



NPIA

National Policing
Improvement Agency

IMPACT
PROGRAMME

The Police National Database

Making a difference: a guide to getting the most from the PND.



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Foreword from DCC Nick Gargan

Deputy Chief Executive, NPIA



The Police National Database (PND) is one of the most important developments in national policing in recent history. For many years, the police service has acknowledged that it needs to properly share intelligence and information through one system, and when the PND is launched we will have that opportunity.

The NPIA is very proud to be delivering PND, with forces now loading their data onto the new system; as a police officer I understand the significant impact it will have on the police service's ability to protect the public, especially the young and the vulnerable. It will also play a vital role in countering terrorism, and disrupting serious and organised crime.

I believe that every investigator and every neighbourhood team in the UK will benefit at some point from the PND, bringing timely information, the full intelligence picture and a real boost to investigations at an early stage.

We must also remember the history with which the PND is associated. It derived from the death of two young girls in Soham and we should never forget the reasons why we are doing this and just how important it is to everyone who cares about making our society safer.

The PND is not simply an IT system; it represents a culture change for policing so that when we share information, we share it effectively and look beyond geographical and force boundaries.

The PND also forms part of the wider Information Systems Improvement Strategy (ISIS), the national, service-wide strategy that will transform the way police information technology is developed, procured, implemented and managed.

I hope the interviews in this booklet help illustrate the practical benefits which the PND will bring to policing, and highlight what the PND will bring to your role.

Nick Gargan

Deputy Chief Executive, NPIA

Introduction from Craig Boundy

UK CEO, Logica

Protecting the most vulnerable people in society is what lies at the heart of the PND. Providing all police forces with easy access to key information from right around the country means that vital role will become a lot easier. The PND will quite simply enable a step change in the way police share knowledge.

At Logica we are incredibly proud of our part in delivering the PND. Getting to this point has not been without its challenges – it's a complex issue – but our team has always been absolutely clear about the imperative and the importance of their work. Bringing together information held by different police forces in different parts of the country will provide a rich source of intelligence that will ultimately prevent crimes against children and other vulnerable people.

Working together with the NPJA we are confident we will deliver an essential tool that will make a big difference to policing in the UK. We look forward to developing its capabilities even further in the coming years.

It is very important that the police service understands how the PND will help it to offer a much better level of protection to the public.



This guide uses police officers and police staff to put the PND into context, explaining the benefits the system will bring to specific key roles and the advantages of sharing and using information on a national scale. Logica is proud to fund this guide and its production.

Craig Boundy
UK CEO, Logica

“At Logica we are proud of our part in delivering the PND.”



Why the PND is important Richard Earland

Chief Information
Officer for Policing



Historically all UK police forces have collected information relating to arrests, incidents, crimes and intelligence and stored this within their own force computer systems.

Whilst this has worked well for individual forces, a number of high profile incidents in recent years has demonstrated that forces not only need to share the information that they have collected; they also need to see information collected by other forces.

Following the tragic deaths of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman in Soham in August 2002 and the subsequent conviction for their murder of Ian Huntley an Inquiry was established under the Chairmanship of Sir Michael Bichard to examine the process and effectiveness of intelligence based record keeping and information sharing.

Sir Michael made a number of recommendations, one of which was that a national IT system for England and Wales to support police intelligence should be introduced as a matter of urgency.

The PND has been developed to meet Sir Michael's recommendation. It will, for the first time, provide a single view of data held in police intelligence, custody, crime, child and domestic abuse systems across the whole of the UK. It will not replace local police systems but it will allow all forces to see and share information that until now has only been available within individual force boundaries.

But more than this, the PND will provide a powerful analytical tool that will allow forces to match records and identify new links and patterns in offending at a local, regional and national level.

The PND will be accessed through secure role based access and will allow sharing, searching, linking and association of information from all UK police forces, and other agencies such as CEOP. This will enable forces across the UK to support public protection and in particular will enhance the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, countering terrorism and assisting major crime investigations. In the interviews that follow this introduction, operational staff working in these areas have explained what difference the PND will make to the way they work.

A more detailed view of the timeline for the roll-out of PND is available at pages 22-23 of this document.

