, it’s epistemology. This is of paramount importance if we are to understand how EBP can be woven into the cultural setting of the police. Moreover, its application within and across policing, with particular focus on professional judgement and experience; known as ‘police craft’ will be probed. Finally the pervasive culture of the police will be discussed, with a last word on the receptivity of evidence-based practice amongst senior officers.

The rise of evidence-based practice

Hope (2009) argues that the rise of evidence-based policing had its foundations in the early 1970s when extensive research was conducted by US criminologists into police practice and criminal justice sentencing. Despite the abundance of research, there was one rather significant conclusion: that no one really knew what worked in policing (ibid). The term was coined by Larry Sherman, a leading US criminologist who adapted the idea from the world of medicine. As in evidence-based medicine, EBP is based on the principles that good decision-making should be informed by the best available evidence. If evidence is not available, decision-makers should use high quality methods to find out works. In Sherman’s opinion “…Lack of knowledge implies we don’t know what we are doing, and do not deserve to hold public office” (Sherman 2009 cited in Hope 2009 p126). Sherman believed that the answer to policing’s concerns was in the adoption of the more rigorous scientific methodologies, similar to those of the medical world (Telep 2016). These methods and most notably the randomised control trial (RCT), involved examining the impact of a chosen intervention by taking measurements before and after it has been implemented. Sherman devised the Maryland Scientific Method Scale (SMS) which he proposed as the gold standard method for evaluating the quality of research for ‘what works’ (Hope 2005). As described by Sherman, the SMS subjects research data to a number of filtrations (Ibid). First, data is screened for relevance, geography, language and methods. It is then screened using a five-point scale ranging from 1, from evaluations based on simple cross sectional correlations, to 5 for randomised control trials (Ibid). Whilst the scale encompasses a wide range of evidence, emphasis has been on level 3-5 and most notably the RCT.

Advocates for the SMS approach, including Neyroud and Weisburd (2014) and Lum and Telep (2014), argue that the use of a scientific approach within policing is not only necessary but essential to the continuing legitimacy and support of the public. With unprecedented cuts to UK police budgets since 2010 and major governance changes with the elections of the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) in 2012, evidence–based practice within policing is seen as key
to reform amongst growing scepticism around many public services (Neyroud and Weisburd 2014). This view is reinforced by the adoption of evidence-based practice in other areas such as the medical world. For example, Novak and McIntyre (2010) in their review of Australian medical health care practices, agree with Sherman that empirical research should underpin decision making in order to maximise outcomes for the public. Further, Telep (2016) argues, that EBP has 'largely accomplished' its central mission to change the mind-set that 'nothing works’ within policing as we now can prove that the police can and do have an impact of reducing crime. Most notably, research has proved that crime hotspots remain constant for 15 years or more (Sherman 2013).

Thus, in a growing number of situations the police can target their scarce resources with enhanced precision. For example, Sherman and Weisburd’s trials on ‘hotspot’ times and locations in the 1990s (ibid) demonstrated that ‘flooding’ the often small and specific locations at the correct times with officers in patrol vehicles, led to an average of 15% reduction in crime. Conversely, the RCTs established that unfocussed and random patrols made no discernible impact on crime and disorder (Weisburd et al 2004 cited in Sherman 2013).

There have also been some notable evaluations through scientific research of current police practices, which have proven to be both wrong and harmful. Neyroud and Weisburd state (2014) that evidence-based research has led to The Scared Straight programme; where young children are taken into prisons in order to scare them from offending, having actually been proven to increase their chances of committing crime. They also cite drugs education in schools where officers attempt to deter young people from taking harmful substances, having actually been proven to increase the uptake of drugs. Both practices are still widespread and neighbourhood teams in TVP are still conducting drugs education in schools (personal conversation with colleague). However as will be discussed later, in other areas of policing, EBP’s relevance and effectiveness still remains in doubt.

**The gold standard of knowledge**

Thus, EBP has a small, but vocal band of advocates. It also has its critics. Many criticise the hierarchical nature of the evidence-based movement with the RCT at the top of the Maryland scale, having over time become taken-for-granted as the gold standard of police research amongst criminologists (Tilley 2009). Both Sparrow (2011) and Hope (2009) argue, that EBP’s underlying assumption that you can not know what works unless the ‘high science’ of controlled experiments and rigorous evaluation has been conducted, should be treated with considerable caution. The exclusionary and dangerously normative nature of what is considered evidence is also noted in other professions most notably management and medicine (Morrell and Learmonth 2015). Lindblom (cited in Sparrow 2011) in his evaluation of how people gather and understand social problems, also condemns the disregard by social scientists of any other knowledge not gathered through the highly technical approaches of a RCT. The method is not disregarded by its critics in its entirety, just that its dominance within the field of policing is both irresponsible and blinding to other types of knowledge (ibid) and will stifle other methodologies and therefore the gathering of more diverse evidence (Tilley 2009). Professor Mark Moore (1995 pp302-303) states, “Instead, I think their [social scientist’s] mistake lies in having too narrow a view of what constitutes knowledge valuable enough to use in confronting public problems, too rigid an idea about where and how useful knowledge accumulates in the society, and too unrealistic a view of how knowledge might best be diffused and deployed in aid of both immediate action and continued learning”. It is exactly these theoretical and epistemological difficulties which can inhibit evidence-based policing’s implementation.

Moreover, there are criticisms over the efficacy of the RCT itself. It is argued that RCTs and their lower, (according to the SMS) quasi-experiments have problems when it comes to social programmes within the criminal justice arena (Tilley 2009). Tilley (2009) argues that social programmes change over time, involve a number of differing subgroups interacting with programme components in a number of different ways. This unavoidable complexity and numerous variables makes it unclear, on the basis of a single experiment what worked and therefore what needs to be replicated. The desire of evidence-based policing to control and define the uncertainty of the social world has led to the ‘summing up’ of experiments in order to smooth out the anomalies of the variations in results, creating what Hope (2009) describes
as ‘unintended consequences’ for research. For example, the Minneapolis Domestic Violence experiment appeared to show positive effects of arrest on abusers, but repeated experiments elsewhere found more varied and unexpected outcomes (ibid). Hope argues that in order to make sense of the variety of responses, Sherman tried to identify likely differences in the propensity to respond before further experiments were completed. This smoothing over of potential inter-experimental variations, has the potential to mislead and misguide policy makers (ibid).

Importantly it has been argued that the setting and context of police work is completely different to that in a medical world; with informed consent and voluntary participation so often absent from experimentation within policing (Sparrow 2011). Moreover, both Tilley (2009) and Hope (2009) question whether the randomly chosen people or geographic areas to which treatment is given (or not) are truly representative of the population, and suggest that in fact there is a ‘double sampling’ of eligible population and then allocated treatment, thereby creating unintended bias. Put more simply, cases are first selected according to eligibility and then further selected according to treatment.

The length and breadth of EBP

Given the narrow and monolithic view of ‘evidence’ and the dominance of the RCT, there too are issues over its application and the outcomes it produces. Described as a ‘blunt tool’, EBP is ill equipped to deal with the complexities of modern policing and the nuances needed in response (Green 2014). Sherman himself describes EBP as guiding police decisions around primarily tactics and strategies for crime reduction and detection (Sherman 2013). Whilst there is acknowledgment that EBP is better suited for ‘place-based’ crimes (burglary, hot-spot policing), (Sparrow 2011) there is much scepticism regarding its ability to address the crimes of modern policing with the timeliness required to help forces respond (Telep and Lum 2014). The Crime Reduction Tool Kit on the College of Policing website, demonstrating the most recent and available research, has no evidence on how to tackle crimes relating to child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, honour based violence or cyber crime – four of the top existing or emerging crimes in TVP’s strategic assessment (2016).

Neither does evidenced-based policing seem to fit within the world of increasing accountability through the democratic governance of neighbourhood policing and the PCCs (Sparrow 2011). The PCCs and neighbourhood policing evolved from the Government wanting communities to have more involvement in policing decisions and priority setting, and for the police to become more accountable to the public. However this requirement to be responsive, dynamic and creative in answer to the community’s concerns is at odds with the rigorous methodologies of evidence-based practice, where evaluation and results can be time consuming and often inconclusive (Lum et al 2012). Sparrow (2011 p5) argues that for problem orientated policing, “...Lay enquiry, with its messier methods and iterative ad-hoc experimentation, contributes mightily to the development of knowledge”. More importantly, the community wants to know that its local police team are listening to their often-diverse concerns. Whilst the team’s responses may not have passed through the rigorous process so required by evidence-based practice, their suggestions are worth pursuing ‘in case’ they work. Willis and Mastrofski (2014) highlight this issue further when they conducted research into how police officers responded to a neighbourhood dispute. An every day operational event for officers across the world, the differences in outcome were startling. From managing the safety of the officers, maintaining order throughout, treating the protagonist as either a criminal or a victim (needing support for housing, mental health etc) the nuances and details of the officer’s actions were varied and wide. With the multiple and complex decision making dependent on the experience and professional judgement of officers of such an every day occurrence, it is difficult to see how evidence-based policing fits in.

The Craft and Culture of Policing

The Craft of Policing

It is however, this issue of officer’s professional judgement, or the ‘craft of policing’ (Willis and Mastrofski 2014) that has caused much disquiet in the field of criminology and the policing world. This chapter will discuss ‘police craft’, look at its definition and the importance it plays in
the delivery of the service. As we shall see when we discuss the results of the research, senior managers frequently find themselves in a dilemma about the orientation of policing as craft or science. The differing definitions of police culture will then be discussed – many of which have stood the test of some considerable time.

Neyroud (a former Chief Constable) and Weisburd acknowledge that EBP is not securely embedded within either the culture or learning of the police (2014). Much has been made of the difficulties of bringing about wholesale reform in many organisations and the police service is no exception. Moreover police culture is frequently cited as being the major and persistent inhibitor, (Chan 1996, Campeau 2015) and police craft has demonstrated an impressive resistance to the most recent attempts to reform the police (Willis and Mastrofski 2014).

It is the ‘police craft’ which has received such particular attention from the evidence-based policing sceptics, with craft being defined as knowledge, skill and judgement born out of the daily experiences of police work (Ibid). In contrast to Sherman, many criminologists have expressed real concern that EBP implies a form of policing which almost exclusively ignores the experience, perceptions and judgement of police officers (Lum et al 2012). Sparrow (2011) and Willis and Mastrofski (2014) add that the virtues of police craft lie in the size and creativity of the accumulated knowledge of the police officers, ensuring they can use sophisticated decision-making techniques when faced with multi-faceted problems.

The most ardent supporters of evidence-based practice admit, “We agree with the need for the new police professionalism to achieve a balance that recognises both science and craft” (Neyroud and Weisburd 2014 p292). Sherman himself acknowledges the criticism stating, “Evidence-based practice does not and cannot replace judgement based on experience. It can only inform such judgement and usually improve it” (2013 p43). However within a short paragraph of this paper he dismisses those citing this as an issue as just ‘creating noise’! Moreover as Morrell and Learmonth (2015) point out, whilst EBP remains overly positivistic with its hierarchical and rank structured manner of appraising what can be used as evidence (with professional judgement at the bottom), Sherman is merely paying lip service to the critics. Given Sherman’s dominance in designing the Cambridge course this tension is significant in understanding how the students will apply their learning when in the work place.

The Culture of Policing

Discussions around police culture could take a whole thesis in itself. However this light touch approach is designed so that evidence-based practice can be set within the context of the culture of the police. The notion of police culture has come from the many studies in the 1970s of the routines of police work (Chan 1996). Often described as a range of negative attitudes and values, it has been born of the huge amounts of discretion utilised by rank and file officers and their wielding of non-negotiable coercive force (Ibid). The isolating and threatening nature of police work has led over time to a term encompassing a complex set of values and attitudes that define the work of the police (Campeau 2015). Reiner 1985 (cited in Campeau 2015) defined police culture by describing officers as pursuing excitement, possessing a cynical outlook, suspicious, exaggerated displays of masculinity and conservative in their morality and political outlook. He stated that officers hold a set of values, norms, perspectives and craft rules that inform their conduct within the work place. However, whilst Reiner’s definition of police culture may well have stood the test of time, (Loftus 2010 cited in Campeau 2015) it has long been recognised that the culture within the police is neither monolithic nor singular in nature (Chan 1996).

Police culture commentators have often argued that ‘police science’ is for managers, leading to a divide between officers on the street and the hierarchy of the organisation (Willis and Mastrofski 2014, Reuss-Ianni and Ianni 1983). Relating the scientific approaches of EBP so desired to utilise maximum efficiency and effective delivery of service, whilst ignoring the experience and judgement of the officers on the street, has remained in persistent conflict with EBP’s implementation (Willis and Mastrofski 2014).
Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) in their observations and interviews with New York police officers in the 70s describe not just one police culture but two – that of the ‘street cop’ and ‘management cop’. Describing the management cop as looking to science and its associated technologies, wanting cost effective procedures, increased legitimacy and accountability, all bear remarkable similarities with the claims of the evidence-based policing world. In their desire to create uniformity in procedures they look to eradicate the organic and non-rational bounds so used by the street cop. They argue that whilst both street and management cop share the same goals; to insure safety and combat crime, they differ in how to achieve it. The street cop, relishing in their autonomy in decision-making sees the immediate response and tackling of jobs as more important than the long-term solutions needed to deal with chronic social problems. This disconnect between the two creates conflict which manifests itself in resistance to organisational change or innovative solutions to problems from the police managers. With evidence-based policing relying on its scientific methodologies and technical solutions to tackle crime, Reuss-Ianni and Ianni’s concept of police culture may well provide an insight as to why EBP has not been the panacea so desired by its advocates.

Lipsky’s ‘Street Level Bureaucrat’ (2010) also provides an insight into why the implementation of evidence-based policing may well have been inhibited. He describes the front line agents of any public service, including the police, as ‘street level bureaucrats’; who deliver, interpret and adapt for their own ends, the strategic policies of the organisation. Despite the training received, he maintains that they interpret, adapt and reorganise their tasks in order to deal with the complex challenging situations they face on a daily basis. With their unprecedented levels of discretion, it is therefore difficult to see that the EBP policies so desired by police management, will be delivered in their entirety and purity at the street level. It seems therefore that the culture within policing may well have a significant impact on any police reform and evidence-based practice may be no exception.

Receptivity to research

Interestingly the research conducted into the receptivity of evidence-based policing states that despite a willingness to engage in the new practice, there is still a strong pull towards policing experience to inform decisions. Telep and Winegar (2015) in their survey of Chiefs and Sheriffs noted that whilst there was a willingness to engage in a number of evaluation activities, their focus remained stubbornly on the use of their own experience and traditional tactics in reducing crime and disorder. Palmer (2011) too noted a similar desire to rely more on experience than scientific knowledge. However both of these studies were conducted on officers who, although had knowledge of evidence-based practice, were not sufficiently versed in it, as our Cambridge students are. Police leaders therefore see the benefits, but with disregard for the experience of officers delivering policing to the public and a cultural resistance to command (Telep and Lum 2012), considerable further work will need to be done by the evidence-based policing movement.

Therefore, through analysis of the literature the difficulties of evidence-based policing have been highlighted, with its positivistic and deductive approach, in reconciling and aligning itself with the less quantifiable and messier methods of experience, skills and judgement. The presiding and persistent cultures within policing described above may well also inhibit EBP’s progression further. Gaps have arisen in the literature regarding evidence-based policing’s fit within the culture of the police and how too it can align itself with the professional judgement and experience of officers throughout the service. Whilst research has been conducted into the receptivity of evidence-based policing, none has been conducted on highly trained and knowledgeable officers who have experience in EBP’s processes and application. No-one has conducted research into the ‘critical mass of professionals’ trained at Cambridge (Sherman 2015) with regards to how they have applied their learning and influenced their home organisations.

