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**National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)
Mobilisation Operational Guidance
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Introduction



Introduction

It is recognised within policing that there is a need to move police resources across force boundaries on occasions to support certain incidents and large events. This process is generally referred to as mutual aid. There are certain circumstances when NPCC through the National Mobilisation Coordinator (NMC) could mobilise resources to support a major incident, national emergency or significant event. This National guidance is intended to provide all police forces with information on responding to resourcing requests to any planned or spontaneous local, regional or major national event.

The Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) clearly sets out that policing should maintain the capacity and capability to respond effectively to national threats across force-boundaries and through national and regional arrangements. Through this guidance document and existing mutual aid arrangements forces can be confident that there is a robust mechanism to deal with threats set out in the SPR.

This is for general guidance and advice, if there are any specific queries or further information required then the National Police Co-ordination Centre (NPoCC) should be consulted for clarification of anything contained in this guidance.

This guidance sets out the expectations and considerations of forces, regions and NPoCC and other key stakeholders who are involved in the mobilisation process.

This mobilisation advice will evolve over time, as changes in policies and policing responses emerge. This advice will be regularly reviewed and amended.

Mobilisation

The police service is required to respond to complex policing operations. Some of these may require resources that exceed a force's own capacity, ie, mutual aid. These types of operations or incidents require people and/or equipment to be coordinated and managed. Mobilisation is the process which supports mutual aid, at the local, regional or national level.

Mutual aid can be described as the provision of policing assistance from one force to another. It is a formal arrangement and is like the provision of Special Police Services. As such, mutual aid is usually provided in response to or in anticipation of a major incident or event. Three main types of mutual aid are identified. The characteristics of each are outlined below:

- i. **Emergency/Spontaneous Deployment:** - For example, an unforeseen demand such as an initial outbreak of disorder, sustained protest or investigation, where another force is called upon to assist. A definition of time for such emergency or spontaneous support is from 0 to 15 days duration.
- ii. **Planned Deployment/Event:** - For example, the "V" festivals, G7 and COP26. Here the event has a capacity requirement beyond a single force or where a force cannot alone police the event and provide appropriate resilience in the rest of its force area.
- iii. **Specialist Staff Deployments:** - For example, Operation Melrose, supply of large-scale crime assets including Casualty Bureau. where a host force does not have sufficient specialist staff to fulfil local requirements. In addition to supporting Home Office forces NPoCC can assist with mobilising officers and staff to support non HO forces and the British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.

The National Police Coordination Centre ([NPoCC](#)) is responsible for the mobilisation of police assets, including general policing, operations and crime business areas.

NPoCC should be the initial point of contact for any mobilisation requirements as it will provide advice and national coordination.

Any mobilisation lasting more than 90 days would normally be classed as a secondment and not mutual aid. Cases will, however, be assessed on an individual basis. Further information can be obtained from the NPCC National Policing Guidelines on Charging for Police Services.

Mobilisation and the Strategic Policing Requirement

Mobilisation is also a key component of the police service's response to the [Strategic Policing Requirement \(SPR\)](#). The SPR highlights the following six threats which have been identified as requiring a national policing response:

- public disorder
- civil emergencies
- organised crime
- terrorism
- large-scale cyber incidents.
- child sexual abuse

The SPR is periodically reviewed and other requirements may be added over time.

The [National Policing Requirement \(NPR\)](#) counters these threats through:

- Capacity and contribution – police and crime commissioners and chief constables should have regard to the planning assumptions and ensure they are able to fulfil their force's contribution to the national capacity in response to threats, harms and other civil emergencies.
- Capability – the police service should be capable of dealing with the threat contained within the SPR. Consideration should be given to the skills, training and equipment required, ensuring each force's contribution to the national requirement is effective.
- Consistency – specialist policing capabilities must be able to deliver an integrated response which is consistent across all police forces and partnership agencies.
- Connectivity – policing resources need to be connected effectively across force boundaries through national arrangements. Policing capabilities should also be able to connect effectively with key partners when planning for, and responding to, civil emergencies.

NPoCC are responsible for maintenance of the Police National Public Order Mobilisation Plan (PNPOMP) which sets out the mechanism for mobilising a variety of public order resources within prescribed time frames.

This operational advice explains key principles and an overarching framework for mobilisation and mutual aid which will help the police service meet the SPR threats and meet other policing challenges which require mutual aid.