Richard Earland
Chief Information Officer for Policing

National policing Tulin Akdam

Sergeant Tulin Akdam, from British Transport Police, is based in the London North Area, but covers an area stretching from Essex in the east, Lincolnshire in the north, Oxford to the west and south to the Thames.

Because we are a national force, in some ways we are one step ahead and can already see the benefits of using national systems.

We have a national BTP computer system which is a real advantage when we're looking at travelling offenders, such as persistent, aggressive beggars using different rail networks and the Underground.

But communicating with other forces can be difficult, partly because there can be a misconception that we only deal with things like fare evasions, whereas we actually deal with the same crimes as other forces.

Countering terrorism on public transport

One of the key strategic aims of the PND is to counter terrorism. By building up a picture of criminal activity across the country the PND will play a key role in keeping the travelling public safe.

If we stop someone at a mainline station under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000, currently we can do a PNC check and if they provide an address, which they don't have to do, we can run a search on that and also do a search on the Force Information System (FIS) system.

But none of those would show up that the suspect had been questioned for acting suspiciously at a big sports venue, for example, or at a major shopping centre in Hertfordshire. With the PND we will see that information.

“Because we are a national force, in some ways we are one step ahead and can already see the benefits of using national systems.”

Runaway train: protecting the young and the vulnerable

Much of our work also centres around protecting children, such as runaways. At the moment if we stop them at stations and conduct searches, we might then decide how we can get them back to their homes.

But a PND search might flag up that they're vulnerable at home, perhaps living with a registered sex offender – although they may be too scared to tell us that.

So instead of wanting to get them back to home, we will now have the opportunity to consider a completely different course of action, and improve the level of protection we afford them.

Cutting economic crime

One of the biggest problems as a response sergeant is when you take someone into custody and you need to do a Section 18 (house search) for something like credit card fraud, because although they have one card on them, you believe there may be more evidence at their home.

Getting the Section 18 authorisation is straightforward, but if the suspect lives in another force's area, we have to inform that force and have them run checks through their system.

This delays any premises search, because we can't do it until we've heard back in case it is under surveillance and it might affect how many officers are sent in. Nor can we interview the suspect, because if we received more information, we'd have to go back and do it again.

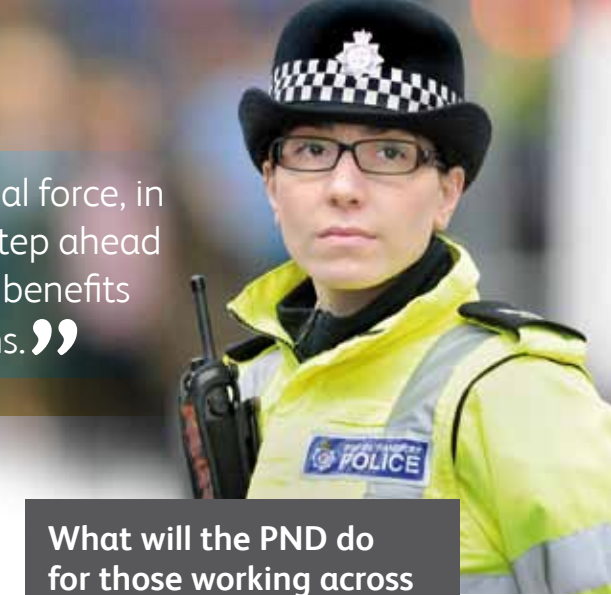
Section 18 searches can take up so many resources. With the PND we'd

What will the PND do for those working across force boundaries?

- Deliver the capability to instantly access important information currently held on local systems
- Form a complete picture of an individual and their criminal activity
- Break down barriers to information exchange that currently prevent you knowing all that you need to know
- Support better decision making

just do one search and save so much time, so if we can free up people faster, that's great.

It also means the suspect spends less time in custody, meaning less of a burden on custody suites and better use of our resources, allowing officers to go back out on the streets much faster.



Analysts

Simon Atkins and Samantha Moor

“The PND could definitely save lives.”



Simon Atkins is a Level 2 analyst in the East Midlands Special Operations Unit. His work involves gathering information about serious and organised crime including firearms, people trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Cross-border problem solver

We look at national crimes and how they might impact the East Midlands region, and at crime that spans force and national borders.

We evaluate intelligence and information from many different sources and must decide how viable the source is and draw in other pieces of intelligence.