It is therefore through the lens of these thought leaders that my research will focus on whether evidence-based policing can ever be aligned to and integrated with the craft and culture of policing.
Methodology

The aim of this research is to understand the extent to which evidenced-based practice can be implemented within the police service. The literature review highlighted issues with its applicability across the multiple and diverse areas of policing, and its link with the skills and experience of serving officers. Moreover, given the significant gap within the literature, the primary research will focus on the practice of evidence-based policing and its fit within the culture of the service.

Research design and sampling

Various methods of research were considered including survey questions due to their ability to reach a wide audience and their less subjective approach (Sharp et al 2002). However, a quantitative research design was felt to be too limited in its methodology and would be unable to provide the depth and flexibility needed to address the research questions. Focus groups were also debated, as either a stand-alone or as part of a mixed method design. However, the intended interviewees come from the senior ranks within the organisation and difficulties with diary commitments and operational duties were seen as a risk.

**Sampling:** Evidence-based policing is the focal point of the Masters course in Applied Criminology and Police Management at Cambridge. Since its inception around six years ago, there has been a cohort of around fifty people every year from all over the world. The potential range for this research is therefore considerable, however given the qualitative response desired, interviewing all of them is clearly unrealistic and impractical. However the accessible population (Gliner and Morgan 2000) of this purposive sample is much smaller. Fifteen officers from TVP have or are currently attending the course, therefore, a mixed design of semi-structured and structured on-line interviews were both desirable and achievable.

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were considered favourable given their flexibility in approach. The ability to probe responses further, to investigate and adjust according to the issues that arose was important in order to obtain rich and detailed answers (Bryman and Bell 2007). Based on key concepts that arose from the literature review, an interview schedule was devised where all topics were covered.

Requests for interviews were sent to all fifteen Cambridge students. Pratt (2009 p856) argues that there is no ‘magic number’ of interviews required in qualitative research, so five face-to-face good quality semi-structured interviews were conducted. In order to confirm or disprove the emerging themes, the remaining ten were asked to answer a number of questions according to the themes that arose in the first interviews. Seven responded, giving a total of twelve officers who were interviewed for the purpose of this research.

Bias and ethics

As with all human interactions there is always a danger of bias during interviews (Pratt 2009). The ‘interview effect’ (Harvey and MacDonald 1993) is when either the researcher seeks answers to their own pre-conceived theories, or when the interviewee seeks to please, providing answers they think the researcher wants to hear. Without enrolling a second interviewer, this bias is difficult to minimise, however all face-to-face interviews were recorded and held in neutral premises to try and mitigate any associated bias. Despite the recorded interviews, all provided candid and detailed accounts. This may in part be down to the fact that the interviewer was known to them and of similar rank and they therefore felt comfortable discussing the issues. For ethical and professional reasons, quotes were annotated anonymously during analysis.

Analysis

Bryman and Bell (2007) argue that there are no clear-cut nor well-established rules for analysing qualitative data. However, their regard for thematic analysis as lacking in identifiable heritage and distinctive technique, is dismissive of its extensive use within qualitative research.
Braun and Clarke state that given its theoretically flexible approach and ability to provide a rich and detailed yet complex account from the data, thematic analysis should be considered a highly regarded method in its own right. It is for this reason that thematic analysis of the interview data was conducted. Repeated listening to the interviews allowed for patterns and themes to emerge and be identified, organised and then interpreted accordingly. An overview of the interviews, including more detailed accounts and interpretation of pertinent aspects will be discussed in the next chapter.

Discussion and Analysis

The general feeling around evidence-based policing, and in particular the impact of the Cambridge masters course, was positive from all respondents. Many of them acknowledged their limited understanding of EBP practices prior to the degree and noted that whilst the course had raised their knowledge significantly, so too had it raised questions regarding its limitations. Whilst career self-interest was a motivator to apply\(^8\), the overwhelming desire to improve the efficiency of policing came across clearly throughout the research. There is genuine enthusiasm to professionalise the police service and to make more defensible decisions around resource allocation, but there are major caveats with EBP's practical application. Whilst maintaining a positive outlook, the respondents recognised the difficulties with the existing culture within policing and the inherent academic nature of EBP. The interviews were informative and extensive, however 5 key areas came up as recurring themes and will be discussed below.

The ethics of a broad reach

Many academic commentators have noted that evidence-based policing has historically concentrated on crime prevention tactics (Green 2014, Lum and Telep 2012). However, the research conducted suggested that its principles could be used across the whole spectrum of policing. The Cambridge course clearly demonstrated to many of the students that EBP's reach was far wider than traditionally thought. From implementing change projects, public order policing, leadership and policing the night-time economy, the interviewees were keen to stress its applicability to more than just crime fighting. Many cited evidence-based policing as giving them more confidence and skills in areas such as leadership and decision-making. Moreover, it helped them to understand data and to recognise statistical significance within the figures. One interviewee talked of bringing ‘what works’ and integrating it into the National Decision Model\(^9\) when discussing problems. Rather than just discussing potential powers and policies, he routinely questioned the evidence around tactics before deciding on a course of action.

Moreover many of the respondents stated that there was clear potential for EBP methodologies to be brought into the world of performance management. However their frustration was clear that this wasn't yet the case and hint at the instinctive cultural reaction when decisions are made.

"The performance culture that we have now...we don't take notice of statistical significance. So we react to small changes and we always have. I've sat around listening to knee jerk reactions about crime figures going up or down...and I've learnt very quickly on the course that these things regress to the mean and that it's normal, and that we should be brave and allow certain things to go up or down".

\(^8\) The recent College of Policing's Leadership review has recommended that in order to reach the level of Superintendent a masters degree is required.

\(^9\) The National Decision Model was devised by the Association of Chief Police Officers as a framework for making decisions, giving transparency and uniformity to the process. The Code of Ethics is at the centre.
Others cited frustration during performance meetings when comparing crime figures for their local area year on year, when the EBP principles of comparison to a controlled or similar uncontrolled area, could easily have been achieved. When questioned further regarding this, one interviewee stated:

“One barrier to implementation is the Delivery Plan. Measures which are set in stone at the start of the year, … and one of them is to reduce burglary. So really that means a reduction on last year’s. So we are already going down that old road of comparing this year versus last year… we’ve just got to be better than last year. So it’s not about anything else other than driving down figures…. So, yes, that’s the barrier for the products we produce and that makes it difficult for us to embed an evidence based approach”.

This ‘political’ notion as a barrier to implementing more evidence-based practice came up time and time again throughout the research. Many of the respondents cited that EBP could be implemented across a ranging of policing but that the risks to police legitimacy from both the public and political world were perhaps too unpalatable for senior leaders. Despite criminologists emphasising EBP’s important role in helping to legitimise the police in the growing arena of scrutiny, (Neyroud and Weisburd 2014) the research has added a contradictory element to this theory. For example, one respondent highlighted the difficulty in measuring police tactics against high harm offenders. In order to establish the effectiveness of police practice, a control group would be needed where the treatment would be withdrawn and thereby potentially increasing harm for victims.

Evidence-based principles mean that without this evaluation we would have no idea whether a tactic was either harmful or helpful, however the ramifications of withdrawing such a practice may be too great a risk for decision makers. This observation suggests an ultimate default point in the decision making of police managers and one which may constitute a barrier to the development of EBP amongst the senior management of the police. Significantly, this avoidance of organisational failure at all costs was proposed by respondents as a barrier to both further research and implementation, especially in areas such as the domestic abuse (DA) risk assessment known as (DASH), arresting domestic abuse offenders and missing people. One interviewee discussed the potential use of EB practices (solvability factors) for missing people with the evidence leading to police potentially not responding to ‘low risk’ missing people. This would clearly free up considerable police resources but has many political, ethical and moral dilemmas attached:

“Our willingness to accept failure is a problem. For example, you could apply it to anything, CSE, missing people, mental health…you could align what the evidence tells us with a bit of experience and therefore 9 times out of 10 it will be really effective. But the one time out of 10 that person jumps in front of a train, that’s where it fails doesn’t it? Now, that’s not an acceptable failure rate is it? So therefore we become very risk averse.”

Respondents also highlighted social and political risks associated with implementing some evidence-based findings. The DASH risk assessment used by all police forces is designed to highlight those cases where the risk of future domestic harm is high. However, TVP Chief Constable Sara Thornton stated in her Cambridge masters research, that DASH provided a poor assessment of the risk of violent crime recurring in the future (Thornton 2011). Yet despite these findings made six years ago, TVP and other forces across the country still use it.

“There are some risky areas… From a DA perspective I can see why there is a real nervousness… this has a very interesting relationship with DA....with the Pemberton case and then the Highmoor Cross one. So we have a very fragile
relationship with domestic abuse…. There are things that define us as a force, a bit like rape in the late 1980s did for TVP.  

"We know DASH is not a good risk assessment tool; but there is no really good alternative out there. It is difficult for one force to break cover with this and so we end up with DASH. How else are we going to risk assess?"

DA arrests were also cited as another such thorny issue when considering EBP. Despite the extensive research that arresting unemployed domestic abusers causes more harm, and no consistent evidence that arresting the perpetrator reduces domestic violence, (Sherman 2013) TVPs policy is primarily ‘to arrest’. When questioned why, one interviewee stated:

"I think it is quite risky to implement this on the basis of the evidence that we have… we need to replicate the experiment in the UK… but doing this type of experiment where we arrest some but not others… well, it’s far too politically risky… we get the flack for doing this with shed breaks. Imagine what it would be like for domestic abuse."

It is not unreasonable however to suggest that there would be both political and public furore should the police conduct this kind of EBP experiment. For example, in an effort to manage their demand, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary suffered a significant back-lash from business leaders and the Home Office when they announced that they would not investigate drive offs from petrol stations unless there were clear signs of criminality (Wood 2015). Given the public reaction on such a low risk offence, this suggests there are limits to the breadth of policing that EBP can reach despite the potential range in its application.

Craft versus Science

Interestingly, across the board the respondents and interviewees were emphatic with the idea that evidence based practice and professional judgement should be seen as complimentary and not contradictory. Whilst some researchers have found that the randomised control trial devalued policing experience, (Lum and Telep 2012) the research conducted in TVP suggested that officers saw them as highly compatible.

"I want people to use their experience and evidence to drive their activity. I am a great believer in this. Everything based on experience but no evidence, you’ll get one outcome and if everything is based on evidence with no common sense then it becomes quite cold – I want both!"

"The EBP actually helps you ‘do’ professional judgement.. so for example, if we aggressively target the profile of this person we could get a 10% drop in burglary or robbery but, wait a minute, what we will actually have is a small riot because of the political implications…. We use our professional judgement to tell us whether we are going to apply the tactic or not”.

"The idea that evidence-based policing removes the need for professional judgement is bonkers."

Rather than EBP’s hierarchical Maryland Scale with expert opinion at the bottom, all respondents suggested that professional experience was highly regarded in decision-making and should be used simultaneously and ‘interwoven’ with other forms of evidence-based knowledge. Whilst many critics of evidence-based practice have been vocal and dismissive of its disregard for skills accumulated through experience, (Sparrow 2011, Morrell and Learmonth 2015) it is evident from the research that in practical terms, this is not the case. It was clear too that the students’ tutors; senior police or ex police officers, were crucial in promoting this message and helping to place the evidence into context:

10 Highmoor Cross domestic murder in 2004 where TVP were criticized in the media and in the IPCC investigation for the delayed attendance at the scene. The Pemberton murder in Newbury 2003 in which the victim repeatedly told police and the family court that her husband would kill her.
“Professional judgement and evidenced-based policing: it compliments it, they are not mutually exclusive.”

“It hasn’t superseded professional judgement. Peter Neyroud and Dennis O’Connor are very clear on this. It shouldn’t be a replacement for professional judgement; it works alongside it.”

The experiment

Professional experience was clearly seen by the respondents as an equal partner to knowledge gained from evidence-based practice. Nevertheless, the RCT, at the top of the Maryland scale, was seen as being at peak of gaining knowledge.

“The RCT is at the pinnacle, the most timely and in some respects the purest way of deciding whether something works or not.”

“The RCT is the most effective way to understand the casual mechanisms of an intervention.”

Despite considerable criticism of the RCT in social science and within criminology itself, (Hope 2009, Green 2014 and Hough 2011) the students did not question its validity. When probed further however, several respondents did acknowledge its limitations, with its narrow focus and high number of variables leaving some of the outcomes obsolete for officers. Both Hope (2009) and Tilley (2009) argue that the complexities of social programmes with variables changing over time make the replication of experiments extremely difficult. Although supportive of the RCT, this concern is echoed in one interviewee’s comments regarding the evidence around arresting for domestic abuse offenders:

“The evidence around that [not to arrest] is quite old. It’s in quite a different context, so we haven’t got recent evidence of that in a UK context. Probably looking at America 20 years ago is a bit too far out? Larry wouldn’t say this. He would say – you should try it in the UK and see if it works! But I think this is a risky thing to implement on the basis of the evidence that we have.”

Despite the heavy investment from TVP with nineteen attendees to the Cambridge course, there has not been a single TVP led randomised control trial completed. Most of the theses conducted for the masters course were level three, perhaps four, on the Maryland scale and to my knowledge, no one has conducted any active experimentation since the completion of their study. With Cambridge clearly championing RCT activity with their students, the interviewee’s desire and interest in carrying out experiments was tempered by major concerns regarding lack of resources, time and expertise. There too, was considerable apprehension regarding attempting such a task. This echoes previous research by Lum and Telep (2014) with US Chiefs and Sheriffs which found that the RCT was just too much of a challenge.

“It’s just too big; it’s beyond the scope of most. Too much for just one person – it makes my mind clog up!”

“I’m not saying that it’s not a good thing, but that’s [the RCT] running really fast, in fact sprinting and we just need to jog.”

With the budget cuts engulfing modern policing, there were also issues with the practicalities of conducting experiments. Lower ranking officers do not have the authority to allocate and direct resources. What is more, Local Police Area (LPA) Commanders who do have the requisite authority, do not have the time. One LPA Commander said:

“In order to conduct an experiment I would have to pull officers off their operational duties which is difficult when I am not budgeted for this non-operational activity.”

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11 Research was conducted in January 2017
Despite the high regard for experiments, the interviewees felt overwhelmed by the prospect of conducting their own research within the workplace. With little support in the way of resources, time and expertise it is apparent that in the current situation, little experimentation will take place.

**Just for academia?**

The operational applicability of EBP featured heavily throughout the research and was frequently linked to its academic nature and the practical translation of the outcomes. Seen as the pinnacle for understanding what works, there was clear reticence around its application both with regard to the experiment and the communication of its results.

“It’s just too difficult and mathematical; drawing conclusions on a high level RCT about what works is, forgive me for saying this, somewhat arrogant.”

“We almost need an idiots guide.”

“We want the research to have practical applications that could be used as an ongoing way of understanding how effective and efficient our tactic was. Without getting bogged down into an abstract academic piece of work.”

“There is a big divide between theory and practice. Lots of the theories are quite academic and not really grounded in the practicality.”

“As with all things academic it can be a bit pure. You can solve everything with infinite resources and focus.”

Much of the literature on evidence-based policing has focussed on the relationship between the police and the world of academia. The research suggests that there is a disconnect between the two, inhibiting its widespread uptake. Neyroud and Weisburd state that the police need to ‘own the science’ (2014). However, educating police officers in the methodologies of EBP casts doubt on its widespread implementation. This corroborates research conducted in the medical world which found that education alone had little impact on the uptake of evidence-based practices in the workplace (Novak and McIntyre 2010).

