

An inspection on the effectiveness and efficiency of the single counter-terrorism grant in the East Midlands region

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Glossary

Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)	professional association of police officers of assistant chief constable rank and above, and their police staff equivalents, in England, Wales and Northern Ireland; leads and co-ordinates operational policing nationally; a company limited by guarantee and a statutory consultee; its president is a full-time post under the Police Reform Act 2002
Association of Chief Police Officers Terrorism and Allied Matters (TAM)	responsibility for devising and driving national counter-terrorism (CT) and domestic extremism (DE) strategic policy and reports to ACPO and the government. It also advises the Home Office on the allocation of the counter-terrorism grant
austerity	difficult economic conditions resulting from government measures to reduce public expenditure
baseline	starting point in time at which a police force's budget position or cost of activities is measured and which is then used to make comparisons with future budget positions or costs of activities
business case	detailed report that describes the area of business proposed for collaboration, how the collaboration arrangements will work and the potential risks and benefits
business support	roles such as IT, stores, property, human resources, fleet, finance and training
capability	the extent to which the ability to carry out particular actions exists
capacity	the total number of resources available to carry out a particular function
collaboration	arrangement under which two or more parties work together in the interests of their greater efficiency or effectiveness in order to achieve common or complementary objectives; collaboration arrangements extend to co-operation between police forces and with other bodies in the public, private and voluntary sectors

counter-terrorism (CT)	work targeted to counter the threat from terrorism. The current government strategy is known as CONTEST
counter-terrorism futures	a programme of activity looking at the UK's future response to counter-terrorism. There are four strands of work: strategic structures; finance; demand risk and resource; and continuous operational improvement
counter-terrorism network	a national network which consists of a London-based counter-terrorism command, four regional counter-terrorism units and four regional counter-terrorism intelligence units
counter-terrorism security advisor (CTSA)	member of staff who is nationally accredited to advise on how to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack
counter-terrorism unit (CTU)	enhanced national counter-terrorism capability located across different regions
counter-terrorism intelligence unit (CTIU)	common counter-terrorism capability located across different regions
covert surveillance	where someone or something is being observed without their knowledge
crowded places reviews	a Home Office-led programme to improve security at venues including theatres, shopping centres, sporting stadiums
local profile (CTLP)	documents that identify the threat and vulnerability from terrorism and extremism relating to terrorism in local areas
dedicated source unit (DSU)	unit which holds responsibility for handling covert human intelligence sources (police informants)
East Midlands policing region	police region that covers Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire
East Midlands region single budget proof of concept	a means of testing the validity of managing a single counter-terrorism budget across the five forces in the East Midlands region

East Midlands Special Operations Unit (EMSOU)	regional unit, comprising police officers, staff and resources from across the five East Midlands police forces; the primary purpose of the unit is to disrupt the activities of organised crime groups operating in that area and to investigate the most serious crimes affecting the East Midlands region
economies of scale	cost advantages that larger organisations or operations obtain by virtue of their size, because the cost per unit of output will decrease with increasing size as fixed costs are spread out over more units
full-time equivalent (FTE)	unit that indicates the workload of a worker in a way which enables comparisons to be made between the workloads of workers engaged in the same and different functions; for example, a full-time equivalent (or FTE) of 1.0 means that the person is equivalent to a full-time worker, whereas an FTE of 0.5 indicates that the worker is part-time (working half the time of a full-time worker in this case)
governance	the method by which the efficiency and effectiveness of a service, including the end results of a service, are overseen
head of special branch (HSB)	senior police officer within a force with specific responsibility for national security including counter-terrorism
human resources (HR)	department responsible for the people in the organisation, and providing direction through a workforce strategy. It also works with managers for some tasks, for example: recruitment; training and continued professional development; annual appraisals; and dealing with poor performance
information and communications technology (ICT)	any products that will store, retrieve, manipulate, transmit or receive information electronically in a digital form: for example, personal computers, digital television, telephones and email
intelligence (department)	a unit that contains a number of analysts who collect and analyse information relating to who is committing crimes, how, when, where and why
learning and development	concerned with ensuring that the training and development requirements of individuals and groups within the East Midlands police forces are made available and are of a good standard

local policing	the provision of policing services at a local level. Comprises both neighbourhood and local response teams, and sometimes investigation teams
major crime	for the purposes of the East Midlands major crime team, major crime means crimes of murder, manslaughter, kidnap with demands, and extortion committed anywhere in the East Midlands region
management information	information that is used to enable managers to have oversight of particular activities so as to ensure they are efficient and effective
national co-ordinator for prevent	a national team that produces and co-ordinates the production of police policy and doctrine in support of the prevent strand of CONTEST
national co-ordinator protect and prepare (NCPPE)	a national team that produces and co-ordinates the production of police policy and doctrine in support of the protect and prepare work streams of CONTEST
National Crime Agency (NCA)	an operational crime-fighting agency that works at national level to tackle organised crime, protect national borders, fight fraud and cyber-crime, and protect children and young people
national counter terrorism police headquarters (NCTPHQ)	undertakes the headquarter national functions of ACPO TAM
national counter-terrorism strategy	the government's counter-terrorism strategy called CONTEST, has four work streams, each comprising a number of key objectives: Pursue – to stop terrorist attacks; Prevent – to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism; Protect – to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack; Prepare – to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack
national security risk assessment (NSRA)	the government monitors the most significant emergencies that the UK and its citizens could face over the next five years

national intelligence model (NIM)	a model for policing that ensures that information is fully researched, developed and analysed to provide intelligence which enables senior managers to make decisions
office for security and counter-terrorism (OSCT)	department within the Home Office responsible for leading the work on counter-terrorism in the UK
operational tactics	the means by which police forces carry out their responsibilities to investigate crime and incidents
performance management	activities which ensure that goals are consistently being met in an effective and efficient manner. Performance management can focus on the performance of an organisation, a department, employee, or the processes to build a service
performance and development review	assessment of an individual's work performance by his line manager, usually an officer or police staff manager of the immediately higher rank or grade
police and crime commissioner (PCC)	elected entity for a police area, established under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, responsible for securing the maintenance of the police force for that area and making sure that the police force is efficient and effective; holds the relevant chief constable to account for the policing of the area; establishes the budget and police and crime plan for the police force; appoints and may, after due process, remove the chief constable from office
ports	ports in the East Midlands region include: seaports; ferry ports; airports; and landing strips
radicalisation	a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or reject and/or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice
regional organised crime unit (ROCU)	consists of a number of specialist policing teams responsible for dealing with serious and organised crime at a regional level
resilience	the capacity to be able to provide an effective and efficient response to demand

