

Reality testing training in multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) and indecent images of children (IIOC)

The learning and development (L&D) team developed a training exercise for the public protection unit (PPU), covering multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) and indecent images of children (IIOC) to upskill the PPU.

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Key details

Stage of practice	Untested
Purpose	Prevention
Topic	Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Rape and serious sexual offences Training and professional development
Organisation	City of London Police
HMICFRS report	PEEL 2023–25 Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy: An inspection of the City of London Police
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Key details

Partners	Police Local authority
Stage of implementation	The practice is implemented.
Start date	January 2024
Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Adults Children and young people Offenders Victims Women

Aim

The practice was designed to test officers' responses to 'real life' incidents in areas where they have little operational experience.

The sessions to date cover multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) and indecent images of children (IIOC) and include the following.

MAPPA:

- What to do when a Category 3 referral is received?
- What is a MAPPA meeting and how is it chaired?
- What is a potentially dangerous person (PDP)?

IIOC:

- Test ability to risk assess and manage an IIOC referral.
- Test ability to safeguard the children.

- Tests ability to manage the suspect.

Intended outcome

MAPPA:

- Improve the response to MAPPA referrals received into the City of London Police.
- Improve the knowledge of the PPU in relation to PDP.
- Increase confidence of the PPU when dealing with MAPPA individuals.
- Improve awareness of partnership working across the UK.

IIOC:

- Improve knowledge in relation to IIOC cases.
- Improve knowledge and usage of common law disclosure.
- Increase knowledge and usage of Kent internet risk assessment tool (KIRAT).
- Improve the working relationship with Children's Social Care (CSC).
- Improve knowledge around the role and responsibility of local authority designated officer (LADO).
- Improve confidence for the unit to present at strategy meetings.

Description

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) recommended that the Probation Service, police forces, and prisons should ensure category 3 referrals are made to manage individuals who present a high risk of domestic abuse, where formal management and oversight through MAPPA would add value to the risk management plan. In addition, following an initial focus group with public protection unit (PPU), HMICFRS indicated that there was a lack of knowledge around IIOC investigations and how to progress them.

The emergency planning team was asked to develop a plan to address the recommendation, so they approached the detective inspector of learning and development (L&D) because of their background in public protection. Emergency planning explained the idea of testing and exercising, and L&D designed the concept, content, and materials of the session.

Emergency planning arranged the full-day session and PPU had no prior knowledge around what to expect when they arrived.

PPU were split into three teams, each with a facilitator or assessor. On arrival, PPU were informed Cumbria Police had an update about a category 3 offender who was moving to the city. This was in the form of a telephone call played to the team, followed up with an email. Each group was provided with a different scenario to work through, presenting their plan to the wider group.

The objective was for the teams to identify that a MAPPA meeting was required. The meeting was convened and chaired by the PPU detective inspector. Assessors played the parts of external agencies. It was then explained to the PPU that the exercise had been based on a live case from Cumbria.

Because of the positive feedback from the first session, a further exercise was created and delivered in January 2025, which focused on IIOC and referrals to CSC.

The PPU split into three teams, each allocated a facilitator. Three different scenarios were delivered which required discussion and some main questions to be answered. Teams fed back to the wider group and depending on the actions and decisions made by each team, they were provided with information and intelligence.

Main objectives were to test the understanding of KIRAT and common law disclosures. A micro-teach on KIRAT was delivered to enable groups to complete a KIRAT for their scenario's suspect. There was further team discussion and risk management with a view that it would lead to common law disclosures being made, and then another micro-teach was delivered on common law disclosure.

Inputs were delivered by CSC on the role of the LADO and a strategy meeting was chaired by CSC based on the referrals from the teams related to their cases.

The planning process was led by the deputy head of L&D who has a public protection background and experience of MAPPA. Planning included reflection on cases managed while working in PPU and knowledge gathered while working with other forces. The background work into putting the exercises together was managed by the deputy head formulating the scenarios, writing the basic plan and then testing it on the L&D team. Once the basic idea was confirmed, the detail and supporting documents were provided. For the IIOC exercise, an analyst was used to produce the suspect profiles.

Existing working relationships were used for the exercises, with Cumbria for MAPPA, and City of London CSC for IIOC. Emergency planning supported the L&D deputy head for the MAPPA exercise, however the IIOC exercise was managed solely within L&D, using crime trainers who specialise in vulnerability.

The sessions were booked months in advance as it required the whole unit to attend and for cover to be provided to ensure live cases did not impact learning. There was no funding required to deliver the sessions, other than refreshments for delegates.

Senior management approval was required to enable the whole PPU to attend. Major crime were allocated operational cases on the day of delivery.

Overall impact

The PPU team have reported that that they felt the sessions were incredibly useful and a good way to embed learning and good practice. It has been proposed to deliver this as an annual event.

Attendees have reported a greater understanding of MAPPA and IIOC and additional options available for investigators.

The unique force structure of City of London Police means the application of this delivery may not be applicable or achievable to wider forces, and therefore may require adaptation.

Learning

- The initial barrier faced was a reluctance from the team to engage with a 'role play' scenario, however once the process was clearly explained, the officers embraced the session and engaged well.
- There were several challenging conversations, and it required a knowledgeable lead trainer to answer queries. When the session was facilitated by emergency planning, they had to pass queries to the deputy head of L&D for areas of subject matter expertise.
- The element of surprise worked well and improved the realism of the sessions. The force highlighted without this, there may have been less positive engagement from the delegates because of preconceived ideas about the session.
- The attendance of CSC in the IIOC case worked well as it gave officers the opportunity to have open discussions outside of dealing with core business, it also allowed for CSC to see the work

that takes place before they become involved.

Recommendations

- Be clear on force policies and procedures and use real examples where possible.
- Encourage supervisors to make decisions as they would operationally, with strong justification.
- Deliver bitesize learning throughout the day at important points.
- Use partners and subject matter experts for delivery and learning inputs where possible.

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