The issue between the police and academia goes further than a mutual lack of understanding (Willis and Mastrofski 2014). The standoff takes place on a deeper, cultural level. The use of academic language, ‘solutions for yesterday’s problems’, and the complexities associated with experimentation all featured during the research. The College of Policing has pushed for a professionalisation of the service, with officers now needing a degree. This has sparked widespread debate amongst rank and file officers. Despite the interviewees being intelligent and educated, with an earnest desire to improve the efficiency of policing, there was a concern that EBP was seen as elitist and lacking in practical application.

“I think it is linked too much to academic study; that’s my main concern. It’s now seen as the ‘Cambridge’ way of thinking.”

“Sending people to Cambridge does feel a little bit ‘Ivory Towerish’. We come back and have buzz phrases which is good as we talk the same language, but it will feel challenging to some.”

Reuss-Ianni and Ianni’s (1983) assessment of the culture within New York’s Police department in the 1970s with the scientific and technology-loving ‘management’ cop has clear resonance with the Cambridge students. So too is the apparent conflict between management and front line officers. An interviewee described one response to his input on EBP’s ‘targeting, tracking and testing’ to a sergeants training day as:

“I’m not sure about the three Ts. More like three Bs – bullshit baffles brains.”

This comment does not necessarily represent the feeling across all officers, especially because more now have degrees. However, it does offer an insight into the disconnect between the academic world and policing. Many respondents did discuss evidence-based principles with their colleagues but unlike the above occasion, they were mindful not to use the exclusive language of EBP for fear of alienation, or as one officer stated “coming across as a bit wacky.”
Implementation and the legacy of the evidence

With significant cultural issues surrounding EBP’s acceptance, the legacy regarding the respondent’s own theses was less clear. The officers interviewed were candid in their discussions about the impact of their own studies. However, the research suggested that there was no widespread implementation or policy making regarding their findings. Many cited local implementation, boosted by their rank and authority over resources, but with officers moving frequently, this had little lasting effect. Lack of implementation was in part attributed to the time and effort needed to constantly reinforce the message, without which, failure was likely.

Moreover, there were clear cultural issues with interviewees stating that the lack of understanding around evidence-based practice led to the results being perceived as ‘telling officers what they already know’. May (2012) in her review of the applicability of RCTs in the social world confirmed this notion that whilst the results of RCTs are often described as surprising, in reality for practitioners, they rarely are. One interviewee shared his frustration in attempting to complete analysis into modern slavery awareness training:

“I can sense their reluctance. They are looking at me thinking, ‘Why are we doing this? We know this is good, raising awareness about modern slavery can only be a good thing. We don’t need to spend time and effort proving it works.’”

This ‘copper’s nose’ belief was highlighted in one interviewee’s difficulty in implementing his thesis experiment about burglary cocooning12.

“Compliance was difficult in some places. Why? Police culture I think. Certain people know better than others. It was a year long trial so it did peter out and officers lost enthusiasm for it.”

Not being able to track Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) about what they said to the neighbours and how much information they gave was an issue for compliance and lends itself to Lipsky’s (2010) work on Street Level Bureaucracy. The PCSO complied with the order to knock on neighbouring doors, but how the message was delivered, and in what detail, remains up to the interpretation and discretion of the officer attending. This could have an impact on any implementation of evidence which goes against the professional knowledge of the officer - or is just seen to be too much trouble.

The last word must be given to the students’ role as thought leaders. The respondents suggested that they promoted the theory of EBP. However, the interpretation of their accounts contradicts this. Some did not want to use the language of EBP for fear of alienating their colleagues. Others declared that they were reluctant to discuss their academic work in the office as it was ‘frowned upon’. Thus, their roles as thought leaders were limited. Almost all of them declared a lack of interest from senior officers regarding their thesis topic and an acknowledgment that ‘only two people have read their thesis: the student and the tutor’. Ultimately though, it is their scepticism regarding EBP’s application and implementation which is the underlying inhibiting factor.

Conclusion

This is a small-scale pilot study with twelve TVP students from the Cambridge Applied Criminology and Police Management Course. Nevertheless, it has offered significant insight into the practical application of evidence-based practice and its cultural acceptance within TVP.

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12 Cocooning is high level police activity after a burglary has occurred where officers offer advice and practical tips to neighbours to spread the word and help protect their homes. His analysis led to 33,000 homes being visited and for every £1 spent, £2 were saved through reduction in burglary offences.
Further national research is recommended for the front line officer, in order for the cultural and practical implications to be further understood.

The hierarchical nature of evidence-based policing - with the RCT - is revered. Yet professional judgement and experience are seen as necessary partners in decision making in order to bring context to an otherwise ‘cold’ science. The research has highlighted that EBP can reach across a broad spectrum of policing in a variety of different guises, but that the continuing scrutiny from the media, public, Independent Police Complaints Commission and Home Office inhibits its ability to influence how the police manage their resources.

Whilst much headway is clearly being made with bringing together academics and police officers with the Police Knowledge Fund\textsuperscript{13}, further work must be done to translate the highly academic scientific research methodologies and their outcomes into practical, realistic options for officers to apply in the operational setting.

The implementation of evidence-based policing has also been inhibited by lack of strategic support. TVP have been pioneers in their attendance at Cambridge, but there remains a lack of understanding within the most senior ranks regarding its promotion and application within the work place. Leaving it to single, lone officers to implement is misguided. Strategic support in the form of time, expertise and resources is the only way to make any impact and reap the benefits of considerable investment.

The College of Policing have played an important role in promoting EBP. But the job is half done: the education of EBP’s practices should not be left to a masters course alone. It should be integrated throughout the professional learning of all staff.

TVP is far from the ‘tipping point for totally evidenced policing’ as Sherman so desires, but the language in policing is changing to reflect more evidence-based decision-making. There is more focus on EBP’s dictum of evaluation and knowing what works and there is a growing acceptance that ‘your hunch’ alone is not the only way, nor perhaps the best way to make decisions. These small but telling developments are low on the Maryland scale, but as one interviewee stated “\textit{it is better than nothing, and better than we had before}”.

\textsuperscript{13} Police Knowledge fund led by the College of Policing links academic institutions and police forces in order to research and promote innovative evidence based practice.
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TVP Strategic assessment 2016


How can Police, Children’s Social Care and Schools work better together to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation?

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to examine how multi agencies, namely police, children’s social care and schools can work better together to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). According to Berson and Berson (1999) child abuse had remained unreported and unmanaged for years with many cases failing to reach the attention of professionals causing an absence or delay in intervention. This research was conducted in southern England with specific agencies volunteering to take part in semi structured interviews and a focus group. The participants included police officers and staff, social workers and teachers with varying levels of experience. The mutual feature between these participants related to their management of CSE within their profession and also sharing geographic boundaries for their work. The key findings of the research outlined continued disparity in communication between agencies and inability of agencies to share information in a timely fashion despite previous recommendations from serious case reviews and inquiries. The participants revealed lack of training for front line staff which could assist them in their daily roles, with a need to attain the same goals amongst agencies to achieve desired outcomes. Furthermore, it became apparent that the selected area had acquired positive relationships between staff, this however was not reflected on a national level. There appeared to be a lack of data collection of referrals which hindered improvements to the process of managing multi-agency working. The importance of information sharing was highly valued however recommendations were suggested for further training in the use of the CSE screening tool, raising awareness of greater communication, a centralised data collection hub and greater involvement within schools for early intervention. The relevance of multi-agency working should be reviewed regularly to maintain high standards of work.

Key words: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Multi Agency working, Schools, Police, Children’s social care, CSE screening tool, Early Intervention.

Introduction

This article considers how three predominant agencies responsible for safeguarding children should work together to tackle child sexual exploitation at the earliest opportunity, and what measures may need to take place to develop these relationships. This article will seek to attain the view point of some of the professional settings that have been criticised in recent publications, and pursue their thoughts on how CSE is managed within their own organisation and identify positive practices and developmental areas.

Aim

The concerns regarding multi-agency working permeate throughout society; the focus predominantly has been on failings of the police and social services. Victims of crime have
however raised concerns with regards to schools, the evidence suggests that early intervention opportunities were missed. To encourage information sharing, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) have been established around England (Home Office, 2014). The MASH report identified that areas within England would face challenges in using the model but the common principles set out for sharing information, joint decision making and co-ordinated intervention were key elements (Home Office, 2014). There is vast literature on the failings of particular agencies yet there is limited literature on how professionals deem themselves working together. There appears sparse literature on the perspective of the professionals of these agencies whom work together to focus on diverting risk and impede CSE.

Despite CSE being a high priority, victims continue to be failed and there are implications that working practices need to be continuously improved. CSE remains a national dilemma and the government with local officials will continue to face a difficult long-term task. This research will look to discover how CSE can be stopped at an earlier stage with partnership working between police, children’s social care and schools.

The research presented in this article has the following objectives –

- What is understood of CSE by police, teaching and local authority practitioners?
- How is CSE training provided within the selected organisations?
- How are concerns raised for CSE information sharing between agencies?
- What difficulties do practitioners encounter when working with agencies in relation to CSE?
- What opportunities are available to identify issues or concerns in relation to information sharing?
- How valuable is the process in place to share information with other agencies?

**Literature Review**

According to Berson and Berson (1999) child abuse had remained unreported and unmanaged for years with many cases failing to reach the attention of professionals causing an absence or delay in intervention. However, in the face of redefining of concepts such as abuse, neglect, child cruelty as well as the emergence of cybercrimes and abuse of children it can be argued that over more recent years there has been a significant movement in terms of protection for victims of CSE. This notion is however disputed by Batty (2004), who has examined the range of policy implementation and changes in legislation, stating that, ‘…children tragedies are still occurring because of failures in the system.’ Bolen (2003), supports this statement that despite history of prevention programs, the occurrence of CSE has not decreased.

Bilston (2006) asserts that the ideologies around child discipline and what is best for the child were deemed a matter to stay within the family home. It was because of this respect for familial privacy that often cases were unreported or hidden within the dark figure of crime. Shouvlín’s (1981) study affirms this notion, in that the problem of CSE lies with the parent’s reluctance to acknowledge the problem. However, Rastogi (1998) places the onus on governments particularly in parts of Asia for failing to enforce the laws in place to protect children from CSE accusing them of an interest in financial gain for their countries only. Rastogi (1998) argues that CSE can only be eradicated with compliance from powerful nations to utilise children’s rights, specifically the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), focusing on combined international intervention to eradicate CSE. Bilston (2006) recognises that the continued emergence of legislation, reform and amendment has seen the development of designated specialist organisations and multi-agency working.

Kelly and Regan (2000) suggest that little attention was paid to the sexual exploitation of children until the 1990s whereby a turn in mind-set brought about changes in laws to protect
children, specifically from child pornography. It is notorious cases such as that of child victims Maria Colwell, Jasmine Beckford, Heide Kosea and Tyra Henry, to name but a few, that enabled the issue to remain in the forefront of the public and political arena in the twentieth century. Kelly and Regan (2000) argue that there is a strong link between child pornography and other forms of exploitation which can include inter familiar and extra familiar abuse.

Until the 1990s there were no changes in legislation in the UK with regard to specific cases despite cases such as that of Victoria Climbe, Baby Peter, Ian Brady, Fred and Rose West occurring during that period.

The most prominent case of the 1990’s was that of Fred and Rose West which resulted in The Cromwell Street Inquiry (1995). Following investigative enquires into horrific sexual and physical abuse, allegations arose of local police officers being aware of the abuse with some using the facilities of the brothel at the address. At the time of the police investigation the family had social services intervention, yet there is disparity in relation to a multi-agency approach in detecting the abuse. The findings and recommendations for future learning for this inquiry in identifying child abuse appear deficient. However, in 2003, following the Victoria Climbe Inquiry (Health Committee) into the murder of the female child, Victoria’s death was described as a gross failure of the system and the failure to implement the Childrens Act in protecting her. The Health Committee (2003) argued that although each case of child abuse was individual, it was evident that the similarities that reoccurred in many of the cases continued to refer to lack of skills from individual social workers, failure to establish procedures, inadequate resources and failure of communication between agencies. Therefore, the Climbe Inquiry (2003) recommended a clearer and defined focus for multi-agency working with an immediate effect.

Yet in 2004, the Bichard Inquiry, following the conviction of Ian Huntley for the Soham murders, again posed criticism for the police practices of effectively recording intelligence and information sharing between agencies, suggesting changes had not been implemented from the Climbe Inquiry. The Bichard Inquiry (2004) made specific recommendations relating to instant notification to police on confirmation of a crime occurring and suggested reform of national guidance for multi agencies to safeguard children.

By February 2009 the Haringey local safeguarding board’s serious case review into the death of Baby Peter highlighted the significant number of agencies involved in the child’s case prior to his death. The review also indicated the failures of communications between agencies resulting in the lack of police involvement on at least two occasions, further recommending that professionals were required to fulfil their legal and moral duty under the s.11 Children Act 2004. The importance of multi-agency working is echoed in statutory guidance whereby…. “children are best protected when professionals are clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together” (Working together to safeguard children, 2015).

It’s apparent that the recommendations made in inquiries and reviews thus far, reiterate similar concerns relating to lack of productive, positive and reliable multi-agency working. There appears to be replication of errors and Professor Beresford (Health Committee, 2003) denunciates the child protection policy for betraying, abandoning and leaving children as vulnerable, necessitating a major overhaul of the system despite previous findings and tragedies. And so, it is difficult to understand why in 2015 the Oxfordshire serious case review into child sexual exploitation evidenced continued failures of the lack of communication between agencies to recognise, understand and prevent CSE to protect children. However, Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children’s board (2017) completed an overview of cases relating to CSE ranging from 1998-2016 which affirmed that multi-agency working had successfully been embedded within the last three years, having a positive effect on disrupting CSE with a focus on further improvement. Gosling-Thomas, chair of Buckinghamshire children’s board reiterated the importance of working with young people to motivate and encourage them to recognise exploitation and to protect themselves better, hence suggesting the recommendations and findings that had previously been identified were now being implemented with a degree of success.

Roberts and Miltenberger (1999) acknowledge the use of positive early intervention in schools but argue such preventative programmes could leave a negative impact on some children such
as reluctance to disclose, fear and distrusting of professionals. Wurtele, Kast and Melzer (1992) consider the role of a parent in training and educating a child in combination with a teacher far more effective and valuable to prevent abuse amongst children however such programmes would be a learning curve for parents too.

Early programs had focused on offender behaviour management but more recent inquiries from the last decade emphasise the importance of information sharing and multi-agency working as a preventative measure in tackling CSE. Pearce (2014) recognises the exceptional practices undertaken by professionals to protect children from CSE however argues the continuing lack of awareness and lack of resources have a detrimental effect in applying early intervention to protect victims from abuse and prosecuting offenders. The reality is CSE is an issue that should concern society as a whole, rather than only pertinent professionals who have a statutory duty to safeguard under the Children’s Act 2004, therefore the dictum “Safeguarding is everyone’s business” (CQC, 2015) is imperative in understanding multi-agency working.

Working Together

Leadbetter et al’s (2007) study which focused on multi-agency working argues that individual learning cannot be separated from organisational learning suggesting that both are entwined. Therefore, when discussing a culpability culture from one agency to another it is imperative that each organisation is in a position to understand their own learning standards, with a view to make relevant changes when issues or malpractice arises. Leadbetter et al (2007) have followed the cultural historical activity theory approach in their study and describe such direction as paramount in understanding how professionals can solve problems with the aid of tools provided to them. It is apparent that when new practices are adopted by organisations, practitioners will face challenges in learning and implementing any new regime as identified in this study. Although this study reviews and recognizes that new forms of multiagency practice are required, the study focuses on the psychosocial impacts of the activities adopted and how staff seek to learn these new protocols in place. Yet it has been identified that historically CSE was misunderstood, unrecognised and unchallenged, therefore many organisations failed to integrate any relevant working tools for their staff to use. Consequently, although this study has an appropriate approach, it can be argued that many organisations working with potential CSE victims have not been asked to change their working tools, they have been simply informed to engage in tools to recognise and manage CSE. The study does rightly embrace the importance of expansive learning which dictates the need “to create new knowledge and new practices for a new emerging activity” (Leadbetter et al., 2007: p523), and further discusses the professionals everyday understanding of multi-agency working, yet there is a lack of clarity on how to embrace new tools offered to them which were non-existent previously.