resourcing	the arrangements to ensure the correct level of funding, officers and staff and any other requirements, to provide a particular service efficiently and effectively are in place
response policing	the service provided at local level to respond to calls for a policing service from a member of the public
security services	collectively known as the security services: MI5 is responsible for protecting the UK, its citizens and interests, at home and overseas, against the threats to national security; and MI6 collects intelligence and mounts covert operations overseas in support of government objectives
senior investigating officer	an officer with specialist skills who is responsible for overseeing the progress of a serious or major investigation
serious and organised crime (SOC)	crime where those involved work, usually with others, with the capacity and capability to commit serious crime on a continuing basis. Serious and organised crime normally includes elements of planning, control and co-ordination, and benefits those involved
single counter-terrorism grant	the office for security and counter-terrorism administer the policing grant to individual forces through 16 different budget or reporting lines. Under the East Midlands region single budget proof of concept these separate grants to forces have been merged into one single counter-terrorism grant to one lead force and one report is issued for the region
special branch (SB)	unit responsible for dealing with intelligence relating to domestic and international terrorism. It also supports other policing priorities such as prevention of disorder, serious crime and organised crime. In the context of national security, special branch works closely with and in support of the security services, as well as with other national agencies
strategic policing requirement (SPR)	document issued by the Home Secretary under section 37A of the Police Act 1996 which sets out what, in her view, are national threats, and the appropriate national policing capabilities to counter those national threats. National threats are threats (actual or prospective) which are threats to national security, public safety, public order or public confidence of such gravity as to be of national importance, or threats which can be countered effectively or efficiently only by national policing capabilities; the national threats

	currently specified are terrorism, organised crime, public disorder, civil emergencies and large-scale cyber incidents
tasking and co-ordinating group	the group within the East Midlands Special Operations Unit that considers the principal crime threats and risks and decides which of these take priority for the allocation of available resources
under spend	spending less than budgeted for
vision	a clear description of what the ultimate end result of a particular action or activity is intended to be
workforce	the police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs), police staff and volunteers (including special constables) working in a particular force

Summary

In June 2014, the police and crime commissioners¹ (PCCs) for the East Midlands² region commissioned Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) "to inspect the effectiveness and efficiency of managing counter terrorism funding arrangements across the East Midlands region through a single counter terrorism grant rather than through separate funding streams".

Collaboration in the East Midlands

Five police forces of the East Midlands region have been working in collaboration for over a decade. Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire have worked together since the establishment of the East Midlands Special Operations Unit (EMSOU) in 2002. The EMSOU is headed by a regionally-appointed deputy chief constable, who reports to the regional chief constables. In 2011, it was agreed to bring together the special branch departments in each of the five forces and pool the separate funding each one received from the Home Office for this function. The East Midlands Special Operations Unit Special Branch (EMSOU SB) was formed.

Counter-terrorism funding

The national counter-terrorism police headquarters (NCTPHQ)³ advises the Home Office on the counter-terrorism policing grant. The office for security and counter-terrorism (OSCT) in the Home Office provides this grant to individual forces and within each grant there are 16 different reporting or budget lines. The grants primarily support counter-terrorism specialist posts, however, money is not ordinarily allowed to be moved from one area to another and any money not spent in the financial year is returned to the Home Office.

¹ Police and crime commissioners can commission HMIC to undertake inspections under section 54(2BA), Police Act 1996. Full terms of reference for this review are included at Annex B.

² Police forces in England and Wales are grouped into a number of regions. The East Midlands region comprises the police forces of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire.

³ From 1 April 2014 the headquarters' functions of the Association of Chief Police Officers Terrorism and Allied Matters (ACPO TAM) has been performed by the National Counter Terrorism Police Headquarters (NCTPHQ).

In April 2013, following a paper to the Minister for Security and Immigration called *East Midlands Region single budget proof of concept*⁴ the Home Office agreed to a one-year trial period where these individual grants paid to forces are merged and paid to one force – called the lead force – and are reported on as one; this is called the single counter-terrorism grant.⁵ This arrangement was due to last for one year, although it has since been extended by one year until March 2015, to allow the region to test this idea fully. The aim is to “find a better balance between centralised funding control and a level of budget devolution, and allow better management and deployment of resources to mitigate against (often changing) risk.”⁶

Since 2011 the EMSOU SB has developed a well-established regional collaborative response to counter-terrorism and the total resources available to the region are provided through a combination of special branch funding and the single counter-terrorism grant. While HMIC found efficiencies in this approach, it is often difficult to say definitively whether the ability to do more is due to the special branch collaboration, the single counter-terrorism grant or a combination of both. In addition, HMIC acknowledges that the EMSOU and the EMSOU SB have several other unique characteristics that make it difficult to compare it with other regional arrangements. However, this does not stop it from sharing good practice. These characteristics include:

- the EMSOU has a regionally appointed deputy chief constable;
- the EMSOU SB are co-located with some of the other EMSOU functions and work under a single command;
- the EMSOU and the EMSOU SB are well-established with processes and systems understood by everyone; and
- the East Midlands region is made up of forces generally of a similar size.

⁴ To test the validity of managing a single counter-terrorism budget across the five forces in the East Midlands region

⁵ The merged single counter-terrorism grant in the proof of concept is made up of 15, rather than the 16 separate budgets. One budget remains separate from this grant and is managed by another police force.

⁶ *East Midlands Region single budget proof of concept*. East Midlands Special Operations Unit, April 2013

Methodology

The HMIC inspection of EMSOU's funding arrangements focused on four areas:

1. the governance arrangements for the single counter-terrorism grant;
2. the impact of increased financial flexibility on operational performance;
3. any inhibitors to the single counter-terrorism grant approach; and
4. any other advantages or disadvantages of adopting a single counter-terrorism grant in the EMSOU SB.

To examine these areas, HMIC conducted:

- a review of the EMSOU SB's strategy and policy documents and other relevant documents that contained evidence of leadership, risk assessment, governance, accountability, and operational performance;
- a review of the EMSOU SB's funding arrangements to compare and contrast the last four years;
- fieldwork between 1 July and 14 July 2014 involving interviews and focus groups with officers and police staff from the EMSOU SB, the five constituent forces, the Home Office, NCTPHQ and the Security Services; and
- PCCs were also consulted at a regional meeting and HMIC spoke to a sample of the forces' assistant chief constables who are members of the regional tasking and co-ordinating group.

