

CPS Response to HMCPSI Inspection of CPS Special Crime and Counter Terrorism Division



05/02/2019

HMCPSI has today [05/02/2019] published a report into the work of the CPS Special Crime and Counter Terrorism Division. The Inspection focused on governance, leadership, and management.

The CPS is pleased that Inspectors found a great deal to commend. Inspectors noted the strong leadership and governance of the Division, reported that there was a sound and systematic approach to the mitigation of risk, and found that the Division had developed an effective performance management regime driven by casework quality. Inspectors also found that the Division had sound financial management and budgetary controls in place.

Inspectors also reported findings of high levels of staff engagement, good visibility of senior leaders, and that good performance was recognised across the Division. However, they noted that some work was needed, to refine systems for sharing good practice, and to consolidate the 'whole Division identity'. The Inspection reported that there was strong stakeholder engagement and that partners regarded the Division as both influential and instrumental in driving forward change.

It is very encouraging that Inspectors found a number of aspects of good practice, including routine quality checks of paralegal activity and Appeals Review work, the Counter Terrorism unit approach to the capture and sharing of best practice, and the Special Crime unit work on the Hillsborough enquiry.

Inspectorate's Issues to Address for CPS

1. The Division should work with the Director of Public Prosecution's office and the Attorney General's Office to review the current arrangements for providing targeted information and to ensure it is delivering the right level of service.

CPS Response: This recommendation is accepted. Casework reporting has already been streamlined following the arrival of the new DPP and reporting from the Division is now more focused. The Head of Division and Area Business Manager (ABM) are reviewing other arrangements, and where appropriate, any further changes will be in place by end February 2019.

2. The CPS needs to develop an effective mechanism of performance review to provide senior oversight at Board level of the Special Crime and Counter Terrorism Division

CPS Response: This recommendation is accepted. The Directors of Legal and Business Services have developed a high level performance regime for the Casework Divisions, which will be subject to regular performance reviews led by the Director of Legal Services (DLS).

3. The Division needs to review its approach to sharing relevant good practice across the Division and wider CPS generally.

CPS Response: This recommendation is accepted. The Division will review its approach, and where appropriate, develop systems and processes for the sharing of good practice across the Casework Divisions and CPS Areas.

4. The Division should consider whether a regular newsletter covering all aspects of business would help consolidate the 'whole Division identity' and break down some of the perceptions that exist between the York and London teams.

CPS Response: This is accepted. The Division will consider use of a newsletter during discussions about consolidation of a 'whole Division identity'.

5. The Division needs to review the various business continuity plans in place in its units to develop a corporate plan using a standard format to enable better control for coordinators and assist periodic testing.

CPS Response: This is accepted. The ABM and District Business Managers will review current business continuity plans and ensure they are in a standard format.

6. The Division should consider if the process used in Counter Terrorism unit of using a risk register on specific individual cases could be used in Special Crime on more complex cases to improve the management of casework risk

CPS Response: This is accepted. Special Crime includes risk as part of its prosecution strategy on each case and has a separate risk register on its largest case. The Division will introduce a separate risk register for use on other specific individual cases in Special Crime.

7. CPS Headquarters need to consider revising the national Individual Quality Assessment (IQA) process to bring it in line with the Appeals and Review unit if this is accepted as national good practice.

CPS Response: This is accepted. CPS Headquarters will consider the aspects of good practice identified and will revise the national IQA process if appropriate.

8. The Division should systematically report on its deployment of prosecutors to higher court advocacy work to ensure that these are being deployed to deliver value for money for the Division.

CPS Response: This is accepted. The Division will reintroduce processes for reporting of advocacy deployment, to ensure this delivers value for money.