The idea of multi-agency working is not without criticism, as such close relationships could yield negativity between agencies if boundaries and roles become blurred. A fear of losing an identity or culture of an organisation could interfere in positive working relationships, which of course would not be beneficial to victims. As defined by Mawby and Worrall (2011) an organisation which has very different ideas and views from another organisation are unlikely to prosper together. Therefore, Mawby and Worrall (2011) identify the need for Davidson’s (1976) framework which includes the need for specific interaction for inter-organizational relationships, which are described as communication, co-operation, coordination, federation and merger. It is vital to understand that Davidson’s (1976) framework mirrors the importance of a national level input from the Government to local level agencies to implement the strategies required to identify and intervene in CSE.

Methodology

The research presented in this article followed the approach of interpretivism which derives from humanistic approach. This approach will offer flexibility and be personable and by human interaction, it is deemed that the engagement of the researcher and the informant will allow for dependable results. By using the interpretivism approach, the researcher will attain a subjective
approach whilst remaining open to new knowledge and will sustain a wider knowledge of
motives and reasoning on the study matter through exploration of research questions.

The use of official statistics for this research study will also be considered as the multi-agency
performance groups within local authorities and local police officers are likely to record and
retain data on matters relating to the research subject. Any official statistics collated should be
only be used with a foresight of how the statistics were constructed and for which purpose in
order that the data is rendered useful for the research (May, 2011).

The opportunity to collate data from participants will fulfil the necessity criteria for this research,
therefore the preferred choice is to conduct interviews, which are semi structured. Although
questionnaires can be considered there are limitations for exploration. The semi-structured
interviews are likely to yield significant data, as King and Wincup (2008) suggest the researcher
will require considerable skills to categorise and analyse this data although this may prove to
be more difficult than other techniques, it is best suited for aim of this research. Zelditch (1962)
as cited in Seale (1999) reiterate the significance and value of interviews and describe this
process as superior when seeking to understand procedures and protocols of an organisation.

The interviews will assist in the interpretive approach, the participants’ perceptions are clearer
to gauge, the opportunity to conduct a one to one interview will ensure any issues are clarified
immediately by providing accurate and relevant information, therefore increasing the validity of
the data. The interview process can be time consuming and the researcher should ensure that
the length of the interview does not result in diversion of topics or loss of interest by the
participant which could affect the reliability of the data.

Data Collection

The particular organisations were chosen due to access and ease of location for the researcher,
as well as an interest and knowledge of the research topic. The sample of interviewees were
selected and generated through individuals who directly engaged with CSE in their current
roles. The essential criteria being that the participant was over 18, had an understanding of
CSE, worked within an organisation relevant to this study and could commit to the research
requirements.

As this is a small-scale study with limited time and resources available, the researcher chose
to enlist a maximum of three individuals within each agency, this was to assist in the
manageability of data and analytical procedure. From a policing perspective a CSE
engagement officer, a police sergeant and a newly appointed constable were selected. From
schools, the sample consisted of frontline teachers including a safeguarding lead, a senior
teacher and a newly appointed teacher within the school. The local authority perspective
included a specialist CSE social worker, a MASH social worker and a MASH social worker
manager. Each participant provided written consent to take part in the interview and focus
group having received written confirmation from the researcher concerning ethical issues such
as confidentiality and maintaining anonymity for each participant. As the interviews and focus
were pre-arranged with participants volunteering to take part, the researcher envisaged no
issues with attendance for each activity.

The use of semi structured interviews and a focus group of a selected small number of teaching,
local authority and police staff was used as qualitative data in this research which formed the
primary data collection allowing the researcher to obtain rich and detailed insight. The
interviews consisted of open and non-judgemental questions which were simple, direct and
articulated on a one to one manner, in an environment which was comfortable for the
interviewee. The questions were designed to initiate responses which had the opportunity to
be fully explored, with the expectation that categories would be identified, coded and analysed.
To ensure accuracy of responses, the participants hand wrote their responses, with no
intervention from the researcher to ensure no ambiguity when analysing the data. Each
respondent received identical questions, set out in the exact same process, with each
participant given as much time as they required to complete each question. The researcher
was present throughout the responder’s completion of the interview, ensuring no use of books,
internet or other information sources were used as the respondent’s initial knowledge on the
questions was significant. At the conclusion of each interview there were no concerns or issues
raised which compromised the data collated. Each response to the interview questions was typed allowing for the ease of analysis at a later date.

The focus group consisted of representatives from each agency who had a working knowledge of child sexual exploitation within their current role. There were some participants that had agreed to take part in the focus group but due to unforeseen circumstances were unable to attend. Despite this setback the focus group commenced with five participants out of nine, the school representative in the focus group had not taken part in the interviews however consented and agreed to represent the school for this activity. The representation from school and two each from local authority and police allowed for a fair and encompassing representation of the agencies subjected to this research. The discussion group was guided by the researcher with key discussion points to facilitate responses in relation to the research. Each participant was given the opportunity to provide details of their knowledge, practices and procedures for each aspect of the focus group, initiating discussion and debate over particular matters. The respondents were able to engage well with one another and utilised the time given well in responding to each matter. The researcher ensured each participant was offered the time to portray their views and opinions of the subject matter in a fair and professional manner, each respondent was able to this in confidence. At the conclusion of the focus group there were no concerns or issues raised which compromised any of the data collated. The focus group was audio recorded with consent from all participants, the audio was transcribed by the researcher to analyse at a later date.

The researcher made significant attempts to attain collated quantitative data by requesting numerical evidence from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to illustrate referrals submitted by the relevant agencies. This secondary data was likely to assist as the official statistics collated would have indicated the level of communication between agencies. The researcher’s aim was to identify any significant trends in particular agencies submitting referrals, indicating the impact of managing CSE. The data collected would have assisted the researcher in recognising positive or negative working practices or procedures. The request for this data was made, however, on submitting the request, it became clear that the MASH did not keep any such records, therefore this data was unavailable to include in this research. The police service’s data analysis department did not respond to requests for information. The local authority has taken some steps to create data relating to CSE referrals, gender and race, however this data collation is in its infancy and was limited in providing a true reflection envisioned for this research. Therefore, the researcher negated the use of any quantitative data for this study due to the unreliability and inconsistency of such available material.

**Results**

The participants affiliation with CSE ranged from basic understanding and knowledge required within their role through to intense day to day management. The staff from each organisation were considered to be the most suitable to participate in this study and were selected based on their role in managing CSE. In order to maintain anonymity, each organisation has been provided with a pseudonym and the participant has been identified through a coding system. In relation to the interviews conducted, the school representatives will be identified as S1, S2 and S3, the social workers as C1, C2 and C3 and police as P1, P2 and P3. The focus group participants include P1, P2, C1, C2 and S4. S1 has the longest service yet has only been in the current role for 15 months, P3 has the least service with 1.5 years yet had only been in the current role for two weeks, C1 had ‘14 years’ experience with 8 years in the current role, which is the greatest number of years in the current role amongst the participants. The length of service is indicative of experience of a professional, the longer the service, the greater the expectation of knowledge.

The data was analysed by returning to the initial research questions and exploring the collected data from the interviews and the focus groups. It was hoped that the responses provided which were shaped around the initial research questions would endeavour to answer the aim of the research, ‘How can Police, Children’s Social Care and Schools work better together to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation?’.
Insights

This research examined the perspectives of individuals from three different sectors involved in the investigation of CSE. It has provided insight into the viewpoint of how information is shared, how agencies work together and considered how this relationship can be improved for improved multi-agency working. CSE has been an ongoing issue over the centuries but has come to the forefront of public interest and criminal investigation as societal attitudes and the position of children changed. This research recognises that over recent decades the issues raised have continued to focus on the inability of agencies to share information in a timely and appropriate manner despite this being a continued recommendation throughout serious case reviews and inquiries. Sadly, this research found that the issues of poor communication are still present on a national level and inadequate training also contributes to the issue of multi-agency working involved in CSE. This point also highlights the conflict of multi-agency working when the desired outcomes of individual agencies are not fixated on the same goals, which is where police maybe seeking to secure a conviction as an end result can create tension where social services are primarily focused on the welfare of the victim and the child’s best interests.

Another issue highlighted was the understanding of concepts used by the individual agencies. Where there was a difference in the understanding of concepts such as safeguarding or child protection this had direct impact on the way in which concepts were utilised and subsequent choices were made by individuals.

Summary of Research

In order to research how police, children’s social care and schools work can better together to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation, it was imperative to establish how each of these agencies identified CSE, understood the notion of CSE and how this information was recorded and subsequently shared.

As previously stated, an observed issue was the understanding of various concepts used when discussing CSE, the understanding of these concepts and how they may be translated differently between the agencies. The concept of CSE itself was not fully understood, with various individuals limiting the concept to direct sexual abuse and failing to understand grooming or power imbalance.

The criteria used to identify CSE was not uniform across the agencies, this was partly contributed to by the inconsistencies in the application of concepts. Length of service within the area of CSE and the extent of training also contributed to understanding of CSE and how this was identified, recorded and information shared.

An area which raised consideration for further probing was the use of the Screening Tool. Not all fully used the tool. Some individuals were fully confident in the use of the Tool whilst others identified gaps in the tool itself which would in fact aide CSE.

With regard to data storing and sharing which was an issue highlighted in the desire to carry out a quantitative analysis, it is imperative that a review of data recording is carried out. Data recording and categorising would undoubtedly have an impact on information sharing and how information is utilised in multi-agency working.

Prior to starting this research, it was believed that although there had been recommendations for multi agencies improvement through a number of inquiries, there was a lack of improvements made, hence ongoing failings by some agencies. This research has ascertained that the local area chosen to conduct the research in has established positive working relationships with one another, therefore creating an environment where tackling CSE is made easier and safeguarding such victims a priority. There appears to a strong ethos between the agencies but a greater working knowledge between police and social services in terms of CSE protocol. The school has a safeguarding process in place, which is utilised, however there
seems to be limited understanding of CSE by frontline teachers which may require additional training to identify the indicators related to this matter.

In order for police, children’s social care and schools to work better together to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation nationally it is imperative that there is a consistent approach adopted and there is shared understanding of the key concepts, the notion of CSE as well as how CSE is identified and information is shared.

**Evaluation**

An interpretivist paradigm was adopted for the purpose of the research to enable an exploratory pathway. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) assert that use of both an interpretivist and positivist paradigms allows for a greater and in-depth approach. An inclusion of a positivist in this research would have allowed for greater validity (Pollard, 2008) however due to time contradictions, limited resources and restrictions of one researcher it was not possible to adopt this combined approach.

Insufficient data recording also hindered the desire to examine quantitative data to seek possible patterns and explanations.

During the focus group phase, it became apparent that many of the matters discussed took a substantial length of time to explore due to in-depth discussions by the participants and a tendency to go off topic. The researcher became aware of losing some control in time management, therefore these are skills that could be refined for future research.

In hindsight, had there not been time constraints, the researcher would have considered a larger participant pool, increasing these to five individuals per organisation to gain a wider range of views on the subject matter.

It would have been ideal to have conducted a comparative study as literature and enquiries suggest that issues around CSE and multi-agency working are regional, subsequently having an impact on national outcomes.

**Recommendations, limitations and ideas for further research**

- It is evident that despite continued recommendations over the years in a range of CSE inquiries, insufficient training regarding screening continues to be problematic. It would be beneficial for all CSE specialist within all agencies be trained in the CSE Screening Tool. This would enable professionals to evaluate any indicators identified and explore these where necessary.

- A problem identified during this research was that of poor communication; this appeared to be regional as opposed to national. A valuable implementation proposed is annual conferences that would enable designated professionals and specialists to meet and discuss strategies to support one another.

- As outlined in the methodology it was proposed to collate data from the MASH in order to consider any patterns, learning outcomes and how these reflected the input of the three selected agencies. As a result of the way in which data was recorded and stored leads to another recommendation, that is, every CSE referral coming in to the MASH should be identified as such. All referrals concerning CSE should be collated, reviewed and retained in a centralised location.

- As discussed, the strength of the relationship between police and social services is strong, therefore it is suggested that such a relationship be established within schools by regular intervention such attendance at assemblies, group workshops and events. This would not only assist the students within the school but also provide teaching staff opportunities to ask questions and build relationships.
• As highlighted by the professionals within this research, theatre drama such as Chelsea’s choice and the online production ‘Alright Charlie’ are useful educational tools that can be used within the school arena for the benefit of students understanding of CSE as early intervention. Both sources are considered as powerful and informative and can be considered to be mandatory in all secondary schools.

• The importance of multi-agency is key for an effective and efficient safeguarding process, therefore regular reviews of processes in each local authority and police area should be monitored which includes schools and other partner agencies.
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An investigation considering the effects of Mental Health and the impact it has on policing within England and Wales: What pressures are the police under?

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Abstract

There have been at least 300,000 police incidents involving people with mental ill health, just within 2016 (Karia, 2016). The Police are finding themselves immensely stretched in dealing with these types of incident. One in four people will at some point suffer with mental ill health, resulting in a 40% increase of Police time (Mind, 2016). The aim for this primary research, is to explore the pressures and demand mental ill health incidents have on the Police, and how the Police are managing this within the current operationally demanding climate. By using mixed method questionnaires, distributed to Thames Valley Police Officers within three stations located within Berkshire, it will allow the research to explore data relating to the use of Section 136 Mental Health Act 1984, Police attitudes and feelings within dealing with mental health incidents.

By using academic sources to underpin the concept and theories, this article will discuss the existence of mental ill health and stigma associated with it. The article will also touch on legislation and community care. Therefore, discussing why Police Officers attend and deal with mental health incidents. The article will conclude with three recommendations.

Key words: Mental Health, Policing, Criminal Justice, Mental ill health, Community care, Stigma, Triage, Section 136, Mind, Thames Valley Police.

Introduction

Mental illness is an umbrella term that encompasses a variety of psychological disorders. While there is debate over how to define mental illness, it is generally accepted that mental illnesses are real and involve disturbances of thought, experience, and emotion serious enough to cause functional impairment in people, (Perring, 2010). With at least 25% of the UK population experiencing poor mental health at some point during their lives (SABP NHS, 2016). It is within government policy that people with mental health illnesses, should receive treatment and care from the health service (MIND 2016). The definition of psychotic can be described as to be “…out of touch with reality” (Mind 2017). Psychotic conditions can interfere with a person’s perception of reality which can lead to hallucinations (MacGill, 2017). This can greatly impact on the individual’s quality of life and their relationships (Mental Health Foundation, 2017). This highlights the importance of training required for mental illness recognition within policing in England and Wales (IPCC; 2008).

Mind, one of the leading charities in UK whose main aim is to provide advice, support and to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They also campaign to raise awareness of mental illness. This organisation has suggested that there is a positive correlation
between the stigma attached to ill mental health and the danger they present to society (Mind, 2016). Leff & Warner (2006) noted a correlation between public fear of mental disorders and violence. Subsequently, they conclude that the “perception of the majority of the public are that mentally ill people are dangerous, this has been greatly exaggerated” (Leff & Warner 2006, pg 26). Individuals suffering with psychological disorders will encounter the Police either as victims or as offenders of crime (Home Office, 2014) and police officers attending these situations are not always aware that mental illness is involved (Holtgraves & Socall, 1992).