Findings

How effective and efficient is the single counter-terrorism grant?

HMIC found evidence to support the single counter-terrorism grant arrangement at the EMSOU SB and also found that it demonstrates a more efficient and effective use of public money than the separate ways of funding counter-terrorism work. The inclusion of the combined PCC grant for force special branch units further complements this single grant. It allows better management and deployment of resources to mitigate the threat and risk from terrorism because it improves the ability to assign and deploy resources, which would not have been possible previously.

In addition, HMIC notes that the single counter-terrorism grant contributes towards stronger working relationships across the counter-terrorism disciplines⁷. It helps promote better practice, increased flexibility, with consistent standards across the region and as a result this provides a wider pool of resources to respond to demand across the service. There are effective safeguards in place which ensure that regional activity continues to support national priorities and provide an effective response to the strategic policing requirement⁸ (SPR) and national counter-terrorism objectives.

Merging the different force grants and budgets into one single counter-terrorism grant is a more effective use of money due, in part, to the mature practices and characteristics at the EMSOU SB. HMIC believes that combining the separate budgets could be as effective in other parts of the counter-terrorism network and the potential for wider roll out should be considered. However, certain conditions would need to be in place to support a single budget approach and, although not exhaustive, the main conditions are set out in **Annex A**.

⁷ The national counter-terrorism strategy called CONTEST has four areas of work, each made up of a number of important objectives.

⁸ The strategic policing requirement sets out the national threats and national policing capabilities required to counter those threats.

Governance arrangements

HMIC found that the structure and ways of working in place in the East Midlands region ensures that resources funded by the single counter-terrorism grant are effectively managed and deployed. The single counter-terrorism grant provides managers with the authority and flexibility to make the best use of available resources without having to seek the permission of individual budget holders.

While there is no single document that sets out the business case, the rationale for the single counter-terrorism grant is recorded in the EMSOU regional business plan, the terms of reference, presentations and briefing papers for senior officers, PCCs, the NCTPHQ and Home Office officials. There is appropriate financial governance and scrutiny of the single counter-terrorism grant. Financial arrangements are carried out by the lead force and internal and external audit is conducted.⁹

There are some inconsistencies in how each of the five PCCs are informed about the threat and risk from terrorism. The EMSOU SB prepares counter-terrorism local profiles (CTLPs) but these are not of a similar standard and not all PCCs are provided with a briefing on their local profiles in a consistent way. They reported to HMIC that sometimes this affects the level of scrutiny possible into the threat and risks posed by terrorism and carrying out the SPR requirements.

Increased financial flexibility improves performance

The single counter-terrorism grant has increased the forces' ability to deploy resources across the region when the need arises because there is flexibility within the financial year to move budgets and there is a wider pool of people that can be deployed to support counter-terrorism operations. This then informs the annual priority setting process and as a result overall budget setting becomes more effective. This is particularly important as the threat from terrorism often changes in response to world events. HMIC found that by pooling the financial resources of the single counter-terrorism grant and the grant provided to PCCs to fund force special branches, each force benefited from the ability to access specialist resources at the EMSOU SB. Any force can request resources at the daily management meeting and resources are moved frequently and in a timely way across the region.

Senior officers at the EMSOU SB are aware of the need to continue to meet national counter-terrorism requirements set out in the grant agreement¹⁰ and the SPR. HMIC has been provided with data which shows this support over the last 18 months and is confident that the EMSOU SB will continue to have the capability and capacity to

⁹ External financial audit of the single counter-terrorism grant and the force finance department is conducted by externally appointed independent auditors.

¹⁰ On an annual basis the Home Office allocates a grant to forces, the regional counter terrorism units and counter terrorism intelligence units.

assist the national network under any new single counter-terrorism grant arrangements. In most cases they are able to provide a better service to the network because of the increased capacity the new arrangements provide. This would not have been possible under the previous model.

However, the ability to judge fully how increased financial flexibility has affected operational performance is not possible due to limited information recorded by the EMSOU SB on baseline costs and savings. There is also no complete register or record of other achievements, for example, about operations that previously had not gone ahead but now have proceeded because of the different funding arrangements.

Inhibitors to the single counter-terrorism grant approach

HMIC found national counter-terrorism performance management information is evolving to give a more thorough understanding of how different geographical regions and individual areas of work are performing against the counter-terrorism threat. The NCTPHQ is developing measures of performance known as 'counter-terrorism service deliverables'¹¹. Although the EMSOU SB is seen as progressive and it has embraced the new performance framework, the data available are not mature enough categorically to judge performance before and after the single counter-terrorism grant was adopted. Some measures contradict a more flexible approach to the counter-terrorism grant. An example can be seen in the provision of special branch officers at airports and seaports. The performance of policing at ports includes measuring the number of staff employed on ports duties (expressed as full-time equivalents) and their abstractions for other non-ports related duties and this subsequently informs funding levels. This has, at times, caused some difficulty having two different methods of monitoring performance during the trial period.

¹¹ Counter-terrorism service deliverables describe the services and functions that CT(I)Us must provide as a consequence of receiving the counter-terrorism grant. They include providing, for example, surveillance capability and other functions such as forensic and exhibits officers. They are intended to strengthen the link between finance and performance reporting, making it clearer what activity the counter-terrorism grant is supporting.

Advantages and disadvantages of adopting a single counter-terrorism grant in the EMSOU SB

Advantages

HMIC found that the single counter-terrorism grant has advantages beyond the flexibility offered immediately for counter-terrorism operations. These include:

- a reduced administrative burden by completing one financial return to the NCTPHQ (although EMSOU SB cannot state exactly what savings have been achieved in managing one grant);
- an increased operational capability and capacity as the workforce develops new skills in new areas of policing, although due to the specialist nature of posts this is limited to a small pool of people;
- the potential to make cuts more effectively in the numbers of police officers and staff from a larger pool of resources in a climate of austerity. Reductions in staff can be spread across all five forces and the arrangements provide economies of scale;
- the potential for a more effective platform to increase working, in collaboration, with serious organised crime agencies and the National Crime Agency (NCA); and
- increased resilience to changes in national funding. For example, while the counter- terrorism police grant is protected, if one budget was to be reduced or stopped in the future, the region could better manage its counter-terrorism response or absorb the reduction across the region.