Key principles

The [Police Act 1996](#) provides the legal basis for mobilisation, in particular:

- [section 24](#) – allows forces in England and Wales to provide aid to each other
- [section 26](#) – enables forces in England and Wales to provide international assistance
- [section 98](#) – allows forces in England and Wales to provide aid to Police Scotland and the Police Service of Northern Ireland
- [section 98\(4\)](#) – provides for the home secretary to direct chief constables to provide resources in extremis (note: to date this intervention has never been required).

Mobilisation may occur in response to [spontaneous](#) or [pre-planned](#) events. It is based on a tiered response. In the context of mobilising people and/or equipment, these tiers are:

- tier 3 – national level
- tier 2 – regional level
- tier 1 – local level.

Each tier has its own key roles, structures and processes which facilitate effective mobilisation. See [mobilisation landscape](#).

Mercury is the IT web-based system used for mobilising resources. Trained designated users within NPoCC and all forces have access to the system. See [Mercury](#) for further information on when it should be used.

NPCC National Police Guidelines on Charging for Police Services: Mutual Aid Cost Recovery provides the framework for charging and cost recovery when mobilisation occurs. These guidelines are reviewed annually, and all stakeholders informed of any revisions. Copies can be obtained from the NPCC/NPoCC.

There has been an identified need to have a Framework for all forces to work within so there is consistent approach for the deployment of officer on Mutual Aid. This Framework has been agreed with the NPCC and all forces have been provided with the document of principles for Mutual Aid. ([Annex A - Framework of Principles for deployment of Mutual Aid](#)).

Roles in Mobilisation and Mutual Aid

This section provides information on the structures and responsibilities associated with national, regional and local mobilisation. It should be read in conjunction with NPoCC's Mutual Aid Guide. [Planning, preparing and responding](#) to mobilisation underpin all three tiers.

Forces and regional roles - Tier 1 and Tier 2

A force is responsible for responding to and managing incidents or events that are within its capacity and capability. As part of its planning and at the earliest opportunity, a force should assess its capacity and capability to mobilise resources, for example:

- What is the provision of specialist roles? Is training and/or accreditation up to date? Note: to support mobilisation these roles should be trained and accredited in accordance with national standards, and to the relevant national role profiles
- What cadre protocols exist or need to be developed, ie, how will staff that hold, or are trained in, specialist roles be alerted and deployed during a mobilisation? What cover arrangements exist? How will staff with multiple skills be deployed to ensure maximum operational effectiveness?
- Are there procedures to ensure operational resilience during a protracted and/or complex mobilisation?
- How will [planning](#), [information](#), [resources](#), [logistics](#), [finance](#), [legal \(PIRLFL\)](#) be resourced if a force is dealing with a mobilisation, eg, could policies be developed to enable non-warranted staff to take on some of these roles during a mobilisation, thus enabling warranted staff to undertake other duties?

This information may form part of a dedicated mobilisation plan and it should be shared with RICC to help assess regional capacity and capability.

Staff in forces (eg, control room personnel, senior management) are likely to be the first to be aware of the possibility of an event/incident which will require resources which exceed local capacity and capability (eg, in response to a spontaneous event or incident). If an assessment reveals the need for additional resources and/or specialist support, force procedures should be followed to ensure appropriate command structures are put in place to:

- assess the event
- decide if the initial assessment is appropriate
- take any immediate action that is necessary to minimise the potential impact of the event
- ensure a swift, professional response.

If mutual aid may be needed, the control room or senior management team should inform the chief officer team or duty gold so that they can assess the resource implications. If it is decided that additional resources are required from beyond the force capacity and/or capability, RICC should be notified. RICC will then liaise with NPoCC to find out whether the source and supply of resources is achievable from within the region or if there is a need to escalate to a tier 3 requirement and source nationally.

Forces who are managing an event that is being resourced at Tier 1 are not required to enter the event on Mercury.

However, where it is anticipated that the event will attract Tier 2 or Tier 3 mutual aid, forces are encouraged to place the event on Mercury at the earliest opportunity.