The police up until now, have not been trained in specifically dealing with mental health scenarios where the individual has a mental health prognosis (IPCC 2008). Due to this, officers may deal with the situation inappropriately even if they may suspect mental illness to be the causal factor. In October 2016, Michael Brown, the mental health lead for College of Policing, stated that new training would be rolled out to all forces. This would ensure vulnerable people are not unnecessarily criminalised and instead get access to the crisis care they need. The guidance and training will equip officers with identifying vulnerable victims and would offer support to those whom need it (College of Policing, 2016).

From 2011 to 2015 there has been a 33% increase of the time that the Police have devoted to mental health incidents (Quinn, Laville & Duncan, 2016). The College of Policing estimates that 20%-40% of Police time is spent attending and dealing with mental health incidents (College of Policing, 2015) which indicates that mental health poses a significant challenge for modern policing.

This article is going to explore the experiences and opinions of serving officers within Thames Valley Police. But also how they manage persons who have, or suspected to have, poor mental health.

**Literature Review**

**Policing & Mental health**

Mental health illnesses are very common in people that have had contact with the Criminal Justice System, a high proportion of offenders have mental health needs (Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health, 2009, Bradley; 2009, Durcan, Saunders, Gadsby and Hazard 2014). It is estimated that 39% of persons arrested and brought to police custody have a form of mental disorder (NICE, 2014). A further 15% of adults detained by police have a mild or moderate depressive disorder. The relationship between mental ill health and the police have a long history of interaction. As statistics show the contact between the two has steadily increased over recent decades (Short et al, 2014). Studies indicate persons with mental health illness tend to have more repeated Police contact, than most of the general population (Markowitz, 2011).

There are many reasons why there is an increased contact between the Police and those suffering with mental health illnesses. Within the UK, the police are increasingly the first responders to people in the community experiencing a mental health crisis (Bather et al 2008). Among the factors that contribute to the tension of police involvement in mental health incidents is the deinstitutionalization of mental health services. Foucault suggested that this ‘decarceration’ was needed due to the oppressive and repressive asylum regime (Foucault 1989). However, in modern times there are still poor community and inpatient mental health treatment options (Chaimowitz, 2011). This is a key concept as legislation took offenders with mental health illnesses out of psychiatric wards and back into the community as legislation and practice suggested that persons with mental ill health would be better integrating with the community (Care in the Community Act 1990). These two are some of the dynamic factors that have contributed to the police and mental health illness relationship. Due to these factors, it often results in the police having to respond to a person suffering when mental ill health experiences a breakdown, also known as a crisis. Due to this lack, of understanding and effective care, the process has now led to the police being referred to as “front line mental
health workers” (Mclean & Marshall, 2010 p63). Lord Adebowale agrees with Mclean and Marshall within his report, in where he put forward that police officers are forced to mop up situations that mental health organisations and social services should be dealing with (Lord Adebowale, 2013).

The majority of police officers may find such mental health situations problematic. One of the reasons is because persons suffering mental illnesses may not respond to traditional police tactics, thus leaving the police with limited options for resolving these situations (Engel, Sobol & Worden, 2000). Such was the case in the death of Sean Riggs, who died within police custody after experiencing a mental health episode. The circumstances around him being brought to custody were likely to have been physiologically stressful to him (Dodd, 2016). Lord Adebowale’s report on Mental Health and Policing (2013) states that mental health poses a significant yet complex challenge for policing in the UK. He suggests that it should be a core priority in all future service delivery’s (Adebowale 2013). Wolff (2005) argues that the police have always had what might be termed a “quasi social work” role. However, Husted et al. (1995) suggest it is not an area that is often valued highly within police work. It does not fit with aspects of “cop culture” that Reiner (2000) identifies. Cop Culture is also known as a ‘working police officer’s personality’ which can include hedonistic love of action, and pessimistic cynicism and the need officers have to fit into this culture (Reiner, 2000). Over the last decade, the Police, Ambulance service and mental health organisations have sought to improve and advance their response to situations involving those of persons with ill mental health (Department of Health and Concordat, 2015).

The Prison Reform Trust (2009) discusses inadequate mental health training for police which has led to several mental health suspects coming in to contact with the criminal justice system from an early stage. The College of Policing confronted issues surrounding police officers and their training on mental health (COP 2016). This steered the development of mental health training which is currently being rolled out in Police services. This can be reflected in 2013 where the UK charity Mind, it reported mental health victims felt they weren’t receiving the right contact with the police. They largely felt that the police dropped their case because they had mental health problems (MIND, 2013). The findings also showed that mentally ill persons experienced high rates of crime, and were considerably more likely to be victims of crime than the general population (ibid).

Alternatively, the police service is expected to grow with modern times, and a modern police service is expected to deal with the complexity of many issues on an everyday basis (Home Office, 2010). The Police are tasked with dealing with persons with mental health issues, and have had to find ways managing them within the community (Mind, 2013). However, the disproportionate amount of Police time and resourcing spent dealing with mental health issues is now becoming a concern, due to police cut backs (Blair, 2016). Alternatively, some mental health sufferers felt they were being punished for taking up police time, when experiencing a mental health breakdown (Jones and Mason 2002, Katsakou and Priebe 2007). These challenges are both individual and organisational to the police and mental health system.

Legislation

Within England and Wales, mental disorders are defined in Section 1 of the Mental Health Act 1983 (as amended by Mental Health Act 2007; ch. 12). This act relates to the care and treatment of mentally ill patients. Section 1 (ss 3) of the 2007 act omits the definitions of psychotic disorder and puts it under the broader concept of “mental disorder” (see schedule 1 section 2 MHA 2007). The legislation defines a learning disorder as “a state of arrested or incomplete development of the mind which includes significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning” (MHA; 2007 ss3). MHA 2007 amended the 1983 act by including, “learning disability” as a mental disorder if “…that disability is associated with abnormally aggressive or seriously irresponsible conduct on his part” (MHA 2007 ss 2(A)). This definition is broad and encapsulates any disorder or disability of the mind (Bartlett & Sandland; 2014). However, the act excludes alcohol and drug dependence (Mental Health Act 2007, ch 12, sections 1 and 3).

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) is a piece of legislation available if a person is incapable of making a decision; it will in some circumstances be applicable to police officers (NPIA, 2010). Section 1 sets out that “a person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established
that he lacks capacity” (MCA 2005 s1 (2)). However, if a person loses mental capacity whether it’s temporary or permanent MCA protects the person’s rights. Sometimes a person could lose mental capacity because of their mental illness (Rethink MI, 2017). The fact that someone’s decision may be considered ‘unwise’ is not in itself sufficient to assume that they lack capacity (MCA 2005 s1 (4)). MCA relates more to the persons care and treatment, with focus on the capacity of a person and how they should be considered to have capacity unless assessed otherwise. National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) states a constable is most likely to use MCA at an incident within a public place involving people who are clearly seriously injured such as victims of serious assaults or casualties of major incidents, but have declined medical aid, it would be within the individuals interest to use the MCA (NPIA 2010).

It is almost without exception that Police Officers have to attend a mental health incident (MetPol, 2014), as police officers are there to manage risk and to promote co-operation. The police have use of multiple powers under MHA. The most frequent power used under MHA is known as Section 136, this power is only available to police officers (Department of Health, 2015). This piece of legislation sets out guidelines for the police, if they believe a person is experiencing a mental health crisis. Under section 136 MHA, the police can remove individuals from a public place to a ‘place of safety’ for their own protection or the protection of others (Mind 2016 also section 136(1)). The action taken must be necessary and must be within the interest of the person, such interest is to enable them to be examined by a medical practitioner (Home Office, 2014). The primary focus of the police is not to diagnose mental illnesses, and this is not expected of them, it provides the power to officers whom in good faith, believe there is an immediate care or control needed to remove the person and place them in a place of safety (MetPol, 2011).

The difficulties that police may face is section 136 MHA legislation does not apply in private homes (Department of Health, 2014). This causes an issue amongst police officers decision making. Once inside and on encountering someone whom they considered in need of treatment and care, the police would then have no legal power for their removal. This means some officers have to remain in the private place with the vulnerable person for several hours, which takes up most of the officer’s time (Quinn, Laville & Duncan, 2016). There have been examples of unlawful practices where to help not only speed up the process but to ensure those suffering a crisis receives help, an officer would persuade the vulnerable person to enter a public space and then apply Section 136 (Durcan, 2014). Burke 2013, suggested section 136 is a ‘blunt’ instrument’. Officers are then left detaining people, for being mentally ill, just for a purpose of an assessment. Burke also goes on to state that there is support out there for mental health problems, but with all that people will go to the police (Burke, 2013).

An ambulance, should be used for transportation to enable police to get back to their regular duties, however, this leaves officers waiting for available transport, and may cause an escalation of the situation whilst the officers are waiting (Hampson, 2011). In some areas police are expected to help perform the role of a mental health professional, by supporting the care of the person (Bouch, 2011). This is not the role police are trained for.

There has been an increase in the numbers of section 135 and 136 over the last 5 years in England (Health and Social Care Information Centre, 2015). Many health professionals believe that the police are frequently using 136 to detain people who do not need to be detained (Department of Health, 2014). The Department of Health within their recommendations conclude that section 136 should be amended to apply to anywhere except private homes, but include railway lines, private vehicles, hospital wards, rooftops of buildings, and hotel rooms. This would ensure that S136 could apply in workplaces, for example, where neither S136 nor S135 currently apply (Ibid).

Good practice guidance in order to help for Police Officers deal with those suffering mental health illnesses, is embedded in to the two Mental Health Act Codes of Practice. (Department of Health 2008; Welsh Assembly Government 2008). However, the Mental Health Act Code of Practice states that police custody should only be used as a place of safety in “exceptional” circumstances (Department of Health 2015). Police custody should not be used routinely as a place of safety for people detained under S136 MHA (Department of Health, 2015 pp 20-25). It has long been recognized that police cells are unsuitable places of safety (Jones and Mason,
They are not the right environment for a person suffering mental illness to be, as it offers no comfort, poor communication and little interaction. The Royal College of Psychiatrists (2011) are in an agreement with this.

Methodology

The main aim of this research is to understand the pressures police may face when dealing with mental health offenders. To investigate this, a piece of sociological research was conducted, where a mixed methods questionnaire was produced to obtain this information. The questionnaire was authorised by Buckinghamshire New University Ethical Committee panel to ensure it met ethical approval before finalisation. The questionnaire was given to officers within Thames Valley Police and in order to distribute the questionnaires to the police service, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was formed between researcher and Police service in order to ensure all data gathered was legitimate and that professional integrity remained respected. Additionally, it was important to understand that social research has implications - due to its invasive nature, some candidates may not welcome the idea, whilst others welcome it (BSA, 2000) therefore, it was important to ensure all candidates were debriefed on the research conducted.

The questionnaires were placed in the following three stations: Bracknell, Wokingham and Loddon Valley Police Station. These stations were chosen due to convenience as they are within the nearest proximity, each questionnaire was placed in the working area of the police station. The questionnaire contained a briefing/consent sheet and were allocated a number from 1-100 (as 100 questionnaires were distributed). Due to the sensitive nature of mental health and the impact it can have on a person’s wellbeing, the back of the double-sided questionnaire noted relevant charities and debriefing section for candidates. The individual number allocated to each officer allowed the anonymity to remain consistent throughout the process. Each Police Station had an allocated area where the Officers would place the finished questionnaires into the envelopes. From this it would be place into a cardboard box which was labelled ‘Mental Health Questionnaires’ and each station was given a poster. Officers were also encouraged to complete the questionnaire as an email was circulated by Thames Valley Police Bracknell and Wokingham Area Admin, to inform Officers of the research project.

The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions: 8 questions providing a variety of nominal and ordinal data. Two qualitative questions producing an in-depth understanding of the thoughts, feelings and emotions of the participator. Questionnaires are useful as the results derived are measurable against other variables in an objective manner (Saunders et al, 2007). Another benefit of using questionnaires is that they are simple to carry out, compared to interviews which can be time consuming (Czaja & Blair, 1996). By using a mixed method approach, it allows using both sets of data to work alongside each other. Allowing an in-depth analysis which can result in stronger results (Muskat, 2012).

The quantitative data contains a variety of nominal and ordinal data. The difference between the two is nominal variables are used to label a series of values (Draper, 2017). Such as the questions which refer to where the Officers are based or dichotomous questions of yes or no. Ordinal scales provide good information about the order of choice (ibid). A Likert scale that contains five values ranging from strongly agree all the way through to strongly disagree allows the participant to have choice and freedom in answering the question.

By visually representing the data, it then becomes easier to draw conclusions (Robson, 2002). Qualitative data is harder to analyse (McLeod, 2008) but can provide a deeper insight into the individual’s opinions such as the two open ended questions 9 & 10. This gives the Officers freedom in expressing what they feel about the current situation regarding mental health, with their identity remaining anonymous which provided true indication of their thoughts and feelings. The qualitative data produced was processed by ‘thematic analyses’. Braun & Clarke define as a method which identifies; analyses and reports patterns within data. By using
thematic analysis, it allows richer research and in-depth look into the participants’ thoughts on a topic.

The questionnaire pilot was created to ensure not only did it look professional, but was also easy for the respondents to follow. The majority of respondents are front-line Police Officers for Thames Valley Police and keeping time considerations in mind, as police officers have to be quick to deploy. Convenience sampling methods place primary emphasis on generalisability (Etikan et al, 2016). Convenience sampling was used to obtain basic data and trends regarding this study without the complications of using a randomized sample (Leiner, 2014). Since the sample is not representative of the population, the results of the study cannot speak for the entire population of the police service. The inclusion criteria were Police Officers & PCSO’s of both sexes working at Bracknell, Loddon Valley and Wokingham Police Stations. This was stretched to emphasise the importance of using Front Line Officers only and therefore, resulted in exclusions for those who were Inspector rank and above. The research project also excluded any mental health practitioner, any persons from CHRT or any civilian that works an inter-agency partner to the Police service and importantly mental health practitioners that work in the triage scheme will not be asked.

This was to make sure the data set remained solely directed at working Police Officers. As discussed, the advantages of this type of sampling are the availability and the quickness with which data can be gathered. The disadvantages are the risk that the sample might not represent the population as a whole (Etikan et al, 2016). The anonymity of the participants of this research project has been respected. Once the questionnaires were finalised, a date of 22nd January 2017 was appointed deadline. Up until that the date, 62 questionnaires were handed back and only 55 were used. Seven questionnaires were not fully completed, giving an overall response rate of 55%.

Ethical implications within this research projected remained key throughout the process and all candidates were fully debriefed so there was no deception. All candidates were made fully aware that they could withdraw at any time and how to withdraw. The reinforced message of the anonymity was prevalent and it was stressed that each questionnaire was confidential; private and also that there would be no infringement of participant rights. It was mandatory to understand that the social and psychological well-being of research participants and to ensure that this was not adversely affected by the research (BSA, 2002).

The Police Service is a professional body and has regulations and standards (COP, 2016). Where each Officer is duty-bound by the Code of Ethics, which binds them to honesty and non-bias discrimination. The research project also included charity numbers for MIND and SAMARITANS. This was placed in the questionnaire in case officers wanted to reach out for help, or to get a better understanding of mental health.
Results

Qualitative

Qualitative data helps develop concepts of social phenomena in its natural setting, providing more emphasis into experiences and views of the participant (Pope & Mays, 1995). After coding the raw data from questions 9 & 10 they were analysed in more detail. The results were compiled, from where the second step of coding began, which put the phenomena into themes. These themes were finally gathered and placed into categories using thematic analysis. Results are shown below:

Since each phenomena directly relates to another, it is easier to identify the prominent themes that are running through the answers through the questionnaire. Each theme was further analysed and place in a table of hierarchy according to the most theme which re-occurred more frequently.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchy of themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Hierarchy of themes
Theme 1- Support
The theme of support was identified throughout most of the questionnaires. It was described in terms of Officers and not having enough of it [support], from outside agencies and at times not enough support from supervisor.