For example, we're currently trying to identify the 'middle people' who alter imitation firearms and sell them on to end users. We're identifying the customer base for firearms, and piecing together who they would contact to obtain the firearms, meaning extensive searches through lots of different systems to find connections and associations.

Tightening the system

But sometimes these connections can be very loose and that's where the current system has weaknesses. We have to rely on other forces putting markers on their intelligence records against 'nominals'.

An ID check on the INI system might show a reference to two different forces. We would then send an information request to both forces; they may look at a file and see no major firearms references for that person, but omit to tell us there's something there from two years ago about a rumour that person was looking for a pistol.

We'd then be blind to that possibly vital information. The PND cuts out the subjective element of someone else doing a search.

It will also save us a huge amount of time. The task could be done in a matter of hours, instead of days.

Confidence boosting

As we saw with Ian Huntley, sometimes it's not that the information is not there, it might just be that the person looking for it has not asked the right questions.

There will be more fail-safes with the PND and I believe this will help the police service save lives.

“The PND will save us a huge amount of time. The task could be done in a matter of hours instead of days.”

Simon's colleague Samantha Moor is a researcher within the East Midlands Regional Intelligence Unit, providing specialist support to Level 2 operational teams.

As part of our role we deal with kidnaps and extortion. If we needed to check a phone number during a kidnap, running it through the PND might flag up something in another force. However, rather than contact that force, I will be able to do further research myself using the PND which will really speed things up in a situation where time is of the essence.

One-stop shop

Photographs of subjects are useful and necessary for identification purposes, but obtaining one outside of our region, particularly out of office hours, can be time-consuming, often involving several departments. By sharing photos via the PND, we can reduce the length of that chain because access is instant.

“The frustration for us as a regional unit is that we dip in and out of so many systems now. Instead, the PND will be a one-stop shop, meaning we'll be able to come up with better results.”

What will the PND do for Intelligence Analysts and Researchers?

- Allow direct access to information so you can easily search for and find the information that you need
- Save time by not having to wait for other forces to supply information
- Improve National Intelligence Model products such as subject and problem profiles by providing a richer picture
- Support regional units by providing access to key information from across your region and reducing the need for manual information exchange
- Allow more meaningful analysis of Organised Crime Groups



Senior Investigating Officer Rob Mason

Detective Superintendent Rob Mason is Joint Head of Major Crime for Thames Valley Police.

Protecting officers

A significant benefit will be the ability to reduce the level of risk to which we expose officers. We had very serious concerns for the welfare of a hostage in a particular kidnap. But the people we believed were involved did not have significant police records.

It was only after the offenders were arrested that we found out there was significant intelligence linking them to firearms and other serious offences. Quite simply, other forces held information on them that we didn't know they had, so we were putting unarmed officers into a dangerous situation, because we didn't have the full intelligence picture.

With the PND that information will be available to us, instantly.

Better use of resources in major investigations

We investigate one or two potential homicides a month and will combine these new enquiries with on-going investigations and preparation of cases for court.

We've got about 100 people on the Major Crime Team, including a dedicated and robust intelligence cell and they're the ones who will really benefit from the PND because the intelligence demand is so great.

In a recent case a prolific criminal family living in the North were offending across England. A huge amount of cross-border work over 18 months linked them to various locations and we built a case against them for a number of offences – important, because each offence corroborated evidence we had for a charge of attempted murder. With the PND, that timescale would have been reduced significantly.

Where an investigation involves a number of forces, we nominate an officer to be the liaison with each force and if there are several, that can use a lot of resources. The PND could free up say, half a dozen officers. These real advantages in terms of time and resources mean greater value for money.

“The PND will revolutionise how we perform by giving us the tools to do the job really efficiently.”



Less frustration, more results, more quickly

Using faster PND searches, it might allow us to gather physical evidence that might otherwise have been lost forever. Offenders could be prosecuted, whereas previously their cases might never have come to court, simply because a key piece of evidence, perhaps CCTV footage or DNA, could not be gathered before it was destroyed.

It can also take days to retrieve information from other forces and it's the duplication of information requests that's so frustrating. With the PND, there's great potential for making the process much more efficient.

It will really help, for example if we're chasing an offender across the country or we've got someone in custody who we're looking to link to other offences. To be able to run a search on that individual on one system will be a huge advantage.

