

# **GM Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Briefing Paper**

## **Firearms Training**

### **Overview:**

Following the inquest into the tragic death of PC Ian Terry in 2008, GMP has worked to address issues identified at the time and during the subsequent investigations. The changes that have been introduced have ensured the way the force approaches, delivers, and manages firearms training is considerably different to the situation that applied before 2008.

### **Detail:**

Since Ian's death, a number of reviews and investigations have been held which have examined issues around firearms training within GMP. There has been a full IPCC investigation which resulted in a report being sent to the CPS to consider criminal charges. The CPS decision was there was insufficient evidence to charge any individual with a criminal offence. GMP's Coronial Team assisted the Coroner's investigation in the lead up to the inquest. The inquest recorded a verdict of "Unlawful Killing." As a result the CPS reviewed their original decision, which remained unchanged. A full Health and Safety Executive investigation was carried out which resulted in charges against the Chief Constable and two individual officers involved in training on the day. The Chief Constable pleaded guilty, and after a Health and Safety trial, one of the two officers was found guilty and the other not guilty. Both guilty parties were fined. A disciplinary investigation conducted by GMP's Professional Standards Branch is still ongoing. The National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA - now the College of Policing), carried out a full review of GMP's structures governing firearms operations and training, to ensure they were in line with national guidance.

The following sections detail the current position.

Governance: One of the most significant changes is that the Firearms Training Unit (FTU) now sits within Specialist Operations, Specialist Protective Services. This ensures that senior individuals with knowledge of firearms matters are in a better position to maintain an overview of the same and ensure training is being delivered in accordance with our Standing Operating Procedures (SOP).

The Firearms Policy Group (FPG), led by the Force ACPO lead for firearms, maintains the strategic overview of all firearms related matters. The main

document that informs the Force in firearms matters is the Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment (STRA). The STRA take into consideration the previous year's events and lessons learnt and any identified potential risks for the following year. The FPG ensures any actions and recommendations contained within the STRA are addressed. GMP's STRA has been held up nationally as being of a high standard. This feeds into both a Regional and National STRA. A Strategic Review Group (SRG) sits beneath the FPG and ensures all matters highlighted by FPG are dealt with, and continually reviews the STRA for emerging issues. A Tactical Development Group sits beneath this which addresses such issues as operational requirements and kit or equipment needs.

Firearms Policy and Compliance Unit (FPCU): A critical change to the position we were in in 2008 has been the introduction of the FPCU. This carries out yearly reviews of all policies to ensure they are meeting national requirements. In addition they carry out compliance checks to ensure policies and procedures are being followed properly. This will include dip sampling documentation and observing briefings and training sessions. As we move to greater collaboration, a regional FPCU is in its early stages of developments to ensure these standards are met throughout the North West. This compliance and review regime is firmly embedded in all aspects of firearms within GMP.

Training: As previously stated the FTU now sits within Specialist Operations. Design, control and assessment of firearms training will only be performed by National Firearms Instructors (NFI) who are occupationally competent in the particular area or specialism and who have additionally been accredited by the Chief Firearms Instructor (CFI). As part of the compliance checking completed by the FPCU, the competence of a particular NFI is examined to ensure training is only completed by an occupationally competent individual for that particular area or specialism. Further to this, all NFIs' portfolios, including that of the CFI, are checked by the FPCU. All roles and responsibilities within the training environment are now strictly detailed.

GMP was criticised for not having Risk Assessments that were fit for purpose. The national NFI course now contains a specific module on risk assessments, which includes far more in depth training on their preparation. GMP includes the module in the in force training for NFIs. A half day in house risk assessment workshop was developed. This was then incorporated into a 3 day course produced by GMP's H&S lead. All NFIs were trained in 2011 to Institute of Safety and Health (IOSH) standard. GMP's Managing Safely Course is now IOSH accredited and all NFIs have completed it. A full safety briefing is carried out before all firearms training and all attendees and observers sign an acknowledgement. Body armour is worn during all training in accordance with national guidance.