“A lot of time & commitment of many resources… Too much time waiting for other agencies (P 53)”

“Too much is left with the officer…Supervisor should take control remotely and tell you exactly what to do” (P 100)

Theme 2 – Knowledge
Stemming from support, many participants felt their knowledge wasn’t enough to give advice when dealing with mental health.

“I don’t know what is put in place. I am not aware of the this personally and I always seek advice before a MH job comes up” (P 96)

“I feel like I don’t have the sufficient knowledge of MH issues to provide the most appropriate response” (P 66)

Theme 3 – Training
Another significant theme in the questionnaires was ‘training’ where Officers described they would require more training to help them carry out their duties.

“Yes- training related to specific MH issues rather than generalized MH training” (P 66)

“Detailed inputs to give officers more in-depth information on MH & needs of the people that have it” (P 76)
Quantitative research is often contrasted with qualitative research, because quantitative information seeks to underpin research by applying a mathematical approach (Given, 2008). Kuhn (1961) suggests both research methods go hand in hand. The data below shows the quantitative data from questions 1-8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Bracknell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>Wokingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>Loddon Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46+</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Question 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Agreement Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neither agree or disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 5</th>
<th>Question 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreement Scale</td>
<td>How Often Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Everyday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Once a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Once a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Less than twice a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 7</th>
<th>Question 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Table representing questions 1-8 on the questionnaire, after the raw data was collected.
Once the raw data was placed into the table above, graphs representing the data was created to allow for visual representation.

Graph 1: Bar graph representing question 1

Question 1: What is your age?

Graph 2: Bar graph representing question 2

Question 2: What station are you based at?

Location of Station
- Bracknell
- Wokingham
- Loddon Valley

Number of Responses

0  7.5  15  22.5  30
Question 3: Whilst on duty have you had to deal with a Mental Health Offender/Victim?

Graph 3: Bar graph representing question 3

Question 4: "I spend a lot of time as a police officer responding to persons that appear to be experiencing from poor mental health."

Graph 4: Bar graph representing question 4

Question 5: "I feel that my current level of knowledge concerning mental health is sufficient."

Graph 5: Bar graph representing question 5
Graph 6: Bar graph representing question 6

Graph 7: Bar graph representing question 7
Q2: What station are you based at?

Q7: Have you ever had to detain someone under S.136 MHA 2007
Graph 10: Bar graph comparing questions 2 and 8

Question 2: What station are you based at?

Question 8: Do you believe that the Thames Valley Police Triage Scheme is beneficial?

Graph 11: Bar graph of question 8 – Bracknell Responses

Question 8: Do you believe that the Thames Valley Police Triage Scheme is beneficial?
Each graph represents the answers each participant gave, but due to having both sets of nominal and ordinal data, standard deviation could not be met. The graphs could not combine majority of the questions into a comparison chart. Each graph will be discussed individually and collectively in order to answer the research question.

**Discussion**

This discussion will focus on the findings of the questionnaire and explore the concepts that will develop the answers further.

Question 9 which draws upon the officer’s feelings and attitude on MH whilst question 10 of the questionnaire asks for officers to explain what is missing in the current management of mental health (MH), these two will be used to either reinforce the quantitative data or debate it.

From looking at Graph 1, it has been observed that it represents that at least 42% of those who completed the questionnaire sat within the 26-35 age bracket which corresponds to recent data from the Police Federation which has recognized that officers are, on average, aged 26-35 (Hales, 2017). This suggests that the majority of officers who have completed the questionnaire could have been in for a longer period of service than the 20% who are 18-25.

Thames Valley Police is in partnership with the Berkshire Healthcare NHS, which helped fund the Street Triage Scheme within Berkshire West - Wokingham and Reading Local Areas (West Berkshire Council, 2016 & Thames Valley Police, 2015). This is an important set of data as Question 2 asks for what station officers are based in. As the Triage pilot had already been started a year previously at Loddon Valley Police Station and Wokingham Police Station but not at Bracknell Police Station, it was essential to know so an investigation of patterns that emerge can occur. Graph 2 shows that at least 53% of the officers completing this questionnaire could have been in for a longer period of service than the 20% who are 18-25.

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Graph 12: Bar graph of question 8 Loddon and Wokingham Responses

**Question 8: Do you believe that the Thames Valley Police Triage Scheme is beneficial?**

Each graph represents the answers each participant gave, but due to having both sets of nominal and ordinal data, standard deviation could not be met. The graphs could not combine majority of the questions into a comparison chart. Each graph will be discussed individually and collectively in order to answer the research question.

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The sharp increase in police time in dealing with mental health offenders have surged within the last couple of years. The College of Policing estimate a 20%-40% increase in police dealing with mental health offenders (COP, 2015). Graph 3 signifies that 99% of the participants have
dealt with a mental health offender and by interpreting this result, it is significant to understand how almost all participants have dealt with mental health offenders. Question 9 allowed the participant to draw upon their experience in mental health related jobs, many of the replies centred on the key theme of ‘support’.

“Happy to attend to support the ‘patient’ – no confidence in support agencies” – Q41
“Unsupported by medical professionals” – Q9
“I am happy to go, but I feel there needs to be more people supporting police” – Q22
“I feel it is necessary for our attendance on most occasions because the person doesn’t get the necessary support from other services” – Q18
“I have no issue attending initially. However, there is insufficient support from MH teams that often means far too long is spent ‘babysitting’” – Q62

From analysis of the qualitative data, some officers accept it is a policing job and do attend the mental health incidents and are happy to attend.

“Part of the job” – Q70
“Policing mental health is an everyday occurrence therefore I consider it to be a norm” – Q 11

However, there are a few officers who do not share this opinion on attending mental health incidents.

“This is not a police job” – Q3
“I do not feel the police are fully equipped or best placed to assist with MH incidents, both long term and short term” – Q 10
“90% of the time it is not a police matter” – Q 63
“Mental health should not be policed, it should be treated medically. I understand we have supported powers like 136, but we shouldn’t be triaging mental health” – Q44

Arguably, it shows that attitudes in attending mental health incidents are still developing; Lord Adebowale in his report of mental health and policing found that mental health is core business and needs to be reflected in all policy (Adebowale, 2013). A number of participants recognised the need for police officers to have a presence in mental health incidents as they expressed they are only available resource able to attend 24/7, which strengthens Sir Winsor’s delivery of mental health care, stating mental health has reached such a ‘state of severity that police are often being used to fill the gaps other agencies cannot’ (HMIC, 2017 page 24).

Graph 4 highlights 53% of participants strongly agreeing that they spend a lot of time responding to mental health incidents. Compared to the 3% who state they disagree that they spend too much time dealing with mental health incidents. Nationally, mental health-related incidents account for up to 40% of police time (P&CC, 2017), when comparing the 53% to Question 9 both sets of data are in an agreement of the time spent dealing with mental health.

“I feel that I spend a considerable amount of time dealing with it and I’m unlikely to get support from mental health professionals” – Q46
“It is an ambulance job, most of the time we have to wait for the ambulance to come” – Q14
“I feel I will get tied up in incidents where the police should not/need to be involved due to the lack of resources of local authority both out of hours and normal hours” – Q74
“The majority of time valuable resources are taken up on MH jobs where the police are not required” – Q79

“Dealing with MH involves a lot of time and commitment of many resources. Too much time is spent waiting for other agencies to play their part – Q53
The majority of participants expressed the need for ambulance to arrive more promptly, which is a case of sooner rather than later. Within the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat which was signed in 2014, a joint agreement was made to improve the system of care and support people in a mental health crisis. The Crisis Care Concordat recognized the above issue of time waiting for ambulance, and put in place an agreed response time and a single national protocol for the transportation of section 136 patients. This data can be interpreted to show that this is yet to be achieved.

When attending a mental health incident, Police Officers are required to have a basic understanding of mental health (COP, 2016). Graph 5 indicates 5% of Police Officers strongly agree that they have sufficient knowledge concerning mental health. A further 36% agree that they have sufficient knowledge contrasting to the 42% of officers who disagree to having sufficient knowledge in mental health, while the further 12% neither agree nor disagree. Training was highlighted as a key factor in the national police guidance 2016 (ibid), with the new training currently being implemented in all forces, the data indicates a need for police specific training. When analysing Question 9 and Question 10, several participants highlighted the need for training which was significant as it appeared throughout the thematic analyses process (See Table 1 and Figure 1).

“I feel like I don’t have sufficient knowledge of MH issues to provide the most appropriate response” Q 66 - “Yes training related to specific MH rather than general” Q66 (Q10)

“Yes we need detail inputs, more information of mental health issues and the needs of people that have them – Q99 (Q10)

“Often unsure of what action to take due to lack of MH knowledge” - Q86

“Unprepared. More time should be spent on training” – Q55

“If we are expected to deal effectively we need comprehensive training” – Q51

“I do not feel as if I have the adequate knowledge to understand how or why the person if suffering” – Q80

“I feel equipped to deal with MH due to my own personal experience not because of training” – Q68

The above data, underpins the quantitative findings of how much of a necessity training and Mental Health knowledge is. The qualitative data represented just how much of a requirement is needed in Mental Health to help officers understand and to be able to safely help vulnerable people.

Graph 6 establishes that officers at least once a day encounter mental health incidents with at least 41% agreeing to this. The data however, shows a figure nearer to 47% of Officers stating that they deal with these incidents on a weekly basis. The question was placed in an expression of frequency scale, which did not allow flexibility in officers being able to state if it was more than once a week or once a month. This question restricted the officers in being able to put across thoroughly how much contact they have with Mental Health sufferers. However, the data still represents that officers are dealing with Mental Health on more than a monthly basis, which can be an added demand. Recently the College of Poling Demand Report (2015) reported more forces are reporting increased levels of demand is responding to people with mental health problems (COP, 2015) and the data agrees with this concept.

Dodd (2016) discussed how officers have had a substantial increase of more than 50% in a decade in the use of powers to detain people under section 136 of the Mental Health Act. Lady Hale in her Mental Health Law’ (5th edition, 2010) argues that s136 could be under-used, because it is very difficult to work with and a natural disincentive. Arguably, as question 5 explored majority of the officer’s knowledge in MH isn’t that sufficient, this could indicate the reason into why the use of section 136 MHA is represented at 91% in graph 7. This perhaps could identify how officers have had to apply Section 136 MHA as they didn’t know what other power to apply, questionably Officers may not have had any other powers to use during that time, such as applying criminal law. In the period April to November 2015 there has been a 3% increase in the number of persons being detained under s136 of the Mental Health Act in
Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead and Bracknell Forest (Bracknell Forest, 2015). Only 9% of participants have not had to detain a person under section 136, debatably representing the over use of section 136. In spite of this, the Home Office review of Section 135 & Section 136, found that the majority of s136 detentions were made outside of normal business hours when other mental health services were not always available (Home Office, 2014).

“If attending an MH incident in a private place, I feel vulnerable to the situation. We have no powers and cannot really help the issues. Yet if it goes wrong we get into trouble” Q16

“I do not know what is in place, I am not aware of personally and I will have to ask for advice all the time before a job comes up involving MH issues” Q90

The above qualitative data represents the hesitancy officers have over section 136, yet the data represents a high number of officers using the legislation.

The triage scheme acknowledges the demand Mental Health jobs had on police officers, and recognized the need to make Mental Health a core police business. Coming into Thames Valley Police just recently, the triage service has already made an impact on officers:

“Before I volunteered for the triage car I was uncertain, apprehensive but since duties in Op Hedge, I feel much more certain of what we can offer,” Q 8

“More triage cars on duty everyday would benefit the service” Q26

Within the short term the triage service has already had impact on officers view, the triage pilot is still in its early stages and has just started to manifest around England and Wales (Morpeth Herald, 2017). Graph 8 displays that 84% of officers believe the triage service is a benefit, compared to the 13% who said they did not know. This figure could relate to Bracknell Police Station only having the triage service operational within the last year (Thames Valley Police, 2015) and not having to experience the triage car. Graph 10 aimed to represent the two sets of data from Question 2 and Question 8 to show the above of Loddon Valley officers completing more of the questionnaires than Bracknell, which could potentially influence the result. Graph 11 represents that 14 of the 18 participants from Bracknell agree that the triage service is beneficial compared to the 1 participant that believes it is not. Graph 12 collectively shows both question 8 responses from Loddon Valley and Wokingham Police Station, 56% of the participants agree that the triage scheme is beneficial, however even though the two stations have had more use of the pilot scheme a small margin of 7% still don't know if it is beneficial to the service.

“More Triage cars on duty every day, so that a person suffering from mental health has the help from the most appropriate agencies” Q26 (q10)

“Yes! Longer triage car deployments i.e. beyond the 4x late shifts. Daytime coverage needed” Q43 (q10)

Nonetheless, Officers have recognized a weakness in the triage service and request for the car to be on duty every day, enabling them to have more help. Street Triage does not operate around clock. Heslin et al (2016), found that 94% of individuals were still being detained under S136 MHA outside of these peak times, agreeing with the participants that the scheme would be a lot more successful if it had a 24 hour service (Heslin et al, 2016) . Several different triage schemes have been implemented around different forces, such as operating day times and only providing advice on phone during nights (UCL, 2016). Thames Valley Police in their triage pilot integrated the ‘Night Assessment Service’ ensuring access to mental health assessment and advice throughout out of hours times (Thames Valley Police, 2015). Even with the success of the Night Assessment Service, there is a demand to have a service more able to address mental health incidents during the day. Question 10 in the questionnaire, set to explore the officer’s attitudes in what was missing in current mental health management.

“Yes more co-operation from CMHT workers” Q64

“Further support from CMHT, something which can work 24 hours/day” Q96
“Lack of out of hours help for people with MH issues” Q86
“Mental health professionals to attend before police, then request for police if needed” Q55
“Yes triage car needs to be on more days/weeks but does not require police officer” Q80
“Yes- Mental health NHS teams/ crisis teams need to take responsibility as they’re the trained professionals, they currently rely on police & A+E departments for mental in the community out of hours” Q99

A majority of the participants voiced the need for a separate service from the police that can attend mental health incidents, reiterating the need for police to be supported by outside agencies. Thematic analyses of the qualitative data, can confirm that support, knowledge and training is a re-occurring problem for Police Officers, but the majority of this is down to the very under resourced and lacking multi agency approaches in dealing with mental health (Mind, 2016).

Through interpretation of the results, it keenly highlights the significant need for more training and represents that officers do not feel confident in dealing with mental health incidents. However, when working with quantitative data, it is important to address the levels of confidence in the data. Margin of error also known as the confidence interval (Wells, 2011) seeks how much of the opinions and behaviour of the sample is likely to deviate from the total population.

By applying West (1999, page 66) graph of margins of error to the data set, we can have 85% confidence in the results above, and a margin of error of + or - 10% on the results.

![Figure 2: West, C (1995, page 66) table of confidence and margin of error](image)

**Conclusion**

This study set out to assess what pressures the Police are under when dealing with mental health offenders. It has emphasized Lord Bradley’s concept of the police fulfilling a role as gatekeepers, in deciding whether a person with mental health illness should enter the criminal justice system (Bradley, 2009). The pressure of mental health within policing began with the idea of cost, it was more about financial figures and disputes if the police dealt with mental health incidents (Karia, 2016).