I also sincerely hope the results of the PND in action will mean the public will have confidence we're sharing more information between forces.

The PND is going to release more staff to do the job the public wants us to do – namely getting out there arresting and prosecuting people who have committed serious offences.



There's no doubt in my mind it will improve every facet, from neighbourhood policing, all the way through to serious crime. The PND will revolutionise how we perform by giving us the tools to do the job really efficiently.

What will the PND do for Senior Investigating Officers?

- Allow better use of resources; less time spent gathering information from other forces means more time to take action on that information
- Immediate access to information means a faster police response, preventing evidence being lost or destroyed, or leading to quicker identification and detention of suspects
- Provide a new source of information that could contribute to improved detections, particularly for Level 2 crime where the absence of cross-border information can hinder detection
- Enable researchers to link similar crimes across the country
- Support operational planning with near real-time information

Domestic Violence Investigator Sharon Stratton

Detective Sergeant Sharon Stratton is part of the Metropolitan Police's Violent Crime Directorate (Public Protection Command) based in Westminster.

Controlling, manipulative and dangerous

Domestic abusers can be controlling, manipulative and dangerous and often move from one relationship to another, which means that keeping up with them can be a challenge. They deliberately try and stay under the radar.



To understand the risk that perpetrators pose to the victim, their families and tertiary victims, we need to have a full picture of the current and historical abusive behaviour.

Effective recording and flagging is an important 'tool' to enable intelligence-led policing for domestic abuse.

The MPS team at the Violent Crime Directorate monitor all allegations of domestic abuse reported to the Met on a daily basis. They provide advice and support to specialist investigators dealing with high risk cases of domestic violence, honour based violence and abuse of vulnerable adults, including a historical profile of perpetrators and previous information held within reporting and intelligence databases.

With separate databases, for example sex offenders and children at risk, that often don't 'search across', research can be an onerous and lengthy task. Risk assessments and investigations might be flawed without all available information and the introduction of the PND will enable more timely and ready access to all information.

A new weapon fighting an old crime

Domestic abuse is not a modern crime, but its proliferation demands a modern response. We have the opportunity to prevent further victimisation, serious harm or even homicide of victims and their children.

One way of ensuring that we understand risk and safely share information with appropriate partners, is through a Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). This entails key agency representatives identifying victims at high risk of serious harm, then coming together to exchange information with a view to formulating safe and robust risk management plans, to protect victims their children or other vulnerable persons in the household.



“Domestic abusers can be controlling, manipulative and dangerous which means that keeping up with them can be a challenge.”

As an integrated technical tool, the PND can help ensure that the human response through MARAC is well-informed. With access to the PND it is likely that the MARAC will be provided with qualitative, timely and holistic information enabling a more effective response.

Improved information quality

Spelling of names is a real issue and lots of criminals will use pseudonyms when trying to avoid arrest. With the PND there will be so many other ways of identification, such as car registrations and telephone numbers.

For me, the most useful element of the new system will be this research capability. At the moment I have to search several databases including the INI, PNC, the local intelligence, crime reporting and child coming to notice databases. Risk management is about robust and timely intervention – but it is hard if you are relying on the post or telephone enquiries for information to be provided. Meanwhile, the victim is at home and we're trying to protect them with what we know.



But there may be one small piece of information about the perpetrator that would make all the difference to how we protect the victim and hold the abuser accountable.

The PND will help investigators having to make important decisions in volume and serious crime daily. The lives some people live are horrific, many victims often suffer in silence for years. When they do find the courage to report abuse we need to ensure that we gather evidence and information to support the allegation and respond effectively. The PND will help us to do that.

What will the PND do for domestic abuse officers?

- Help to provide the full picture needed for quality risk assessments
- Uncover the past behaviour of domestic abusers
- Contribute to multi agency risk management plans
- Support earlier interventions to protect domestic abuse victims, their children and other vulnerable persons
- Provide a better, more efficient way to quickly access the information you need to do your job

Child Protection Officer Anne-Marie Large



“When you think of the cases we deal with, knowing we will have access to all the information held by other forces in the UK is very satisfying.”

Detective Sergeant Anne-Marie Large works in the Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAIU) in Stafford.

The whole picture – instantly

The PND will significantly improve the ability of the police service to protect children because it will help us to quickly build up a picture of serial perpetrators who move around the country.