GMP received further criticism for its use of live rounds in the training environment. Live fire has always been a part of firearms training, and its use must be fully risk assessed. In the build up to the Olympic Games, The Metropolitan Police in conjunction with the (then) NPIA wrote a module in relation to the training of officers using live rounds during a house/room entry. Only our most experienced and highly trained officers, Counter Terrorist Specialised Firearms Officers (CTSFOs), were trained in this tactic. GMP's ACPO firearms lead approved this in consultation with DCC Simon Chesterman, national ACPO lead for firearms. This training was to continue after the Olympics to deal with any terrorist threat. All CT Hub Forces' CTSFOs were to maintain this training. After GMP expressed concern about elements of the training, including Risk Assessments and learning outcomes with DCC Chesterman, we received the necessary assurances from him and the College of Policing (COP). Only NFIs who are operationally competent in this tactic are able to provide the training. This annual training is now approved by GMP's Chief Officers' Group (COG) and responsibility for it is governed by DCC Chesterman. This has ensured we are able to meet our commitments at both a local and national level to a terrorist threat and our officers are trained to the highest levels.

Until earlier this year, all firearms training was overseen by GMP's CFI. We now have a Regional CFI. The Regional CFI maintains an overview of all training in the North West. He has a deputy at regional level. GMP in turn has a Local Training Manager. This provides resilience in the absence of any of these individuals who are each qualified CFIs. No training is conducted unless it is approved training delivered by NFIs at FTU, under the auspices of the Regional CFI. This ensures any independent training, such as that which took place in June 2008, no longer occurs.

Systems: GMP had a computerised system that detailed all training and qualifications of officers. This was not fit for purpose. It has now introduced the Chronicle system which is in use by all the other NW Regional Forces, as well as many others nationally. This also records all details of firearms incidents, command logs and helps inform the STRA.

GMP has introduced a robust armoury SOP which prevents officers booking out their own weapons and ammunition. The introduction of Chronicle has reintroduced an electronic swipe system which records on its database all weapons and ammunition booked in and out. This SOP is subject to daily scrutiny by supervisors as well as compliance checks by the FPCU. This covers all GMP armouries at the TFU, FTU and Manchester Airport Section (MAS).

Command and Control: GMP has a wide range of experienced firearms commanders. These are at Strategic Firearms Commander (SFC – Gold), Tactical Firearms Commander (TFC – Silver), and Operational Firearms Commander (OFC – Bronze) levels. Two TFCs are qualified as Specialist TFCs to deal with incidents

involving the very highest threat and risk. All commanders have to maintain a yearly portfolio, have incident logs they complete scrutinised and attend Continuous Professional Development (CPD) sessions. Commanders are signed off as competent on a yearly basis by GMP's ACPO firearms lead. A rigorous Peer Review process is in place to examine incidents from which improvements could be made, or lessons learnt. Commanders are supported by Tactical Advisors who give appropriate support and guidance at spontaneous, pre-planned and advanced levels.

GMP has a number of nationally trained Post Incident Managers (PIM). The PIM was originally developed to deal with all police firearms incidents that led to death or serious injury or exposed anyone to an extreme risk of the same. This is now being developed to include other police contact incidents, for example custody or road policing. The background experience of GMP's PIMs reflects this.

Firearms Training Licence: After the events of June 2008, GMP was subject to an NPIA development plan to achieve a full training licence. All of our processes were subject to intense scrutiny. In March 2012, NPIA visited and awarded the Force full licence status without the need for a development plan. They acknowledged the hard work, improvements and understanding that had taken place.

Conclusion: GMP is not the same organisation that it was at the time of Ian Terry's death. We must never forget that dark day, nor revert to the complacency that existed at the time. As already stated, no firearms training takes place unless properly risk assessed and conducted under the supervision of NFIs from the TFU acting on behalf of the Regional CFI.

Our firearms officers are now some of the most highly trained and experienced in the country. We have provided CTSFO support to the Olympics and national terrorist related operations and locally have engaged in high profile operations such as Dakar (the hunt for Dale Cregan) and Chess (the High Risk Cat A movements of Cregan and eight others and court security operation).

## **Risk:**

The Force is continually reviewing the risks associated with firearms training as laid out in the above report and a separate and much wider review of the use of force continuum, including its understanding and application within GMP, has been commenced. It is intended that this review will cover a wider range of circumstances and tactics.

Legal Advice: N/A

Financial Advice: N/A

Recommendations: The Commissioner is asked to note the contents of this briefing.

Attachments: N/A

Tracking:

Date	Issued to	By	Status