

Meeting	SPA Policing Performance Committee
Date	9 March 2021
Location	Video Conference
Title of Paper	Review of Police Scotland's Armed Policing Deployment Model (APDM)
Presented By	ACC Mark Williams, Operational Support
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

The purpose of this briefing paper is to provide the Policing Performance Committee with an update on the APDM which has remained unchanged and in place since the previous update presented at the May 2019 meeting.

Members are requested to discuss the content of this report.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** In late 2014, the final report from the *'Review of Standing Firearms Authority for Scotland's Armed Response Vehicle (ARV) Crews with Police Scotland'* was published by HMICS.
- 1.2** Part of the review examined the deployment criteria in place for ARV officers in respect of both firearms-specific and non-firearms-specific duties.
- 1.3** The review recognised political and public debate over armed policing in Scotland and questions raised regarding legality, legitimacy and accountability and the need for improved transparency and engagement by Police Scotland.
- 1.4** The review findings reiterated that the overt carriage of side arms by ARV officers is the "best and safest method of carriage", and recognised the vital contribution ARV officers can make to local policing incident resolution.
- 1.5** As such, one of the key recommendations emerging from the review was that Police Scotland and the SPA should *"re-engage with local authorities and other stakeholders and develop criteria for ARV officers to undertake non-firearm duties which are understood and accepted by local communities and allow ARV officers to meaningfully contribute to local policing priorities"* (p.9).
- 1.6** In December 2017, following a period of targeted engagement, formal proposals for an extension of the role of ARV officers (to allow deployment to more non-firearms incidents) were presented to the SPA.
- 1.7** It was suggested that such deployments would be the responsibility of the control room Initial Tactical Firearms Commanders (ITFCs) who, using their professional judgement, experience and training, would support local policing as and when required.
- 1.8** The revised deployment model was approved and launched in May 2018.

2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

- 2.1** Since May 2018 there has been no reported disruption to the force response to firearms incidents, while significant and wide benefits

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have been reported and recorded in regards to vulnerability and conventional policing incident attendance.

- 2.2** This has manifested in successful incident conclusion (see table 1) and positive feedback regarding call attendance times and availability of response options (from police colleagues in local policing and C3).
- 2.3** Table 1 below outlines the manner in which, under the APDM, AP officers have delivered services to Scotland's communities in support of local policing spanning the 2019/2020 calendar year.

2019/2020 ARV Deployment Statistics	
Firearms Operations/Incidents	
Firearms operations	615
Firearms related incidents	4185
Conventional Policing Incidents	
Missing persons assistance (e.g. hasty search)	1847
Tracing missing persons	330
Vulnerable persons assistance (e.g. responding at locus)	1160
Road traffic incident assistance	1888
Medical assistance (where medical skills have been used)	385
Total 'conventional' deployments	11021
Report submissions/arrests	
Road crime KPI submissions and reports to COPFS	202
Fixed Penalty Notices (e.g. ASB)	101
Recorded police warnings	82
Arrests	369
Other reported offences	5723

- 2.4** Feedback from ARV officers via the various improvement fora that Specialist Services now have in place, as well as from management and peer group meetings with frontline ARV staff, clearly indicates that deploying to local policing incidents (within a flexible set of guidelines that prioritise risk) is popular with officers in both Specialist Services and local policing divisions.
- 2.5** It appears that qualitative and quantitative evidence suggest the APDM changes continue to be a success. Previous internal concerns regarding geographical differences in relation to the scale and type of incidents attended have been, and will continue to be addressed

through the Firearms Review Group (FRG) forum between AP and C3.

- 2.6 Next Steps:** members are requested to discuss the report, note the continued contribution to local policing from AP and provide any comment in regards to the results. The model will continue to be reviewed by Police Scotland, with daily data collated and assessed and future findings presented to the SPA Board on request.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1** There are no additional financial implications.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** There are no additional personnel implications other than ARV officers being deployed as per the model. No additional training was required beyond briefings to those involved.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** The review recognised political and public debate over armed policing in Scotland and questions raised regarding legality, legitimacy and accountability and the need for improved transparency and engagement by Police Scotland.

6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** There are no reputational risks identified in the continued use of the APDM nor on the continued and successful delivery of armed policing.

7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** There continues to be clear social implications for improvement in response times to some of the most vulnerable and critical incidents that local policing faces.

8. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 8.1** There is evident positive community impact in improving police response times to conventional policing incidents while not impacting on attendance at firearms incidents.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no Equality, Diversity or Human Rights implications that have been reported or identified since the launch of the model. There were none identified in advance of the launch.

10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no Environmental and Sustainability implications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to discuss and note the contents of this report.