However, as time went on the police found themselves fulfilling this role of dealing with mental health. The Police are far too often dealing with people experiencing a mental health crisis, and the public are still accessing the vital mental health care via contact with the police (Callen,
The Police operate under a wide structure that requires a multi-agency approach to combat the issues around mental health (Mind, 2016). Alongside their legislative powers, the Police have a duty of care for the individual, they are also accountable to investigate the incident, whilst having to make decisions for the individual under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, for those who don’t have the capacity to make them (Metropolitan Police, 2011). The police can no longer perform as a single organization, it requires the state and other social services to help fight the burden of this issue. However, through the pressures and actions have resulted in positive outcomes such as the Triage Pilot Scheme, which has solidified the need for a multi-agency approach, to remove the pressures and demand on the modern-day policing service, who now accept that mental health related incidents are largely becoming a huge factor and norm in their roles. Arguably, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and powers under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 places a duty of accountability on officers, therefore increasing their involvement with mental health. Although this research project wasn’t able to find any significant result about policing mental health, it has reinforced the need for more mental health training. Findings also suggested that police attitudes in attending mental health incidents are changing, but more importantly highlighted the need for a better multi-agency approach.

Recently, Parliament has considered many of the problems with Section 136 MHA and have now passed a parliamentary bill containing proposals to amend the Mental Health Act 1983 (Parliament, 2017). These proposals are widening the scope of the Section 136 and will now be able to be applied anywhere other than a dwelling. Place of safety will be restricted to stop the use of police custody unless in exceptional circumstances. Most importantly an introduction to a consultation requirement will be required, it will be proposed that officers will have to consult mental health professionals before instigating the use of section 136 MHA. This could not only drop the use of detention under 136 but allow Officers to have more confidence in attending mental health incidents, giving them the extra support they need.
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Managing competing risks affecting displaced persons in a conflict environment; a case study from United Nations Policing in South Sudan

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Abstract

During the South Sudan crisis of December 2013 thousands of civilians sought safety with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. By 2015, approximately 200,000 internally displaced people were residing in United Nations (UN) protection of civilian (PoC) sites. The Government and its forces, including the police, were accused of serious human rights abuses.

Serious security incidents were occurring in the sites such as murder, gang rape and child abuse. The Security Council Resolution mandated the Mission to protect civilians from physical violence but, with no executive powers or adjudication system, it faced the challenge of how to respond. Whilst the suspect presented a significant risk to their victim and the security of the PoC site they were also at serious risk should they leave the safety of the UN's protection.

An approach was developed to review each case, identify and balance the risks and provide accountability for decision making. A menu of responses was developed ranging from a community led restorative justice mechanism to continued detention by the Mission. These responses are ‘Clumsy Solutions’ driven by an operational necessity to take action to address this ‘Wicked Problem’. As the peace process changes the context, the problem may be ‘tamed’ offering opportunities for ‘Elegant Solutions’.

Introduction

In 2013 the United Nations (UN) Mission supporting the development of the newly independent South Sudan suddenly faced a unique set of challenges. As a conflict spread across the country tens of thousands of civilians fled to the UN compounds. The mandate changed to focus on the protection of civilians. In this highly complex environment the existing powers, responsibilities and approaches of the Mission were no longer fit for the challenges it faced. The Mission’s failure to adhere to an existing agreement to handover detainees resulted in assertions of harbouring from the Government. Mistrust developed and cooperation suffered. The UN Police (UNPOL) became responsible for dealing with crime and disorder within the protection of civilian (PoC) sites. Amongst the internally displaced people (IDPs) in the PoC sites there was little confidence in the UN imposed restorative justice mechanism and customary justice continued to be practiced, employing corporal punishment and a strong gender bias against the rights of girls and women. There was no precedent for how the Mission should deal with suspects who had been detained for serious incidents such as murder and rape and every option presented significant risks.

A theoretical framework assisted in understanding the nature of the challenge and identified opportunities and mechanisms to develop guiding principles. Recognition that this was a
‘Wicked Problem’\textsuperscript{14} informed an appropriate approach to produce a ‘Clumsy Solution’.\textsuperscript{15} Following the implementation of the peace process the changing context may produce opportunities to ‘tame’\textsuperscript{16} the problem; for the Government to resume responsibility for the safety and security of all of its citizens, providing an ‘Elegant Solution’\textsuperscript{17} to the Mission’s problems.

A range of responses was developed ranging from a community led restorative justice mechanism to continued detention by the Mission. Each response carried immediate and/or ongoing risks. The learning from this case study will identify guiding principles that are appropriate to complex contexts and challenges and, can inform organisations and individuals in their practice.

### South Sudan; a country in conflict

Following two Sudanese civil wars fought over six decades, the Republic of South Sudan won its independence on 9 July 2011. This new country enjoyed a short period of peace until 15 December 2013, when fighting broke out within the Presidential Guard. Factions aligned on political and tribal lines. Supporters of President Salva Kiir were predominantly Dinka, the largest tribe, and supporters of Vice President Riek Machar were predominantly Nuer, the second largest tribe in South Sudan.

A number of reasons for this conflict have been suggested, including a power struggle between the President and Vice President, an attempted coup and an assertion made by some Nuer Leaders that this was the beginning of a planned genocide of the Nuer people by the Dinka as highlighted to the author by Nuer leaders in the PoC site in Juba in 2015. This appeared to be a strongly and widely held belief amongst the Nuer, contributing to fear and distrust of the Government, Government Authorities and Dinka civilians.

The conflict quickly escalated across the capital, Juba, involving other military units. Over the coming days, fighting exploded across the country. Reports of human rights atrocities committed against civilians by both sides were widespread, including allegations against South Sudan police officers.\textsuperscript{18} By 2015, as a result of the on-going conflict, more than 1.66 million South Sudanese had been internally displaced.\textsuperscript{19}

Post-independence there was a United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) delivering capacity building. During the crisis many civilians fled to the Mission for sanctuary. As the conflict continued these IDPs remained because of fear to return home due to potential violence. PoC sites were established, with UNMISS providing security and protection and humanitarian aid partners providing clean water, food, healthcare and shelter. By the end of December 2015 over 190,000 civilians were being accommodated in UNMISS compounds.\textsuperscript{20} The capacity building mandate was replaced by a protection of civilian mandate and almost all capacity building ceased.

\textsuperscript{14} A ‘Wicked Problem’ is complex and novel with high uncertainty. There are no right or wrong answers, only better or worse alternatives. See: H. W. J. Rittell & M. M. Webber (1973). ‘Dilemmas in a general theory of planning’, \textit{Policy Sciences}, 4, 155-69.


\textsuperscript{16} Although it may be complicated it is resolvable. See Rittell & Webber (1973).

\textsuperscript{17} An ‘Elegant Solution’ is a managed process that has worked before. See Grint, 2005.


\textsuperscript{19} United Nations (2016). \textit{UNMISS Police concept of operations} (CONOPS), para. 4.1, 16 May 2016.

\textsuperscript{20} United Nations (2016). \textit{UNMISS Police concept of operations} (CONOPS), para. 4.1, 16 May 2016.
Powers and responsibilities

The Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between the UN and the Government of the Republic of South Sudan concerning the United Nations Mission in South Sudan of 8 August 2011 sets out the obligations and responsibilities of the Mission and the Government:

‘The Government shall provide ... areas for headquarters, camps or other premises as may be necessary for the conduct of the operational and administration activities of UNMISS ... Without prejudice to the fact that all such premises remain territory of South Sudan, they shall be inviolable and subject to the exclusive control and authority of the United Nations. The United Nations alone may consent to the entry of any Government officials or of any other person who are not members of UNMISS to such premises’. 21

The Mission did not permit the South Sudan Police to enter the UNMISS PoC sites. As the IDPs distrusted and feared Government Authorities any attempt by the authorities to covertly enter the PoC sites was met with violent resistance from the IDPs. The SOFA sets out how the Mission provides security on its compounds and interacts with the Government’s security institutions and notes that ‘... personnel designated by the Special Representative (of the Secretary General; SRSG) shall police the premises of UNMISS and areas where its members are deployed’. 22 Policing of the PoC sites was exclusively provided by UNPOL. A Community Watch Group (CWG) 23 of IDP volunteers was developed to provide community safety patrols and act as eyes and ears to assist UNPOL but was not afforded any powers:

‘The personnel (designated by the SRSG) may take into custody any other person on the premises of UNMISS. Such other person shall be delivered immediately to the nearest appropriate official of the Government for the purpose of dealing with any offence or disturbance on such premises. When a person is taken into custody ... UNMISS or the Government ... may make a preliminary interrogation, but may not delay the transfer of custody’. ‘The present agreement shall remain in force until the departure of the final element of UNMISS from South Sudan’. 24

In practice, some of these obligations, e.g. handover, were not adhered to by the Mission and this resulted in the Government distrusting the Mission and, may have been a factor in poor levels of cooperation by the South Sudan authorities.

The Mission deployed two types of police officers; ‘individual’ police officers and Formed Police Units (FPUs). Only the FPUs were trained, equipped, armed and authorised to use force. The Mission did not have an executive mandate so the UNPOL had no police powers within South Sudan. The ‘Directive on Detention, Searches and Use of Force for members of FPUs on assignment with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)’ 25 provided the authority for detention, searches and use of force by members of FPUs in their areas of deployment in UNMISS 26 and set out the principles, parameters and conditions under which detention, searches and use of force may be used by members of FPUs. This use of force is regulated by international human rights norms and


23 See Jackie Gold’s paper for more detail.


25 22 February 2016.

standards. UNMISS FPUs are authorised to stop and detain individuals in their areas of
deployment, in all situations where the use of force is authorised as set out in paragraphs 22
and 23 of this directive.\textsuperscript{27} It is stated that the UNMISS FPUs were authorised to use force to:

‘Prevent or stop the commission of an act or violence or other disturbance within an
UNMISS protection of civilian site; to prevent the escape of any detained person,
pending their hand-over to the South Sudanese law enforcement agencies and/or
community leaders to be dealt with by Mitigation and Dispute Resolution Mechanism;
to protect civilians, including humanitarian workers, under treat of physical violence; to
protect and defend themselves, other United Nations and associated personnel, UN
facilities, installations, equipment, areas or goods; to prevent or put a stop to acts of
civil unrest; to prevent or stop the commission of serious crime under international or
national law that presents an imminent threat of death or serious injury.’\textsuperscript{28}

Considering the SOFA and FPU directive together the FPUs were authorised to use force and
detain individuals in certain circumstances then, in the case of an offence or disturbance on
UNMISS premises, the Mission should immediately hand them over to the Government.

**Threats to the security of the PoC sites**

The CONOPS acknowledged that incidents of violence in and around UNMISS PoC sites
continued to present a serious concern noting that:

‘Violence has been perpetrated against IDPs, as well as United Nations and associated
personnel, stemming from intercommunal tensions, increasing community leadership
struggles, youth radicalization and the abuse of drugs and alcohol… Serious security
incidents have occurred on a regular basis, including murders, rapes, assaults, and
trafficking in illegal substances… Security incidents, threatening women and children
have also been noted to occur regularly within the PoC sites and it is suspected that
many such incidents have gone unreported.’\textsuperscript{29}

In the author’s experience murder, assault with weapons causing serious injury, gang rapes,
domestic violence, child abuse, possession of firearms and munitions and gang activities
including extortion and the supply of weapons, drugs and alcohol were commonplace in
UNMISS PoC sites.

**Engaging with Government Authorities**

There were practical and political difficulties in engaging with South Sudan’s Authorities.
Reports continued to expose ongoing human rights abuses perpetrated on civilians by
Government forces.\textsuperscript{30} To provide a balanced viewpoint, it should be acknowledged that such
abuses continued to be committed by both sides of the conflict. Around the UNMISS PoC sites
IDPs were in fear. Rapes, abductions, beatings and murders of IDPs by Government forces in
close proximity to the PoC sites were reported to UNMISS. Some corroboration of these
allegations from witnesses and injuries was obtained. The Mission, therefore, had a high level
of concern about the safety of any person they handed over to the authorities.

There were attempts by the Mission to secure an agreement about how persons handed over
would be treated and that UNMISS Human Rights Officers could have unrestricted and


\textsuperscript{29} United Nations (2016). UNMISS Police concept of operations (CONOPS), para. 4.2.

\textsuperscript{30} United Nations (2016). Assessment mission by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights to improve human rights, accountability, reconciliation and capacity in South Sudan: detailed findings. 10 March 2016.
unsupervised access to monitor their treatment. This was consistently resisted by the Government. When Human Rights Officers tried to monitor Government conditions of detention they were sometimes refused access to the detainee or information about where he or she was being held and, if access was granted, it was invariably supervised by police or prison officers thereby preventing or deterring the detainee giving a truthful account of their treatment.

**The capacity of Government Authorities**

There is very limited capacity within the justice systems in South Sudan. Outside of Juba Government institutions have limited reach. Many factors influence this; scarce resources, a vast geographic area, limited communications infrastructure and poor roads that are impassable in the wet season. In many areas there may be no police available. Where there is a presence, they often have few resources. Illiteracy is exceptionally high with 70% of Police Officers illiterate. The country has also experienced a financial crisis with soaring inflation and Government employees are frequently not paid for weeks or months at a time. This exacerbates corrupt practices and criminality, with reports of motorists being stopped and fined and ‘fees’ being demanded for documents and processes. Armed robberies and vehicle high jacking also increased when the police had not been paid. Many police officers appeared to lack basic skills. Few were trained in the law and there were no reference materials available.

**The culture**

There is a prevailing machismo culture in South Sudan where women and girls are considered property. The value of a girl is the bride price she will fetch in cows. A wife undertakes the household, child-raising and cultivation chores, provides more children and submits to the will of her husband. Despite the law providing protection and rights for girls and women, these are widely unknown or ignored and the justice system may be unwilling to enforce them. For example, the laws of South Sudan prohibit child marriage but if a girl refuses marriage the family may turn to the police who will imprison her. In a pilot scheme to handover UNMISS detainees to the local authorities, negotiated by the Mission with the Minister for Justice, detainees suspected of gang rape and another of child sexual abuse, were handed over to the Criminal Investigation Department. They were transferred to a local station where the Commander decided to release them with no completed investigation.

**The justice system**

Formal courts and prisons are limited to the main towns. The customary justice system is recognised alongside the formal system and this flourishes in communities across the country. This system is limited in the types of offences it is permitted to address although that is widely ignored. Community Leaders are appointed to preside over customary courts but are not legally qualified and their training is limited. Whilst the customary system enjoys much support and its determinations are accepted they are often brutal and not human rights compliant. Physical punishment, including beating, lashing and being held down and repeatedly bitten have been reported within UNMISS PoC sites and the resulting injuries observed. Where an unmarried female has been raped the families may negotiate compensation for her reduced value as a bride. The perpetrator’s family will make a payment in cows and the victim is married to the perpetrator.

Customary justice was not permitted within the PoC sites by the UN as it supported corporal punishment and unjust practices. The alternative restorative justice approach imposed by the UN, the Informal Mitigation Dispute Resolution Mechanism (IMDRM), was not supported by the IDPs, who had more confidence in their brutal approaches, and in any case, was determined by the UN as unsuitable to address more serious incidents and any sexual or gender based violence. The Mission has had no adjudication process available so no means of establishing the innocence or guilt of a suspect, and no authority to determine punishment or restitution.

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Observations

The context of South Sudan, the Government, culture and the Mission is unique and highly complex. Pre-deployment training and briefings in the UK and UN induction training provided little understanding and those deployed learnt on the job. This was a common observation for all UNPOL contributing countries. There was limited UN guidance material available and rapid turnover of personnel and poor knowledge throughout the command structure resulted in little knowledge being passed down from managers and supervisors. Faster progress and more effective engagement could be secured through more focussed training, greater provision of UN guidance, ease of accessing such guidance and an ongoing responsibility for managers and supervisors to inform and develop their staff.