Once the PND is in use, an enquiry with concerns about a family can come into the office at 10am, my researcher will have almost immediate access to all the information possible, and I can confidently go home at 6pm knowing everything about this family from around the country – fantastic.

At the moment, when we get a referral, we run a search on any individual connected, which can mean searching several databases. I’m searching for anything from drug abuse to firearms offences to domestic abuse and drinking-driving offences – these can all be very important when you’re looking to protect children. The ‘owning force’ can sometimes take days to come back to us.

“Even just checking Staffordshire Police’s internal systems can take a couple of hours. With the PND we will be able to have the ‘full picture’, instantly.”



When you’re making a decision about how to safeguard a child, that delay can be crucial, because it may mean you change your strategy about what is needed.

Jigsaw identification of ‘bad character’

Putting pieces of a “jigsaw” together is pivotal to the progress of the enquiry, influences our next steps and dictates the urgency.

On one occasion we dealt with a man after a relative suggested he had access to images of child abuse. But our own records had very limited information, although a search on INI showed another force had intelligence on him for more serious offences.

That tipped me from thinking this was a controlled possession of indecent images case to something bigger.

There had been no conviction, just intelligence that a complaint had been made. But by accessing that information and interviewing the original complainant, we were able to use the information as evidence of ‘bad character’.

Public confidence in child protection

The advent of the PND should also inspire and improve public confidence, which is very important when encouraging victims of crime, especially children, to come forward. Forces will be ‘talking’ to each other, so young people will be better served by the service as a whole.

I have been on the CAIU unit for eight years, and more people are coming forward to report abuse crimes. In particular, we are increasingly aware of people viewing images of child abuse. Sadly, I know from my training that people who view these kinds of images are very likely to be abusers, too. So it is important that links are made, even if a conviction hasn’t necessarily been secured in previous investigations.

It could be that we are told this individual is looking at images of child abuse, and in checking we find he is also living with a single mother. So you move quickly to take protective, and preventative, measures.

Tightening the net

Lord Bichard indicated in his inquiry that there were others like Huntley who may have ‘slipped through the net’. I agree, but I also believe that by sharing information on the PND we have the chance to close that net.

At the moment, I make decisions on what I know, I can’t second-guess. The PND will give me access to an individual’s interaction with the entire police service, rather than just snippets, so it is a vital tool for us.

When you think of the cases we deal with, knowing we will have access to all the information held by other forces in the UK is very satisfying.

What will the PND do for child abuse investigators?

- Provide instant access to information to inform decisions about your initial response to referrals and improve risk assessments
- Support strategy and case conference discussions with partner agencies by making information available to you at the right time and allowing preventative action
- Open up new lines of enquiry, including the potential to uncover bad character evidence that could be used in interviews with offenders or as part of case file in court
- Improve the ability of the police to safeguard children and improve public confidence



Intelligence Director Alan Lyon

Detective Superintendent Alan Lyon of Greater Manchester Police (GMP) works in the Force Intelligence Branch, at GMP's Serious Crime Divisional Headquarters.

In my role, I manage intelligence development within GMP on firearms, drugs, children at risk, vulnerable people and public safety, as well as handling all intelligence requests that come in to the force, and our implementation of the PND.

I feel passionately that by sharing intelligence using the PND we will vastly improve the level of protection we offer the public. Equally, by not sharing we are exposing them to unnecessary risk.

The Met, Northumbria, West Midlands, Merseyside, West Yorkshire and GMP, which between them will provide around 75% of the intelligence shared on the PND, have all agreed, subject to confirmed safeguards and policy, that even the most sensitive data – that which falls under the National Intelligence Model's Handling Codes Four and Five – should be shared. This is a big step forward for the intelligence world.

Putting the public first

If you have sensitive intelligence which is correctly recorded and coded, I believe you have a professional obligation to share it in appropriate circumstances if it helps another force to safeguard members of the public.

Imagine GMP has intelligence on a suspected child abuser and that target criminal goes on holiday to Cornwall and abuses a child whilst on holiday. If the suspect is in custody and the investigation stagnates, but at the same time GMP holds a piece of very relevant intelligence on that suspect, we're not safeguarding the public – simply because of our nervousness in sharing information.