National Police Coordination Centre(NPoCC)

NPoCC is responsible for mobilisation at a national level. To achieve this, NPoCC:

- assesses national capacity and contribution in relation to the SPR and NPR
- establishes and coordinates continuous testing and exercising regimes to ensure effective capability and mobilisation of national assets when required
- facilitates mutual aid in a **steady state** and provides a fit-for-purpose coordination facility in times of crisis
- ensures **effective reporting mechanisms** with the Home Office and central government crisis management structures.

NPoCC operates a 24/7 service. In addition, it has the capacity and capability to scale up for significant operational mobilisation demand when required (but still maintains unit business continuity).

NPoCC works with other national coordination centres which have responsibility for mobilising specialist resources. These include, for example, the Counter Terrorism Coordination Centre (CTCC), the Police National CBRN Centre and Specialist Counter Terrorism Armed Policing Unit (SCTAP). It also liaises with the Scottish Police Information and Coordination Centre (SPICC). SPICC is responsible for coordinating and managing the mobilisation of Police Scotland resources for events where cross-border mutual aid is required. When mobilisation involves the PSNI, Police Scotland and/or non-home office forces NPoCC will ensure that the host force has the necessary legal framework in place to support variations across officers' police terms and conditions.

To maintain a national overview of service capacity/capability and inform resource management based on threat and risk considerations, NPoCC undertakes horizon scanning with forces and regions. In addition, NPoCC:

- liaises with national policing areas (eg, to develop and maintain role profiles, undertake specialist skill capacity assessments)
- develops and disseminates shared good practice (eg, outcomes of the mobilisation review group and as a result of post-event debriefing)
- manages the Mercury system.
- on behalf of the College of Policing co-ordinate national structured de-briefs and course delivery and the dissemination of any relevant national learning from these.
- represent policing within JESIP and disseminate any joint organisational learning identified.

NPoCC is also responsible for ensuring national mobilisation situational awareness. Designated officers at regional levels (Regional Information Coordination Centres) provide information to NPoCC reflecting their force's/region's chief officer perspective on current and future events, potential resource implications and local resilience overview. Only information that is considered relevant/significant and appropriate to tier 3 mobilisation should be reported. This process ensures that NPoCC can support

forces, partner agencies and stakeholders with timely and accurate information, advice and decision making in response to steady state and crisis situations.

Following routine or significant mobilisations NPoCC, working with the Joint Operational Learning working group (JOL) ensures a coordinated post-event debrief process is implemented to capture learning, develop good practice and improve future mobilisation. These structured debriefs also support other related activity, eg, Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) and NPCC's Public Order and Public Safety (POPS) working group.

National mobilisation coordinator (NMC)

NPoCC's strategic lead acts as the national mobilisation coordinator (NMC) when NPoCC is required to coordinate large-scale mobilisation in response to either spontaneous or planned events (eg, in response to serious public disorder or a civil emergency).

The NMC:

- coordinates the provision of all police mutual aid, with the exception of counter-terrorism (CT) assets, in response to requests from chief officers, and provides advice and guidance to achieve national consistency and an equitable spread of resource demands
- supports the Assistant Commissioner Specialist Operations (ACSO) in matters relating to CT and maintains an overview of non-CT mutual aid deployments in support to a CT incident, which ensures an integrated approach to mobilisation between NPoCC and the CTCC
- provides a single point of contact for forces and coordinates with key strategic partners and stakeholders
- appoints a deputy NMC to ensure resilience
- acts as the single, informed point of contact for government regarding the provision of mutual aid, and national capacity and capability
- provides briefings and NPoCC updates as part of any formal government reporting strategy (note: this role does not imply that the role of the relevant gold commander(s) and/or existing specialist policing functions, such as that provided by CT policing, is withdrawn or limited – the NMC will, as per current arrangements, work closely with key strategic operational leads)
- leads the NPCC Mobilisation Portfolio
- ensures the delivery of any fast-time regional/national capacity and capability assessments.

When NPoCC is dealing with a national spontaneous/planned mobilisation the NMC is supported by a:

- chief of staff
- dedicated operations team which manages and leads responses to current activities (ie, within the current 12 to 24 hour period)
- dedicated planning team which manages and leads the planning input for responses to future operational activities (ie, beyond the current 12 to 24 hour period)
- dedicated communications team.