Disadvantages

Some interviewees in the wider counter-terrorism network mentioned the risk that increased regional autonomy in funding could reduce national capability. For example, if the EMSOU SB decided to reduce the number of counter-terrorism security advisors (CTSAs), the numbers available nationally would decrease. This could hamper the region's ability to deliver national tasking such as crowded places reviews. However, during this inspection there was no evidence of any such issue. HMIC believes that this is unlikely to happen because of the many safeguards in place. These include:

- clear links from regional activity to national priorities;
- required skills to perform some highly specialist roles in the counter-terrorism environment which limits some staff movements; and
- the region's commitment to contribute to the implementation of the new 'counter- terrorism service deliverables' in the performance framework.

Recommendations

Within three months:

- 1. The national counter-terrorism police headquarters (NCTPHQ) should review the regional funding for counter-terrorism services in the East Midlands Special Operations Unit special branch (EMSOU SB) and consider advising the office for security and counter-terrorism (OSCT) to adopt the approach as normal practice.**
- 2. The national counter-terrorism police headquarters (NCTPHQ) should review the conditions necessary for a wider roll out and decide if this is a suitable approach to adopt for other counter-terrorism units (CTUs) and counter-terrorism intelligence units (CTIUs).**
- 3. The East Midlands Special Operations Unit special branch (EMSOU SB) should provide a briefing document, in a standardised format, which is shared in a consistent way, with the East Midlands police and crime commissioners (PCCs) on the threat and risk from terrorism in their force area.**
- 4. A common understanding should be agreed between the East Midlands Special Operations Unit special branch (EMSOU SB) and the national co-ordinator protect and prepare (NCPP) to ensure there is sufficient flexibility to deploy ports officers and staff based upon a regional assessment of risk.**
- 5. The national counter-terrorism police headquarters (NCTPHQ) should share the lessons learned and main findings from the single counter-terrorism funding pilot with the counter-terrorism futures programme and the wider counter-terrorism network.**

Introduction

Inspection commission

A police and crime commissioner (PCC) for a police area is democratically elected to represent the local community with responsibility to secure the efficient and effective policing for that area. Police and crime commissioners for each police area in England and Wales were elected in November 2012. HMIC has been commissioned to inspect the EMSOU SB single counter-terrorism grant arrangements by the PCC for Derbyshire who leads on counter-terrorism matters on behalf of the five PCCs¹² in the East Midlands region. The inspection provides an independent view on whether the single counter-terrorism grant in the East Midlands is a more effective and efficient method of funding counter-terrorism. In the region, the single counter-terrorism grant is administered by one force, which is the lead force for finance.

Full terms of reference are set out in **Annex B**.

The trial of a single counter-terrorism grant for the five forces began in April 2013. It was set up to last for a year and has since been extended until March 2015. The sponsors for this trial are the deputy chief constable of the EMSOU and the director of resources at the NCTPHQ. The proposal, which received ministerial approval, is to conduct a one-year proof of concept exercise to:

- test the validity of managing a single counter-terrorism budget across the region;
- construct a suitable financial and operational framework for managing a single budget;
- report progress and issues emerging; and
- produce a report on the proof of concept.

The full terms of reference for the East Midlands region single budget proof of concept are set out in **Annex C**.

¹² Police and crime commissioners can commission HMIC to undertake inspections under section 54(2BA), Police Act 1996.

Background

The police counter-terrorism network in England and Wales consists of a London based counter-terrorism command, with four regions hosting a counter-terrorism unit (CTU) and four hosting a counter-terrorism intelligence unit (CTIU). The units are co-ordinated nationally and managed locally by a lead force.

The CTUs are regionally-located national resources. The staff support the forces in their region (and beyond) in the policing areas of counter-terrorism and domestic extremism. These substantial units are comprised of staff drawn from a number of disciplines, including highly-skilled detectives, community contact teams, financial investigators, intelligence analysts and high-tech crime investigators. The CTUs are largely self-sufficient and can effectively co-ordinate routine enquiries and operations without compromising the commitment of local forces to day-to-day policing.

The CTIUs, while still substantial, are smaller in scale than the CTUs and are focused upon the development of counter-terrorism intelligence rather than the investigation of offences. Where a terrorist-related incident or intelligence is identified within a CTIU area the initial investigation is carried out by CTIU staff. Once the initial intelligence gathering has reached a stage where there is sufficient evidence for action (such as the arrest of a suspect) the investigation is then handed over to a specially trained counter-terrorism investigator.

The East Midlands region¹³ has a regional CTIU which is known as the East Midlands Special Operations Unit special branch (EMSOU SB).

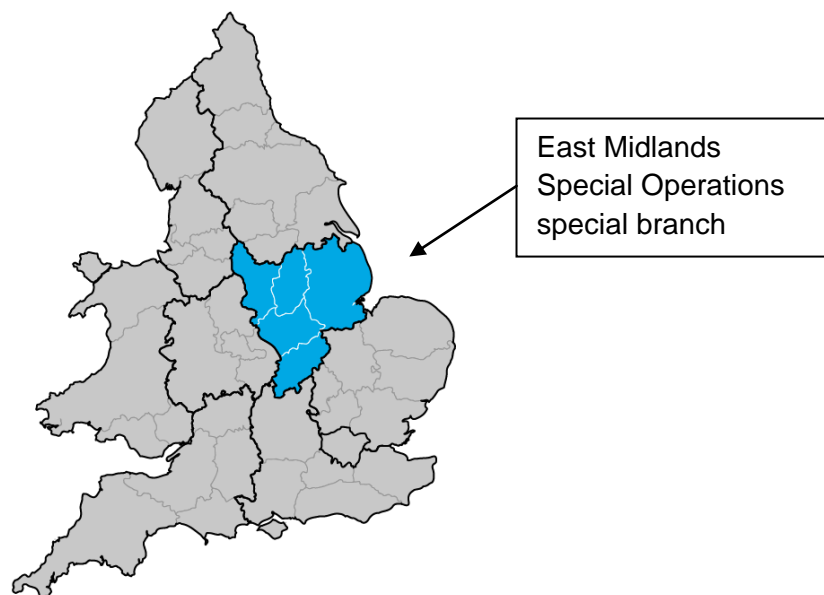


Figure 1. Map showing CTU and CTIU regions

¹³ Five forces make up the East Midlands region: Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire.