The protection of civilian mandate shifted the Mission's focus away from capacity building. Concurrently many donor programmes also stopped or significantly reduced capacity building activities. Whilst there were many compelling reasons to do this, the ongoing limited capacity perpetuated the challenges of poor knowledge and application of the law and contributed to continuing corrupt, unlawful and discriminatory practices. At political and practical levels the Mission struggled to engage with the Government and its authorities on the issue of crime and disorder in the PoC sites and this compounded the mutual distrust. Maintaining capacity building within the justice system may have enabled greater cooperation and increased confidence.

The South Sudan customary justice system enjoyed a high level of confidence amongst IDPs but punishments were often not compliant with human rights so were not permitted to be practiced within the PoC sites. The UN imposed the IMDRM which was not considered effective by the IDPs and, as the UN only sanctioned this approach for very low-level incidents and excluded any sexual or gender-based violence. It had very limited potential. Engaging the IDPs in the creation and implementation of a restorative justice mechanism that more closely resembled their customary justice system and was more consistent with their cultural practices, may have resulted in greater levels of confidence and reduced human rights abuses. The UN may struggle with tolerating this imperfect solution, however, the reality was that the IMDRM was largely ignored by the IDPs whilst the customary justice system flourished. The gap between locally accepted practice and international standards was too great to breach in one step and a graduated, incremental approach, accepting a level of risk, was potentially more effective.

The SOFA was signed in August 2011 for a Mission to support a newly independent South Sudan. The obligations the Mission agreed to in relation to handover to Government Authorities did not fit the context of the post-December 2013 conflict environment and ongoing human rights abuses. The Mission had compelling reasons not to hand over detainees but this fuelled assertions from the Government and authorities of harbouring criminals and supporting the opposition, and led to mutual distrust and poor cooperation. The SOFA did not appear fit for the context of the conflict environment.

The Security Council Resolution

Security Council Resolution 2252 of 2015 decided that the UNMISS mandate should be as follows, and authorised UNMISS to use all necessary means to perform the following tasks: ‘Protection of civilian: To protect civilians under threat of physical violence, irrespective of the sources of such violence, within its capacity and areas of deployment, with specific protection for women and children…’

The Mission’s challenges

The Mission was faced with a series of challenges. The mandate required the Mission to protect civilians from physical violence and this included protecting IDPs residing in UN PoC sites from physical violence perpetrated by other IDPs within the site. This duty applied to actual violence and to the threat of violence so required an immediate intervention and created an ongoing responsibility to protect the victim or other potential victims. The mandate also applied to the

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suspected perpetrator. They had to be protected from the actual or threat of physical violence, which may come from community retribution or from Government forces, particularly as many IDPs are from tribal and political background that are associated with the opposition. Trying to address these concurrent responsibilities created a complex set of challenges.

Risks
There were many significant risks as highlighted here:

- The incidents - murder, serious assault, gang rape, child sexual abuse - caused ‘high harm’ to the victim and often to the wider community creating anger, distrust and tensions. This led to retribution attacks and sometimes escalated to widespread violence involving hundreds of members of the IDP community.
- There was concern about re-offending, particularly where perpetrators were motivated by a desire to dominate or by deviant tendencies.
- It was believed that the Government continued to commit tribal and politically motivated human rights abuses.
- The death penalty is still imposed in South Sudan for some offences including murder.
- Given the low skills of many police officers, lack of capacity, a machismo culture and widespread corruption, confidence in securing a sound conviction is low.
- There is almost no mental health support available in South Sudan so when a female IDP, who was known to behave strangely, beat a man to death, it was a NGO operating in the PoC site who sourced a psychiatrist. The doctor was able to diagnose severe mental illness and provided drug therapy improving the patient’s condition to the point that she appeared calm and content. If the family cannot manage an affected person then the usual approach to mental health issues in South Sudan is for the authorities to keep them in jail.
- There was tension between the Government and the Mission where the Government levelled accusations at the Mission of breaching the SOFA by refusing to hand over detainees and of harbouring criminals and opposition fighters within its PoC sites. Both accusations had merit.
- The Mission was not resourced to provide legal representation so people detained by the Mission had no access to legal advice and no-one to make legal representations on their behalf.
- The Mission has no adjudication system so detainees had no process to engage with to test their innocence or guilt, nor to decide on a form of punishment. In effect this created a situation where a suspect remained a suspect indefinitely and, despite long periods of detention, could not be recognised to have served their punishment. It could be considered that this is prolonged, arbitrary detention by the UN; an abuse of an individual’s rights imposed as a means of protecting the rights of others and in some cases protecting the detainee from human rights abuses by their Government.

Understanding the problem
In order to adopt an appropriate approach to addressing these challenges it is first necessary to understand the nature of the problem. Horst et al described a ‘Tame Problem’ as one that may be complicated but is resolvable, is likely to have occurred before and, has only a limited degree of uncertainty. A ‘Wicked Problem’ is more complex rather than just complicated: it is novel; any apparent solution often generates more problems; there are no right or wrong answers, only better or worse alternatives; and there is a huge degree of uncertainty.

The context is unique and the UN had never experienced this set of challenges before and, therefore, there was significant uncertainty. Addressing one issue created more issues and there did not appear to be a right answer, rather a series of options, each with its pros and cons. Identifying that this was a ‘Wicked Problem’ was an important step in deciding how to approach it. It was only on reflection some months after the end of deployment that the author recalled a presentation by Keith Grint on ‘Wicked Problems’ and was able to set the challenges and approaches within a theoretical framework. During her time in the mission the author worked intuitively and organically, trusting in the skills, knowledge and professional practice
gained over two and a half decades in policing and with the confidence to adapt and develop solutions through trial and error.

Elegant and Clumsy Solutions

A ‘Tame Problem’ can be solved with an ‘Elegant Solution’; a managed process that has worked before.34 A ‘Wicked Problem’ requires a ‘Clumsy Solution’ that relies on collective engagement and shared responsibility. Soft leadership skills of persuasion, debate and ideological attraction encourage positive deviance and constructive dissent to ask the right questions and challenge established norms or assumptions. Having the confidence to accept imperfection and make do with what is available is necessary as is an ability to accept failure as part of a learning process by trying new approaches to see what works. It required the skill of the bricoleur to stitch together whatever is at hand to ensure practical success and an acceptance the ‘Clumsy Solution’ will only ever be the ‘more appropriate’ rather than ‘the best’.35

The approach

Accordingly, senior Mission leaders developed an approach. Under the existing system, when a serious security incident was reported or discovered the suspect was arrested. UNPOL conducted an administrative investigation, the purpose of which was to establish what had happened, rather than to gather evidence to prove or disprove an offence. In the meantime the suspect would be transferred to a holding facility within the Mission’s compound, consisting of a secure fenced area with large metal transport containers, adapted with a door and window openings, which accommodated them. The area was guarded by FPU Officers and staffed by International Corrections Officers.

The new approach introduced risk assessments that were undertaken by Human Rights Officers or in the case of juveniles by Child Protection Officers. The risk assessment considered the suspect’s background and circumstances; was s/he an ex-combatant, and from which side of the conflict, did s/he have family outside of the PoC site, did s/he go out of the PoC site and for how long, what was his/her view of any risk s/he faced outside the PoC site? The assessment concluded with a summary of the risk factors and a recommendation whether handover to the authorities or expulsion from the PoC sites presented a significant risk to the security of the detainee. Within a further approach, UNPOL delivering community policing in the PoC site consulted the community leaders to assess their attitude to the suspect and whether he or she would be accepted back into the community. Enquiries were made about the circumstances of the victim, with some voluntarily moving out of the PoC site or on to other PoC sites.

The author initiated a 360 degree case conference review. This meeting was chaired by the Detention Focal Point, a Senior Manager in the Mission appointed by the SRSG to take responsibility for overseeing all detentions. Contributors included senior representatives from Legal, Human Rights, Child Protection, Corrections and UNPOL. NGO representatives were invited to observe and comment. They were able to offer support, particularly with regard to pastoral care for detainees. The UNPOL assessment team and the Senior UNPOL Officer in charge of the PoC site participated to present the administrative investigation and community consultation respectively and Human Rights presented the risk assessment. The meetings were explorative and challenging. Differing views and ideas were encouraged and debated, and the risks were weighed and balanced. All options were considered to try to move the individual out of UNMISS detention. A democratic process was employed to determine a recommendation, and this was later presented to the SRSG for a decision. To ensure transparency and accountability a record was made of the key considerations, recommendation and SRSG’s decision, which was retained with the administrative investigation file and risk assessment. The frequency of the case conference was every 21 days whilst the person remained in detention.

34 Grint (2005).

This approach appeared unique and novel within the Mission. It relied upon individuals who were prepared to work outside of the normal organisational culture; to be challenged, to fail, to take risks and to be accountable. Given the complexity of the contexts in which the UN works, this approach, and the skills, attitudes and courage required to employ it, may be useful for future development and support.

**UNMISS options and associated risks**

Each option presented particular risks for the victim, potential victims, detainee and IDP community, which had to be carefully considered and balanced when making the judgement whether it was an appropriate course of action. Generally considered in this order these were:

**Release to the community due to insufficient evidence** to support reasonable grounds to believe that the detainee was responsible for the serious security incident. Sometimes the conference identified a poor investigation, or new information had come to light, or the victim and suspect’s families had come to other arrangements and the victim withdrew their allegation. There was a risk of retribution against the suspect or their family and of the suspect re-offending.

**Release to the community for IMDRM.** Whilst the Mission prohibited this as an initial response to an alleged serious offence or any sexual or gender based violence, the case conference group developed a practice for this to be used post-detention for these offence types where there was strong community support for the detainee to return to the PoC site. The risks included the suspect being subjected to corporal punishment and of him or her re-offending.

**Handover to Government Authorities.** This presented significant risks of human rights abuses, a lack of cooperation to monitor the suspect once handed over and corruption, culture or incompetence resulting in release without an effective investigation and accountable process. A pilot was conducted with four detainees as a result of which the Mission decided not to continue with handovers.

**Expulsion from all UNMISS PoC sites.** This could also present significant risks of human rights abuses although the authorities would not be aware of the expulsion. In practice, expulsion was almost impossible to enforce due to the porous nature of the PoC sites. Civilians can freely enter PoC sites through the gates without any system to check their identification or status as an IDP. In addition, the perimeter fences at some sites were incomplete and at others had breach points that were commonly used for ingress and egress.

**Release for assertive management in the community.** This practice was developed as a means of releasing long term detainees and re-integrating them back into the PoC community. It was controversial in respect of the types of offending it was implemented for including child sexual abuse. It was a community-led process where the detainee’s family and community leaders and the CWG agreed to intensively supervise and monitor the suspect. UNPOL were responsible for supervision of the community monitoring to ensure it was robust and effective and to be alert to any allegations or information that would suggest breaches of the agreed monitoring or signals of re-offending. In addition, environmental factors were considered such as family living conditions; for a child sex offender this would require that no children shared the accommodation and neighbours were aware of the suspect and the potential risk to their children. Given the occupation density and the fact that shelters consisted of plastic sheets over a wooden frame, security and separation were impossible to ensure. The risks of this option were considerable and included retribution and reoffending.

**Continued detention.** If none of the aforementioned options were appropriate detention would continue for up to a further 21 days when it would be reconsidered at the next 360 degree case conference. Some sections of the international community voiced their concerns about arbitrary detention and the Government made allegations against the Mission of harbouring criminals.

UNMISS had been detaining IDPs for serious security incidents since the PoC sites were established. By July 2016, hundreds of IDPs had passed through this system. Some had been detained for very long periods, in excess of a year, without charge, without legal representation and without access to any type of adjudication system. For those who were suspected of offences that attract the death penalty, including the woman with the mental health illness, they remain in UN detention and there still does not appear to be any alternative and the Mission
has had no long-term plan of how to resolve this since 2016. The process and options UNMISS senior colleagues developed were a practical response to the circumstances but they remain imperfect and legal and moral questions remain.

The changing context; taming the problem

The changing context may present opportunities that will 'tame the problem'. The peace agreement signed in Addis Ababa in August 2015 intended to bring sustainable peace. As part of that agreement the Government and the opposition will contribute 50/50 to a 5,400 strong police unit called the Joint Integrated Police (JIP). This included UN training in human rights and community policing techniques and deployment to areas where there are high numbers of IDPs. This was intended to increase public trust and confidence in the Police and, to open the way for the South Sudan Police to be accepted on the PoC sites by the IDP communities and by the Mission. Committed actions to achieve the peace agreement from both sides would attract international aid, allowing capacity building to recommence.

To develop an effective and human rights compliant justice system, capacity building is needed at all stages, from the police, through the court systems to corrections and re-integration. As security improves, it is widely anticipated by the UN, International Community and others that the IDPs will feel confident to leave the protection of the UN and return to locations of their choice. The desired end state for the UNMISS Police component is the establishment and full operationalisation of the JIP which will take ultimate responsibility for the security situation in the areas where the PoC sites are located to enable the eventual safe and voluntary return of IDPs and refugees to the places and/or live in areas of their choice in safety and dignity.

As the Government of South Sudan becomes able to effectively exercise responsibility for the safety and security of its citizens so the UN will be able to rely on an ‘Elegant Solution’; to return responsibility for dealing with this group of suspects of serious offences to the authorities to be dealt with through their justice systems.

Conclusion

The rapid and significant change in the context from post-conflict capacity building to ongoing conflict and human rights abuses presented UNMISS with a unique set of challenges and risks. The existing powers, responsibilities and approaches were no longer fit for purpose and there was no precedent to guide the Mission on how to deal with IDPs suspected of serious crime and disorder that threatened the security of the PoC sites.

A theoretical framework assisted in understanding the nature of the challenges and the possible approaches. The learning from this case study identifies guiding principles that are appropriate to complex contexts and challenges. By nature, a ‘Clumsy Solution’ will never be perfect. The ‘Wicked Problem’ is complex and unique; there is no management process that will deliver a correct answer or perfect solution. Soft leadership, cooperation, shared responsibility, mutual

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37 However, this view may not take into account the impact of poverty and dependency on aid concentrated within the PoC sites and their continuing development into townships with their own leadership structures, which have been valued by the IDPs.

challenge, a willingness to work with what is available, and the ability to accept that the outcome will be more appropriate to the circumstances rather than the best, are all necessary to move forward. The optimum outcome is to identify the least worst option whilst accepting this may carry significant ongoing risk.

This is the approach the senior colleagues from UNMISS took when they were struggling with the challenge of what to do with IDPs suspected of serious incidents who were in UN detention. In seeking a 'Clumsy Solution' they had to encourage challenge, fail quickly, learn and try again and be accountable. These skills, attitudes and behaviours can be selected, developed and encouraged by organisations and practiced by individuals to make them more effective in addressing complex challenges.
### Acronyms and abbreviations

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>CWG</td>
<td>Community Watch Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONOPS</td>
<td>Concept of Operations</td>
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<td>FPU's</td>
<td>Formed Police Units</td>
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<td>IDPs</td>
<td>Internally Displaced People</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMDRM</td>
<td>Informal Mitigation and Dispute Resolution Mechanism</td>
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<td>JIP</td>
<td>Joint Integrated Police</td>
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<td>PoC</td>
<td>Protection of Civilian</td>
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<td>SOFA</td>
<td>Status of Forces Agreement</td>
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<td>SRSG</td>
<td>Special Representative of the Secretary General</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNMISS</td>
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<td>UNPOL</td>
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References