NPoCC may request that a host force or partner agency deploy liaison officers to NPoCC, for example, staff association representatives, specialist skill subject matter experts, or intelligence officers. This type of request will depend on the nature and complexity of the event, but it is more likely to be made during a period when NPoCC's operational status has been declared and activated. Specific liaison roles and responsibilities will be carried out in accordance with previously agreed memorandum of understanding terms.

Mobilisation supply strategy

NPoCC will develop and implement an intelligence-led supply strategy to meet a mutual aid requirement. This will be transparent to forces and regions and will be based on:

- early proactive engagement with forces to understand internal capacity and capability and the potential mutual aid resource requirement
- threat and risk assessment, which will include an assessment of the current and prospective national demand on resources having cognisance of the National Significant Events calendar maintained by NPoCC.
- consideration of the specific challenges associated with the event, for example,
 - scale and composition of mutual aid
 - nature of the specific specialist resources being requested
 - nature of the event/incident requiring aid
 - duration of mutual aid
 - risk of disorder (if applicable)
 - threat and risk to officers
 - impact of the mutual aid deployment
 - media implications
- consideration of existing collaborative agreements.

The scale and/or nature of the mutual aid requirement may result in an intelligence-led pro rata approach being applied to meet the demand. NPoCC would seek chief officer agreement to implement the approach which supports, as far as is practicable, a fair and equitable distribution of resources. Whilst individual chief constables retain independence and ownership of their resources, where there are competing demands, the NMC will liaise with relevant chief officers to ensure a joint understanding of national risk and thereby ensure prioritisation accordingly. If necessary, the matter will be referred to the NPCC chair.

Co-ordinating Gold Commander and NMC

For large scale operations that span multiple forces there is the potential for multiple resourcing requests being made for finite resources to NPoCC. Whilst each Chief Constable is responsible for policing activity within their own force area and will appoint a Gold Commander responsible for their operation, it has been recognised that at the national level a Co-ordinating role is beneficial to ensure consistency in approach to resourcing and risk assessment of national level operations. This role will be referred to as the '**Co-ordinating Gold Commander**' and there will be a role for the NMC to work with the Co-ordinating Gold Commander to agree the overall mobilisation supply strategy. Further information on the role of the **Co-ordinating Gold Commander** is contained in updated Public Order APP.

Strategic briefing and communication

NPoCC is responsible for managing strategic briefing and communication arrangements in relation to mobilisation and service resilience. These are developed on an event-by-event basis in consultation with the Chief Constable of the host force(s) and relevant government departments.

Mercury

This is the secure IT web-based system which underpins the management of mutual aid. All forces, including the PSNI, Police Scotland, States of Jersey Police, Guernsey Police, Ministry of Defence Police, Civil Nuclear Constabulary and British Transport Police have access to Mercury. It is owned and managed by NPoCC. Mercury allows:

- a force which requires mutual aid (host force), to input event details and request resources – split by specialism, date and scale
- a force which has been asked to provide the mutual aid (donor force), to accept or reject the request and populate the required information/data. Where the request cannot be met, rationale as to why needs to be included, this could be due to competing demand already being resourced.
- logistics information to be arranged and communicated between the host and donor force.

Mercury can be accessed by designated users in forces and RICCs.

Mercury must be used for all pre-planned events which require Tier 2 & Tier 3 Mutual aid.

Mercury is not to be used for Tier 1 planning

The key priority in a spontaneous event is to achieve a timely and effective mobilisation response to support an operation. The use of Mercury is not time critical, therefore, forces/RICCs should liaise with NPoCC to clarify whether the force/RICC or NPoCC is in the best position to coordinate the use of Mercury in response to the event, at the appropriate time.

The benefits of Mercury include allowing:

- a force/RICC to request and respond to mutual aid in a simple and consistent way

- the host force to request any required details (dietary requirements) from the donor force
- the host force to arrange and communicate accommodation and transport details
- RICCs to have a clear oversight of mutual aid activity within their region.

In addition, Mercury provides:

- simple, printable reports
- finance information
- an audit of the mutual aid. a communication tool between NPoCC, host and donor forces involved in an event (e.g., news items, publication of joining instructions and operation orders).
- Query tool to identify the locality of assets nationally based on the agreed role profiles.

Regional Information Coordination Centre (RICC)

The response to mobilisation is based on nine regions. To facilitate mobilisation at this tier and support individual forces (tier 1) and NPoCC (tier 3), each region (tier 2) will host and run a Regional Information and Coordination Centre (RICC). Each RICC has a mandate to communicate and coordinate across its region to identify and mobilise mutual aid resources from forces within the region.