To support the national network, which consists of a London-based counter-terrorism command, four regional CTUs and four regional CTIUs, each police force in England and Wales has a locally-based special branch. Each force retains special branch capability either individually or collaboratively with other forces and it deals with all national security issues including counter-terrorism. Typically, these consist of a group of police officers and staff who work at a local level to comply with the provisions of the government's national counter terrorism strategy (CONTEST) and the strategic policing requirement (see **Annex D**).

Funding arrangements

The Home Office makes grant funding available to all forces on an annual basis. Allocation is based on advice from the NCTPHQ and the ring-fenced money goes to PCCs specifically for counter-terrorism purposes. There is a complex administrative structure in place to deliver the counter-terrorism grant to different locations across forces in England and Wales. The grant has 16 different budget lines and in 2013/14, the total counter-terrorism policing grant provided was £563m¹⁴ and the EMSOU SB received £8m¹⁵. This money is mainly spent on staff costs and the EMSOU SB has over 200 officers and staff working in the unit.

Grant reporting requirements mean that each force returns a quarterly report to show how each of the budgets are being spent. Under the arrangements each budget has to be managed, reported and accounted for as a separate entity. Since April 2013, following the approval from the Home Office for a trial period, the five force grants and different budgets were merged into one grant and provided as one payment into one force, which manages the money on behalf of the East Midlands forces.

¹⁴ A grant is made on the advice of NCTPHQ and is subject to the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and the financial management scheme for the counter-terrorism policing grant.

¹⁵ Available from the office of police and crime commissioner for Derbyshire statement of accounts 2013/14. The figure has been rounded.

How effective and efficient is the single counter-terrorism grant in the East Midlands?

1. Governance arrangements

Financial governance

HMIC found that there is a robust evidence-based, financial and operational case to test the concept of combining the different grants and separate counter-terrorism budgets at the EMSOU SB. While there is no single document that sets out the business case, the rationale for the single counter-terrorism grant is recorded in the EMSOU regional business plan, the single counter-terrorism grant terms of reference, presentations and briefing papers for senior officers, PCCs, the NCTPHQ and Home Office officials.

There is appropriate financial governance and scrutiny of the single counter-terrorism grant. Financial arrangements are conducted through a lead force and there is both an internal audit and an independent external audit. Quarterly financial reports are submitted through the EMSOU SB senior management team to the Director of Resources, the NCTPHQ and the Home Office¹⁶. There is also a quarterly governance meeting where there is scrutiny from the regional PCCs on the special branch collaborated budget and overall counter-terrorism performance.

Operational governance

The EMSOU SB is led by a deputy chief constable (DCC), jointly appointed by the chief constables of the five East Midlands forces. The DCC also has devolved responsibility for managing regional resources for terrorism, major crime and serious organised crime. He provides oversight and ensures that the best use is made of the single counter-terrorism grant to tackle the threat and risk from terrorism in the region. This is achieved through a covert tasking and co-ordination meeting for counter-terrorism every three weeks, chaired by the superintendent head of the EMSOU SB. This meeting scrutinises operational performance and ensures that resources, funded by the single counter-terrorism grant and other counter-terrorism resources, are deployed effectively to the priority areas identified at national level. The meeting is informed and supported by a regional daily management meeting (DMM) and a weekly covert resource meeting. The head of special branch (HSB) in each of the five forces and the regional head of station for the security service brief the chief constables every six weeks.

HMIC found that the structure and ways of working in place in the East Midlands region ensure that resources funded by the single counter-terrorism grant are effectively managed and deployed. The single grant provides managers with

¹⁶ Office for Security and Counter Terrorism Financial Advisory Board

authority and flexibility to make the best use of available resources without having to seek the permission of individual budget holders.

Recommendation

Within three months, the national counter-terrorism police headquarters (NCTPHQ) should review the regional funding for counter-terrorism services in the East Midlands Special Operations Unit special branch (EMSOU SB) and consider advising the office for security and counter-terrorism (OSCT) to adopt the approach as normal practice.

The concept of the single counter-terrorism grant is a more effective use of money due, in part, to the mature practices and characteristics at the EMSOU SB. HMIC believes that merging the separate grants could be as effective in other parts of the counter-terrorism network and the potential for wider roll out could be considered. Although it is recognised that the context differs from region to region, the proof of concept shows that it is a more efficient use of tax-payers money and an effective way of managing risk.

Recommendation

Within three months, the national counter-terrorism police headquarters (NCTPHQ) should review the conditions necessary for a wider roll out and decide if this is a suitable approach to adopt for other counter-terrorism units (CTUs) and counter-terrorism intelligence units (CTIUs).

There are some inconsistencies in how each of the five PCCs are informed of the threat and risk from terrorism. The EMSOU SB prepares counter-terrorism local profiles (CTLPs) but these are not consistent, and not all PCCs are given a briefing on their local profiles. They reported to HMIC that sometimes this affects the level of scrutiny possible into the threat and risk posed by terrorism and delivering the SPR requirements.

Recommendation

Within three months, the East Midlands Special Operations Unit special branch (EMSOU SB) should provide a briefing document, in a standardised format, which is shared in a consistent way, with the East Midlands police and crime commissioners (PCCs) on the threat and risk from terrorism in their force area.

2. Increased financial flexibility on operational performance

HMIC interviewed a number of officers and staff from the Home Office, the five forces that make up the East Midlands region, the NCTPHQ, the EMSOU SB and consulted with PCCs. During these interviews, HMIC found that the majority believed the principle of a single counter-terrorism grant was a more effective way of providing funding for tackling terrorism. Those that worked at the EMSOU SB reported that they were strongly in favour of continuing with a single grant. They believed that this was the best way to match funding to the threat and risk and that the single counter-terrorism grant arrangement should be adopted permanently.

The collaborative working model at the EMSOU SB, together with the current funding arrangements, means that, on a daily basis, the most appropriate resources are used to counter the identified risk. Neither force nor financial boundaries inhibit the regional deployment of resources.

During fieldwork HMIC found many examples of staff being transferred to work outside their specific funded area. Despite the previous grant agreement being split into different budgets and not allowing this, in reality some moves have been made at times of need in the past. One of the main functions of the single counter-terrorism grant is to allow managers the flexibility to move staff to address the threat and risk in a more open and transparent way. One interviewee described the change in financial flexibility and transparency as “the proof of concept [single counter-terrorism grant] legitimises what the operational response was trying to do”.