At that point I think there's a bigger risk in not sharing than in sharing.

The PND gives us that opportunity to share intelligence safely, securely and certain that it will be handled sensitively.

Sharing intelligence... intelligently

There are many robust safeguards in place to ensure intelligence remains secure on the PND, including codes which dictate and

“I feel passionately that by sharing intelligence using the PND we will vastly improve the level of protection we offer the public.”

restrict how shared intelligence must be handled by the viewing force.

Intelligence uploaded on to the PND can be flagged without going into detail, so it informs investigating officers and they then know where to go.

So in my scenario of the holidaying child abuser, they could see there may be a 'corridor' of intelligence flags from forces all along a motorway, because the suspect might be for example a travelling sales rep. So the PND is not about revealing all your sensitive intelligence, it's more about saying 'We have intelligence that may be useful and appropriate to share in certain circumstances if you contact us'.

Safe, secure but still able to share

The PND Data Access Restriction Codes (DARC) will allow forces to not only control who can or cannot view their intelligence, but also apply handling conditions to very sensitive intelligence, specifically Handling Code Four and Five data.

What will the PND do for Directors of Intelligence?

- Provide a more efficient way for your department to exchange information with those that need to know what your force/organisation knows
- Deliver information-sharing with high levels of security, providing reassurance to support culture change
- De-risk decision making around information sharing by allowing the existence of sensitive intelligence to be known when appropriate
- Improve intelligence analysis, intelligence products, and briefing and tasking through researchers and analysts having instant access to more information

This means that all intelligence can be shared in a meaningful and effective way and doesn't mean an impractical and unworkable total "lock down" of all intelligence.

Safeguards like the DARC codes are just one of the many measures in place to make sure that access to the PND, and control over its use, are robustly and efficiently managed, while allowing the right information to be shared between forces.

It will be a massive leap for the service to have a confidential database that will allow us to share local records on a national level.

This represents a major shift in the intelligence world. I expect there now to be a real change of culture in intelligence gathering and sharing.

Public Protection Kay Wallace

Detective Inspector Kay Wallace works in the Public Protection Unit at West Midlands Police's Birmingham headquarters, where she's responsible for investigating child abuse and child exploitation, serious case reviews, and sharing best practice.

Breaking down boundaries

The police service is very boundary oriented, but criminals aren't. Like many of my colleagues in forces around the country, I am acutely aware of the service's limitations in tracking criminals across county and force borders.

As a result child abuse investigation will become more effective in terms of speed of response, staffing hours and ultimately serving the public.

Real-life application

I once dealt with a lorry driver where there were reports of him openly committing sexual acts on himself in public view and we also believed he was travelling with a child. Before we were able to identify him, we contacted other forces we thought he may have travelled through to see if they had similar reports. But once we had the registration number of the lorry and were then able to

“To say we are excited about the possibilities PND will bring is an understatement.”

Local force, national crimes

We're mostly dealing with live cases that may have come into us from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) or internally from frontline staff.

Our work often takes us beyond the West Midlands force geographical boundaries, for example, following up concerns about offenders from our area who have travelled abroad and have been caught abusing children overseas.

In this sort of scenario, designated intelligence officers in the child exploitation team will run intelligence checks and decide if there are children imminently at risk in the West Midlands area.

What will the PND do for Heads of Public Protection?

- Allow better use of resources by reducing the bureaucracy surrounding current information exchange processes
- Support Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements by providing information relevant to the risk posed by sexual and violent offenders
- Provide immediate access to information to help your teams protect the public and improve public confidence



Some child abusers travel up and down the motorway and across the world to do what they do; the PND will smash through those boundaries.

In this respect alone the PND will pave the way for a whole seachange.

“The police service is very boundary oriented, but criminals aren't.”

ascertain the potential offender's details, we had to approach the respective police forces all over again to ascertain what additional information they had.

Eventually we were able to convict him of committing indecent acts, but if we'd had the PND, it would have saved us ringing round all the forces twice. We had a dedicated individual working on that research for two weeks and they had to contact a dozen forces.

With the PND we could do that in a matter of hours. The public think we already have that kind of 'joined up' capability in place!



“Speed and accessibility will be incredibly useful features.”

At the moment West Midlands Police has access to a very effective “joined-up” intelligence system – FLINTS – which brings together numerous pieces of information and can even predict where and when crime is likely to happen.