RICCs will have a strategic (ACC) lead with delegated authority to:

- establish the regional response levels required for mobilisation
- coordinate the regional response to mobilisation requests.

This will be achieved through consultation and negotiation with all the other force ACC counterparts in the region.

When **not activated** to mobilise resources, RICC performs the following functions:

- creating and maintaining a regional events calendar to help with resource capacity/capability assessment to feed into NPoCC
- a service level agreement for the region in response to NPoCC requests
- liaising with, and accessing, other regional capabilities which can help plan and coordinate mobilisation activations/requests (eg, CT hubs, intelligence units)
- regional mobilisation plans, eg, identification of strategic holding areas for the region
- identifying mutual aid liaison officers (MALOs) with the appropriate skill set and experience to
 - deploy during the mobilisation phase
 - act as a key link between RICC, NPoCC, and host and donor forces on welfare matters
 - provide situational awareness reporting, to support strategic briefing processes
- collating and quality assuring force mobilisation plans

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- capturing collaborative arrangements such as joint public order or firearms units and/or exploiting good cross-force working relationships
- the fast-time mobilisation of resources across force boundaries within the region
- establishing conditions of service with the forces in their region and chief officers for deployed staff
- debriefing following activation
- developing and disseminating good practice
- ensuring that information input on Mercury for the region is accurate (achieved by nominating a single point of contact with NPoCC)
- will work on behalf of the Regional Mobilisation Lead (RML) to ensure the availability of accredited commanders in the region as determined by the RML/POPS lead, eg, public order gold/silver/bronze commanders.

RICC's may be activated to mobilise resources by a force(s) in its region. If a RICC is activated in these circumstances and NPoCC is **not** activated, it will ascertain the requirements from the host force(s) and coordinate the supply of resources from across the region (tier 2). RICC will still, however, liaise with NPoCC to ensure visibility of its activities and to enable NPoCC to maintain an accurate overview of national resourcing.

The RICC will consider the following in their regional resourcing strategy before making a tier 3 request.

- on duty resource
- moving of shifts to accommodate 'due on' resources
- review of all ready in use resources (i.e. football serials – bring in earlier)
- cancellation of rest days – seeking volunteers
- cancellation of rest days – requiring not requesting

A brief summary of actions the host force has done in order to try and resource the event at both tier 1 and 2, should be included within the tier 3 request so that NPoCC can provide tier 3 donors with this rationale from the outset.

It is acknowledged that on occasions geographically it will be more pragmatic to move to tier 3 before exhausting the above list of tier 1 or tier 2 resources. For example, urgent spontaneous incidents or some local derby football matches.

In circumstances where NPoCC has been activated, the RICC will provide an expeditious and coordinated response to the national demand for resources, on behalf of the region.

When activated, the RICC strategic lead (usually chief officer level) will act as a regional mobilisation coordinator (RMC). The RMC will:

- ensure liaison with commanders in the host force(s) and NPoCC
- negotiate and coordinate the identification and supply of resources at a regional level
- set the appropriate staffing levels within RICC to facilitate effective mobilisation when activated, eg, to facilitate [planning](#), [information](#), [resources](#), [logistics](#), [finance](#), [legal \(PIRLFL\)](#).

Special arrangements (Tier 1 & 2)

Some forces are located within a region where greater efficiency and effectiveness would be achieved by contacting neighbouring forces for mutual aid, prior to exhausting the complete Tier 2 (regional) options.

This is because neighbouring forces, despite being placed within other regions are geographically closer or have the requisite capability/capacity that could not be accessed as expeditiously or effectively within the host region.

In these circumstances, with prior agreement of NPoCC, forces that can provide a rationale are permitted to contact neighbouring forces outside their region as if they were a Tier 2 request.

In this case, NPoCC have to give prior agreement and immediately advise all RICC's within the host and donor regions that such special arrangements are being applied and the rationale as to why this is the case. All mutual aid requests that rely on special arrangements **MUST** be entered on to Mercury without delay, with the rationale being documented within the body of the request.