The single counter-terrorism grant has also increased the ability to pull together quickly resources across the region when the need arises. This is because there is a wider pool of people that can be deployed at the daily management meeting to support operations. This is particularly important as the threat from terrorism often changes in response to world events.

The EMSOU SB records each time that a member of staff is deployed temporarily to a different budget area, for example, when a ports policing officer is moved to assist in a local force special branch. HMIC examined these records¹⁷ and is confident that there is a robust process in place to manage workforce movements and that no particular area of counter-terrorism policing is disadvantaged disproportionately. The table below shows the number of officers and staff who have been moved from their normal duties, the length of time spent away and how many operations and other teams have been supported by this.

¹⁷ Chart showing the EMSOU SB flexible deployments of resources for 2013/14

Table 1. Officer and staff movements for 2013/14

Length of period away from normal duties in support of other operations / teams			Number of these operations / team deployments which are within the region	Number of these operations / team deployments which are out of the region	Number of resource movement requests not supported
Less than 5 days	More than 6 days but less than 30 days	More than 30 days			
134	22	4	124	36	4

By adopting the single counter-terrorism grant the EMSOU SB is more agile and has increased its capacity to respond to the threat from terrorism. One interviewee explained: “before [when] there was a single pot of money, it meant in effect that people couldn’t do other people’s work [the single counter-terrorism grant] allows better resourcing to the threats EMSOU SB is facing.”

The single counter-terrorism grant has provided the EMSOU SB with much greater flexibility to use the available funding for the purpose for which it was intended: tackling terrorism. For example, money used in the Prevent¹⁸ strand is being used to brief communities and increase community contact. By using funds from the single counter-terrorism grant for Prevent, the EMSOU SB has conducted more community seminars than would have otherwise been possible.

The ability to better align budgets to the threat and risk has meant that the EMSOU SB has used a larger part of the counter-terrorism grant than in previous years. Since its introduction, the single counter-terrorism grant has been a more efficient use of the monies allocated as the EMSOU SB has come closer to spending its total budget with only a 0.4% under spend in 2013/14.

HMIC also found that a single grant enabled the region to re-assign responsibilities where appropriate. For example, one force in the region has a lower terrorist threat and the head of special branch has the capacity to take on additional responsibilities. As there is agreement among PCCs to pool resources, this person also manages the

¹⁸ Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism

ports policing officers. Therefore, counter-terrorism grant-funded ports officers have a line manager who is funded by a PCC. This best use of resources is a direct result of the new funding conventions under the single counter-terrorism grant. The benefit for the PCC is that this force's special branch, which formerly had a small number of staff, can now have access to the EMSOU SB staff of over 200.

HMIC was also provided with other examples of how a single budget made it easier to police major events that require large numbers of specialist counter-terrorism staff. Planners normally use their own staff and then make requests to borrow staff from other areas of policing when they can't meet demand. This can mean making requests of other forces through agreed mutual aid protocols or – as is often the case in counter-terrorism – making a bid to the counter-terrorism network. Such situations require business cases and bids to be submitted. They depend upon the availability of resources and often involve expensive overtime payments. This is not the case in the East Midlands. In July 2014, the East Midlands hosted two major events in the same weekend; the British Formula 1 Grand Prix at Silverstone and the Waddington International Air show in Lincolnshire. These events are attended by over 100,000 visitors each. The events required significant EMSOU SB resources and by using staff funded by the single counter-terrorism grant, together with PCC funded special branch staff, the event was policed with no mutual aid, assistance from the counter-terrorism network or additional funding. One manager stated that “we prioritise across disciplines - only skills and geography, not budgets, are [now] our limiting factors.”

HMIC attended a daily management meeting (DMM), where all five forces were represented, and staff were assigned to work on immediate priorities. For example, a researcher from the EMSOU SB was moved to work in a force special branch.

It is unlikely that this example of effective resource management, where staff are funded differently, would have occurred without the flexibility of the single counter-terrorism grant.

Any force can request resources at the DMM and there is frequent and timely movement of resources around the region. HMIC found that by pooling the financial resources of the single counter-terrorism grant and the grant provided to PCCs to fund force special branches, each force benefited from the ability to access specialist crime resources at the EMSOU SB.

During the inspection HMIC looked to see what effect the single counter-terrorism grant is having on the workforce. It is clear that amalgamating separate budgets into one is helping managers to identify and deploy resources quickly. The EMSOU SB staff are considered to be one unit with many separate functions and skills. HMIC found widespread agreement with the concept among those staff and officers interviewed and when officers are moved from one budget or geographical area to another the moves are mutually agreed. For example, a situation arose where staff

were urgently required to work in a police force. A police sergeant working at the East Midlands Airport was moved to a force special branch (a PCC funded post). This was one of a number of examples where an operational need was met while providing a development opportunity for staff. This example illustrates the integrated nature of the region and a culture of using resources to reduce risk.

Forces now have an enhanced capacity and capability to deal with counter-terrorism, especially those with fewer counter-terrorism resources, because they can access resources on a regional level if required. We found that senior officers at the EMSOU SB were aware of the need to continue to meet national counter-terrorism requirements set out in the grant agreement and the SPR. HMIC is confident that the EMSOU SB will continue to have the capability and capacity to assist the national network under the single counter-terrorism grant. In most cases they are able to provide a better service to the network because of the increased capacity that the new arrangements provide.

A number of other examples of how the single counter-terrorism grant has contributed to the Prevent strand were reported to HMIC. For example, in 2013 the EMSOU SB produced a DVD to highlight the dangers of young people being radicalised. The content in the DVD has been identified as good practice by the national co-ordinator for Prevent and it is now used across the region.

It is likely that forces would not have supported the production of the DVD without the single counter-terrorism grant because, although previously forces had allocated budgets for Prevent initiatives, it was more limited.

Another example of an EMSOU SB Prevent initiative aimed at reducing radicalisation in schools is a YouTube production called 'Diary of a Bad Man'. This initiative is recognised as good practice and received Home Office approval. HMIC found that the economies of scale that the single grant provides make funding for innovative ideas easier to obtain, even if it is through a bidding process which has clear criteria for prioritisation. This means that some initiatives fail to obtain funding where the perceived risk is low but which might have been successful before the single grant approach was adopted. Two examples were provided where local Prevent initiatives were stopped and replaced with a regional product which was better value for money or in an area of higher risk. While HMIC understands the rationale behind these decisions, the EMSOU SB should continue to be aware of the local nature of Prevent and the perception of local communities that could see generically produced products as not being able to meet their particular needs.