In some ways the PND will be like a national version of this regional system.

To say we are excited about the possibilities PND will bring is an understatement. There will be no hiding place for criminals who for too long have used the police's lack of a joined-up, national view to their advantage.

Speed and accessibility will be incredibly useful features. We will be truly sharing information across boundaries and borders, which can only go to boost public confidence in the police service as a national entity.

Counter Terrorism Michael Keogh

Detective Inspector Michael Keogh is seconded from Cambridgeshire Constabulary to work for the National Co-ordinator Prevent – part of the government’s Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) for tackling, and preventing, violent extremism and terrorism in the UK.

I helped investigate the murders of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman and that fuels my passion for the PND. My role now is to ensure the Counter Terrorism (CT) network can interact effectively with the PND, and to ensure it functions seamlessly and consistently around the country.

Prevent centres on international terrorism – the most significant security threat to the UK public.

“Countering terrorism is one of the three primary aims of the PND, so it is important the CT world understands what it will do.”

Primary motivation

The PND will help in identifying individuals who might be vulnerable to radicalism or could be taken down the path of extremism, by identifying crime and crime trends in areas which may indicate social deprivation which in itself can lead to individuals feeling disenfranchised. It should also help us spot key individuals to help reinforce government strategy and enable us to highlight the places and premises that may be at high risk of extremist activity.

It will also assist us in avoiding placing individuals who may be vulnerable into high risk areas.



By exploiting PND, we should also identify areas where there is clearly good community engagement and successful partnership working. This may be evident through the quality of reporting being inputted onto PND. Through this we may identify key individuals to work with locally, regionally or nationally.

Once we’ve done that, it could help us plan operations and understand the impact on communities. It will assist in identifying community issues or tensions so we won’t need to rely on another force to tell us.

We might also have some people in a car behaving suspiciously by taking photographs near a large train station, and when questioned, their answer is innocuous – they’re waiting for a relative. A PNC check on the vehicle shows it belongs to them and fears are allayed.

But the PND might reveal they gave the same answer at stations in Cardiff, Glasgow, Oxford and Birmingham – now you have a very different picture emerging...

United we stand

In the past the CT units have not always been good at sharing information with forces, but that style of thinking has changed, and we can share information with all forces by uploading to one hub via the PND.

The CT and PND systems will be distinct and separate, partly because CT deals with other agencies, such as the Security Service. CT officers

“Ultimately it will allow us to do our job and protect the public, which is what we’re paid to do.”



and staff will be able to search the PND and we’ll also be able to send relevant information back to the PND.

Imagine we’ve got intelligence about a large heroin importation, but our source also says one of the key players in that crime may be abusing their own child. The temptation may be to over-protect the information utilising the NIM 5x5x5 process. It is important to think ‘who requires this information?’ and grade it appropriately, because if we get the dissemination wrong it can have serious consequences, in this case in protecting a vulnerable child.

I see the new system as a great leap forward and an indispensable tool but the PND will never replace the human element – it is an ‘enabler,’ and it is not there to sort out all our problems. We must be clear: IT will not do everything for us. We have to change our mindset, too. The PND is just the “kit” which will allow us to share.

Think like the criminals

Terrorists and criminals don’t respect borders, they move around; some move their families from one area to another to avoid detection. Previously a force may not have known where they’d moved from, but now it will be much easier to gather that information and also help other agencies involved to do their job more effectively.

What will the PND do for Counter Terrorism Units and Special Branch?

- Provide direct access to information held by other forces/organisations without having to approach them
- Information from the PND will support the prevent and pursue elements of the CONTEST strategy, for example by helping to identify those that at risk of radicalisation
- Taking away the organisational boundaries that terrorists may use to hide their activity
- Supporting information sharing in a business area where this has presented significant challenges in the past

Many years ago a group of suspected criminals bragged that they based themselves where the borders of three shire county forces meet because they could roam and commit crime undetected ‘since you lot never talk to each other!’. But now the PND will give us national connectivity.



Timeline

A national system is in place

PND functionality is being delivered to forces in three releases – Release Zero, where data is loaded into the PND from all forces, Release One, with functionality which at least matches the current Impact Nominal Index (INI), as well as instant access to data, and Release Two with more advanced functionality.