Spontaneous events

A spontaneous event is defined as;

An event that occurs without prior notice or warning that presents an adverse effect on the community in which it occurs and where no reasonable opportunity arose to prepare or activate plans that would deliver an effective response or provide adequate resources that would mitigate the effect.

National Mobilisation – National Emergency/Event

In situations considered to be a national emergency/event, such as the disorder in 2011. Consideration will be made to invoking 'Exigency of Duty'. Below is the PNB Circular 9/86 which defines an exigency:

PNB Circular 9/86 defined an exigency of duty

“Where alterations are made to an annual duty roster after its publication these changes must arise from the exigencies of duty (unless they are made at the officer’s own request or have otherwise been agreed with the joint branch board).

The term “exigencies of duty” should be interpreted as relating to situations where a pressing demand, need or requirement is perceived that is not reasonably avoidable and necessitates a change of roster.

In this context the word “pressing” relates to the expected situation at the time when the duty is to be performed rather than the time when the duty roster is changed, i.e. the reasons for a change may be known many months in advance but still be pressing.”

This definition should be considered prior requesting a mobilisation of resources.

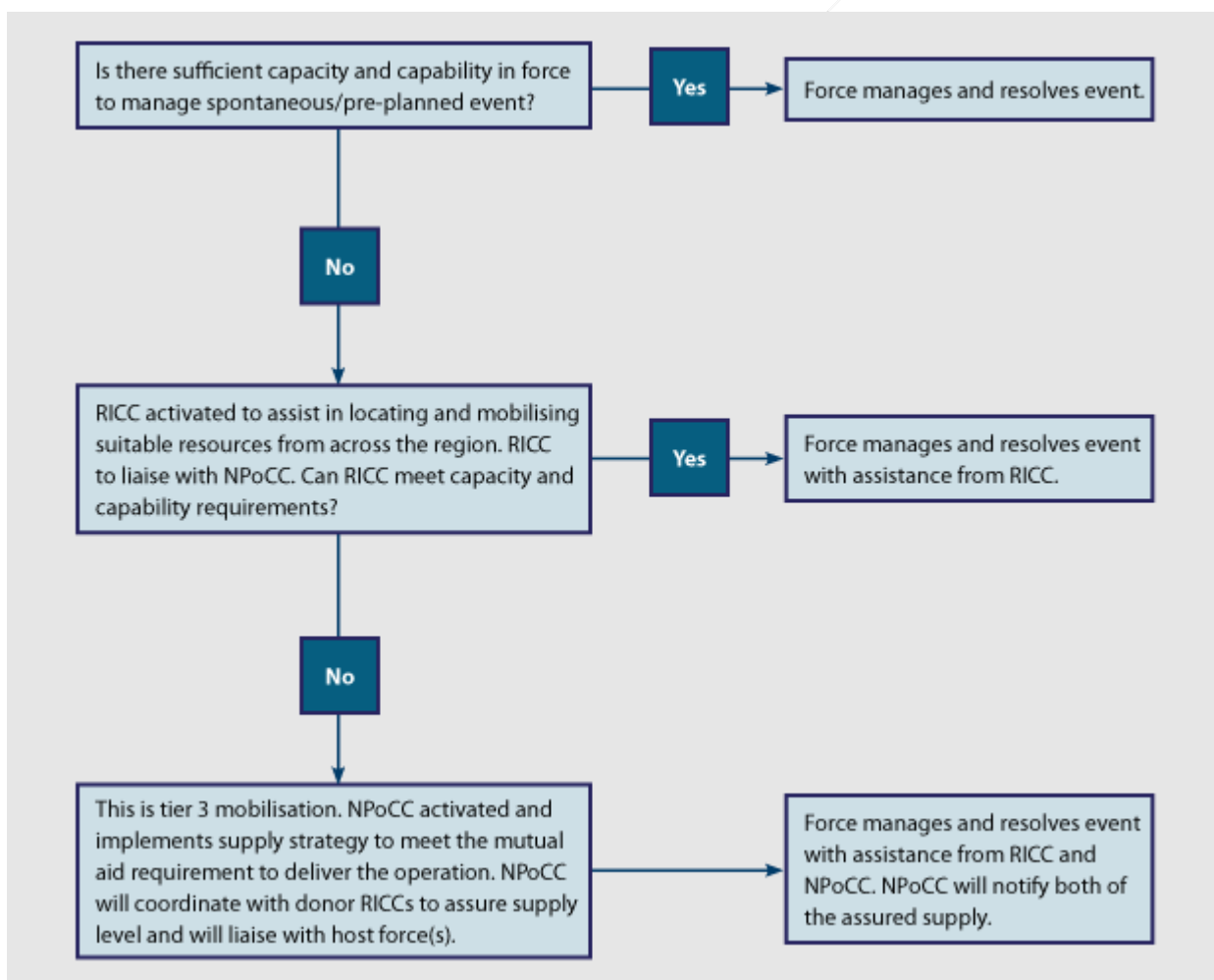
For resourcing purposes the following will be considered before moving to the next tier:-