3. Inhibitors to the single counter-terrorism grant

Performance framework

HMIC found that national counter-terrorism performance management information is currently evolving to enable a more thorough understanding of how geographical areas and individual work themes are performing against different threats. The NCTPHQ is developing measures of performance known as 'counter-terrorism service deliverables'. Although the EMSOU SB is seen as progressive and embraced the new framework early, the data available are not mature enough to categorically judge performance before and after the single counter-terrorism grant was adopted.

Special branch policing at ports is funded through a specific element of the counter-terrorism grant funding. This enables officers and staff to work at borders to monitor and detain known criminals and terrorist suspects. The staff are employed by police forces and nationally co-ordinated through the NCTPHQ. There are rigid performance measures for special branch ports staff which are agreed with the OSCT. Chief among these are the number of staff employed on ports duties and their abstractions for other non-ports related duties. The number of staff on ports duties is expressed as 'full-time equivalents' (FTEs). The indicators are monitored by the NCTPHQ and significant weight is placed on any abstractions. The NCTPHQ report to the OSCT if staff no longer appear to be permanently engaged in ports work and advise that budget allocation should be reduced accordingly. Therefore, existing performance measures conflict with the flexible nature of the single counter-terrorism grant. HMIC found that there had been insufficient explanation of the single counter-terrorism pilot to those held accountable for monitoring ports officers' performance which added to this conflict. One interviewee stated that the "[single counter-terrorism grant] approach has not allowed the performance regime to catch up".

Recommendation

Within three months, a common understanding should be agreed between the East Midlands Special Operations Unit special branch (EMSOU SB) and the national co-ordinator protect and prepare (NCP) to ensure there is sufficient flexibility to deploy ports officers and staff based upon a regional assessment of risk.

Counter-terrorism futures

The counter-terrorism futures programme¹⁹ is considering options for how counter-terrorism policing should be delivered in the future and will report these findings to the Terrorism and Allied Matters (TAM) Board. Although counter-terrorism futures is listed as an interested party in the original single counter-terrorism grant documentation and named as a member of the single counter-terrorism grant oversight board, engagement has been limited. As the counter-terrorism futures work is still developing, it is not yet clear what effect the recommendations or conclusions will have on the capability and capacity of CTIUs such as the EMSOU SB. Although, HMIC understands that ports policing will be reviewed in 2015 through the counter-terrorism futures programme.

Recommendation

Within three months, the national counter-terrorism police headquarters (NCTPHQ) should share the lessons learned and main findings from the single counter-terrorism funding pilot with the counter-terrorism futures programme and the wider counter-terrorism network.

The ‘footprint employment model’

The EMSOU staff working in the serious and organised crime arena are all employed by one force under a ‘lead force model’. In contrast to this arrangement, the ports and CTSA staff in the EMSOU SB remain employed by their home force, known as the ‘footprint model’. All matters relating to their employment such as their performance, sickness rates, welfare or discipline remain the responsibility of their home force. This adds complexity to their employment conditions as the EMSOU SB is faced with five separate performance and development (PDR) systems to consider and police staff undertaking the same roles have, in some cases, different employment conditions. A more visible example of the different working conditions of staff from different forces is that the equipment provided to ports officers and CTSAAs varies from force to force.

¹⁹ A programme of activity looking at the UKs future response to counter terrorism. There are four strands of work; strategic structures, finance, demand risk and resource and continuous operational improvement.

HMIC understands that the EMSOU SB has decided not to adopt the lead force model, however, more consistency regarding equipment provided to staff may improve overall effectiveness and provide opportunities to make further procurement savings.

4. Advantages and disadvantages of adopting a single counter-terrorism grant in the EMSOU SB

Advantages of the single counter-terrorism grant

HMIC found that the EMSOU SB has developed an integrated regional IT structure that helps significantly the efficient and effective deployment of counter-terrorism resources. Staff who are deployed to different locations continue to have access to all the required IT systems, even when they move to a different force or unit. The central network security team (NeST) maintains an effective and thorough overview of IT activity.

HMIC found that the single counter-terrorism grant has other advantages beyond the immediate operational flexibility mentioned above. These include:

- a reduced administrative burden by completing one financial return to the NCTPHQ (although EMSOU SB cannot state exactly what savings have been achieved in managing one grant);
- an increased operational capability and capacity through the workforce developing new skills in new environments, although due to the specialist nature of posts this is limited to a small pool of people;
- the potential to make cuts in capacity from a larger pool of resources in a climate of austerity more effectively. Reductions in staff can be spread across all five forces and the arrangements provide economies of scale;
- the potential for a more effective platform to increase collaboration with serious organised crime and the National Crime Agency (NCA); and
- an increased resilience to changes in national funding. For example, while the counter- terrorism police grant is protected, if one budget was to be reduced or stopped in the future, the region could better manage their response or absorb the effect across the region.

Disadvantages of the single counter-terrorism grant

Our inspection found no significant disadvantages to amalgamating the separate grants into a single grant. However, some interviewees from the wider counter-terrorism network mentioned the risk that increased regional autonomy in funding could reduce national capability. For example, if the EMSOU SB decided to reduce the number of CTSAs, the numbers available nationally would decrease. This could hamper the region's ability to deliver national tasking such as crowded places

reviews. However, during this inspection there was no evidence of any such issue. HMIC believes that this is unlikely to happen because of the many safeguards in place. These include:

- the clear linking of regional activity to national priorities;
- the required skills to perform some highly specialist roles in the counter-terrorism environment limit some staff movements; and
- the region's commitment to contribute to the implementation of the new 'counter-terrorism service deliverables' in the performance framework.

Conclusion

There is good evidence to show that the single counter-terrorism grant arrangement is a more efficient and effective use of public money than the separate grant arrangements and should be considered as an approach to be adopted as normal practice in the EMSOU SB. In addition, consideration should be given to a wider roll out across the counter-terrorism network once certain conditions have been met.

The inclusion of the combined PCC grant for force special branch units further complements this single grant. It allows better management and deployment of resources to mitigate the threat and risk from terrorism because it improves the ability to bring together, allocate and deploy resources quickly. In addition, HMIC notes that the single counter-terrorism grant contributes towards stronger working relationships across the counter-terrorism disciplines. It helps promote more standardisation in the region and subsequently creates a wider pool of resources to respond to demand. There are effective safeguards in place which ensure that regional activity continues to work to national priorities and the constituent forces respond effectively to the SPR. As one senior police officer stated during interview; “You would never build an organisation which totally ring-fences resources as you need to look across your threat and risk and allocate resources accordingly.”