- on duty resource
- moving of shifts to accommodate 'due on' resources

- review of already in use resources
- cancellation of training
- moving to 12 hour shifts
- use of 'restricted duties' officers to backfill deployable officers (restricted officers may need to include those restricted for discipline matters as well as those on physical restrictions)
- use of 'ring fenced' officers (ring fenced officers are not funded, but not usually abstracted from day to day role)
- use of funded officers (funded officers are those who are funded by a third party and may have contractual restrictions on their deployment)
- cancellation of rest days – seeking volunteers
- cancellation of rest days – requiring not requesting
- cancellation of annual leave

At tier 3, forces will rightly expect that Tier 1 and Tier 2 will have exhausted all reasonable methods of resourcing prior to making a Tier 3 request and may ask NPoCC for confirmation of the measures employed by the Host RICC before agreeing to support. This rationale should be confirmed by the requesting NPCC officer from the host force and available to the NMC if requested.

Assessment/activation process



Planning, preparing and responding

Planning

Each force should develop its own mobilisation plan. These plans should differentiate between actions when the Force is deploying resources or receiving resources. These may be collated or developed collectively by RICCs to develop an overarching regional mobilisation plan. NPoCC should be sent a copy of each Regional Mobilisation Plan for central collation, such as Public order Level 2 and level 3 plans. Mobilisation plans should be reviewed, refreshed and tested regularly and ideally on an annual basis.

It is essential that staff involved in developing and maintaining a mobilisation plan have the knowledge, training, time, resources, and support to ensure that it is done thoroughly.

The mobilisation plan should include (not exhaustive):

- a named chief officer with responsibility for mobilisation (note: this could be the RICC strategic lead for an overarching regional plan)
- a named individual with responsibility for reviewing and updating the plan
- capacity and capability assessments as per SPR requirements
- [mobilisation assessment/activation processes](#)
- arrangements for hosting mutual aid (hosting plan)
- arrangements for deploying mutual aid (donor plan)
- the process for recording deployment details (note: this should be achieved through Mercury)
- a communications plan that includes provision of radio, telephone and IT systems,
- a transport plan for moving staff, delivering vehicles and fuel, providing secure parking, and maintaining vehicles 24/7 (hosting plan) an accommodation plan, including the provision of adequate toilet facilities (hosting plan) a catering plan that provides for additional resources 24/7 animal management arrangements that include accommodation, feeding and veterinary care 24/7 (hosting plan)
- an equipment plan, eg, reserve supplies of essential equipment (hosting plan)
- a briefing plan that identifies facilities for briefing and debriefing (hosting plan)
- identification of strategic holding areas (SHAs) and [rendezvous points \(RVPs\)](#) (hosting plan)
- provision of welfare centres, including contact numbers (hosting plan)
- detailed maps of the force area that can be easily distributed to donor force staff on arrival (hosting plan)
- training and awareness arrangements
- links to business continuity plans (hosting plan)
- exercising arrangements
- the [command and control structure](#) and identify sufficient trained and available staff to carry out the [command support](#) roles 24/7 (hosting plan)
- post-mobilisation considerations

return-to-force strategy. For some operations (eg, pre-planned tier 3 events), there may be a requirement to develop a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the host force and donor forces. This may include:

- the legal authority to mobilise resources
- a statement of intent including, for example:
 - details of the dates and times of the tasking and the nature of the operation being supported
 - resources to be requested/provided (personnel and equipment)
 - operating procedures
 - practical arrangements for transport and accommodation of personnel and equipment
 - health and safety issues (including risk assessments for the operation)
 - training
- equipment/financial arrangements (including details of expenses and what can be claimed) pensions, insurance, awards, torts and discipline applicable to officers from donor forces.