Annex A

Conditions to be operating effectively prior to consideration of adopting a single grant approach:

- Transparent and integrated regional management structure able to provide clear lines of accountability, particularly where it is decided to reallocate monies from one budget to another, and appropriate scrutiny of performance.
- A common approach to providing consistent briefings to police and crime commissioners, which enables them to scrutinise performance against the threat and risk posed by terrorism and delivering the strategic policing requirement.
- Robust and transparent financial governance arrangements to ensure a common approach to reporting, with an internal and external oversight and scrutiny process, which involves regional management and police and crime commissioners.
- Ability to report on the separate budgets within the single grant to retain transparency around the way the grant is locally allocated against operational activity.
- A performance framework, which includes measures that are outcome orientated and reporting against counter-terrorism grant deliverables, and which have sufficient flexibility to deploy resources based upon a regional assessment of threat, harm and risk.
- Mechanism for tracking the movements of single counter-terrorism grant officers and staff both within and outside the region and reporting this as part of a performance output.
- Ensure any variance in the underlying infrastructure is minimised to support joint working (such as ICT, employment terms and conditions, finance and budgeting approaches).

Annex B

Terms of Reference

The commission's purpose is to provide an independent review of the proof of concept of a single counter-terrorism fund within the East Midlands Special Operations Unit (EMSOU).

Included within the commission will be a review of the effectiveness and efficiency of managing counter-terrorism funding arrangements across the East Midlands region through a single counter-terrorism grant rather than through separate funding streams.

In considering the funding arrangements, the inspection will identify:

- governance arrangements for the single counter-terrorism grant;
- the effect of increased financial flexibility on operational performance;
- any inhibitors to the single counter-terrorism grant approach; and
- any other advantages or disadvantages of adopting a single counter-terrorism grant in the EMSOU.

Scope

The review will focus solely on the effectiveness of the proof of concept at the EMSOU.

Timescale

The inspection will take approximately three months from receipt of the formal confirmation of the commission. This time period will facilitate planning, co-ordination of fieldwork and report writing.

Annex C

Terms of Reference for the East Midlands Region single budget proof of concept (POC)

Aims and Objectives:

- To test the validity of managing a single counter-terrorism budget across the East Midland Region.
- To construct a suitable framework for managing a single pot both operationally and financially.
- To report progress to ACPO(TAM) and the East Midlands Region on a quarterly basis.
- To produce a report on the proof of concept project for the end of the year.

Timescale:

- Initially one financial year covering 2013/14 (1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014).
- If the proof of concept is not extended beyond the first year then the East Midlands region would be subject to transitional funding arrangements in the following year to realign back to agreed budget allocations.

Sponsors/Senior responsible officer:

- Sponsors: deputy chief constable of EMSOU and director of resources, ACPO(TAM)
- Senior responsible officer: chief superintendent of EMSOU, head of finance ACPO (TAM)

Methodology and reporting:

- East Midlands will be allocated a single counter-terrorism funding stream by the Home Office, covering the agreed counter-terrorism functions for 2013/14.
- Within this single funding stream, monies for intended functions will remain separate so as to retain a degree of transparency around the way the East Midlands grant is locally allocated against operational activity.
- East Midlands will have the flexibility to manage this funding as a single entity in year, allocating resources according to need within the funding stream.

- Reasonable viring²⁰ of monies between separate activities covered by the funding will be allowed at CTIU discretion. These movements will also be overseen by the governance board.
- East Midlands will still be required to comply with grant reporting requirements which will remain on a quarterly basis. These will still require details of where budgets are being expended.
- The proof of concept will also explore the detail around what the future holistic regional bids for an annual single counter-terrorism grant funding stream would need to include, if the trial was to run beyond 2013/14. Conversely if the trial ends after one year then the transitional arrangements described above will also need to be defined to ensure that the region is able to realign itself to the existing arrangements in all other regions.
- Issues emerging from the proof of concept exercise will be reviewed on a quarterly basis by ACPO (TAM) Finance and the East Midlands via a Governance Board. The Board will be jointly chaired by the DCC Regional CT Lead and TAM Director of Resources and will include representation from EMCTIU SMT and ACPO (TAM). It will sit on a quarterly basis, and additionally if required, to review progress on the proof of concept. This will include:
 - (a) Oversight of the proof of concept
 - (b) Review of financials
 - (c) Agreement on future decisions
 - (d) Consideration of future financial planning
- Issues arising from the exercise should be captured and included in a final report. The report will be commissioned by the governance board and will examine:
 - (a) The overall success of the exercise
 - (b) The advantages/disadvantage of managing a single pot both operationally and financially
 - (c) The value for money aspects
 - (d) Any practical issues coming out of the exercise
 - (e) If there are opportunities to extend the proof of concept exercise more widely across the counter-terrorism network.

²⁰ Where money is transferred from one budget to another

Key Stakeholders:

- East Midlands Region
- ACPO(TAM)
- National Co-ordinators
- CT Heads
- Home Office (OSCT)
- Regional Police and Crime Commissioners
- Regional Chief Constables
- CT Futures Programme

Annex D

The national counter-terrorism strategy – CONTEST

The government's counter-terrorism strategy has four areas of work, each made up of a number of important objectives:

- *Pursue* – to stop terrorist attacks;
- *Prevent* – to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism;
- *Protect* – to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack; and
- *Prepare* – to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

The strategic policing requirement

The strategic policing requirement²¹ sets out the national threats and national policing capabilities required to counter those threats. Police forces in England and Wales carry the responsibility for tackling a wide range of threats to cut crime and keep the public safe. Although many of these can be tackled by an individual police force within their own police force area, there are some that go beyond those boundaries. These national threats can require a co-ordinated response in which resources are brought together from a number of police forces. Forces often need to work collaboratively to ensure such threats are tackled effectively.

The strategic policing requirement supports the chief constables and police and crime commissioners to ensure they fulfil their forces' national responsibilities. One of the threats to the country, that the SPR recognises, is terrorism, which the national security risk assessment identifies as a tier one risk²².

²¹ *The Strategic Policing Requirement HM Government*, July 2012. Available from www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-policing-requirement

²² A tier one risk is judged to be the highest priority for UK national security over the next five years, taking into account both likelihood and impact.