The number of staff required may vary throughout the response to an operation or incident. This will affect issues such as the provision of accommodation and refreshments.

Officers deployed on Mutual Aid mobilisations will be of substantive rank and that acting and temporary ranks will not be utilised on mutual aid unless in extremis when appropriate authority will be given by the National Mobilisation Coordinator.

Forces and RICCs should, therefore, consider scalability in their mobilisation plan and ensure they can receive a wide range in size and scale of mutual aid resource.

Suitable locations for Strategic Holding Areas (SHAs) or Rendezvous Points (RVPs) should reflect this scalability.

Preparing

Preparation provides the link between planning and responding to mobilisation. Preparation includes:

- raised training and awareness of mobilisation planning and processes
- ensuring relevant staff have access to mobilisation plans
- Exercising.

Forces and regions should ensure that they identify, train and exercise sufficient staff in the roles they will be expected to perform during a mobilisation. This includes staff in support roles as well as frontline officers, eg, muster and debriefing teams, welfare teams.

Staff should also be fully aware of mobilisation processes and procedures and their responsibilities should a mobilisation occur, especially if they fulfil a function which is likely to be redeployed. Key staff in force/regions (eg, force control room, critical incident managers) should have access to mobilisation plans.

An out-of-hours process must be in place and communicated to staff to support effective mobilisation should it be required.

An effective exercise and testing programme should be developed and implemented to ensure that both staff competency and mobilisation processes are fit for purpose. Forces and regions are encouraged to engage with NPoCC, which will support exercise development and ensure learning is shared across the police service, partners and stakeholders.

Forces need to ensure that all role profile data is up to date on Mercury as this will enable accurate planning for any mobilisation.

Responding

An effective response to mobilisation is built on planning and preparing. Given the potential complexities and variation in scale associated with different types of events, forces/regions should be flexible about delivering the response.

Commanders will require access to appointed support officers in the areas of planning, resources, logistics, finance, legal during a mobilisation.

This support:

- enables command support staff within each element of PIRLFL to advise or communicate relevant issues to commanders
- assists command decision making
- avoids information overload for commanders.

Command support staff do not make command decisions, but they do hold the level of authority to facilitate and direct PIRLFL support. The number of staff involved in each component will depend on the scale of the event. Forces/regions must ensure that they have enough staff identified to carry out these roles, and factor in resilience during a potentially protracted mobilisation.

The following provides further information on those elements which are unique to mobilisation. Note: Mercury helps support delivery of these elements.

PIRLFL – Planning

A force/region's generic contingency plans or specific plans to respond to identified risks should be used in conjunction with mobilisation plans.

PIRLFL – Information

Information requirements for planning may include supplying information to organisations and agencies outside the host force(s) area, and responding to freedom of information requests and managing [disclosure](#). A bespoke intelligence cell or unit may be activated. This will help with the management of information and intelligence during a mobilisation.

PIRLFL – Finance

Forces/regions should ensure that accurate and auditable records of expenditure are kept. Nominated staff should be given responsibility for setting up procedures to capture all costs reasonably incurred in responding to mobilisation. Mercury can be used for this purpose. The financial accounting arrangements to be used should be clarified when the lead coordinating agency responsibility passes from the police to another lead agency. For more clarification on this. You can refer to [National Policing Guidelines on Charging for Police Services](#). This outlines all the charging guidelines when a donating force is looking for recharge and the process which is required.

Post-mobilisation considerations

A mobilisation is considered to have ended when:

- the incident is resolved, or
- the operation ends, and/or
- the lead agency responsibility is handed to a relevant partner, eg, the local authority.

Forces should have in place:

- mechanisms to support the recovery phase of an operation
- arrangements for the handover of lead agency responsibility
- a return-to-force strategy.

A mobilisation offers participating forces and regions opportunities to identify and share lessons learnt. When a tier 3 mobilisation has occurred, host and donor forces should ensure NPoCC and other key partners are engaged in post-event debriefing to ensure identified good practice is implemented for future mobilisation, this maybe in the form of a structured debrief which NPoCC will assist with co-ordination and facilitation.

Return-to-force strategy

This should consider the following. This is not an exhaustive list.

	Host force	Donor force	Host and donor force
An outgoing headcount to ensure that all staff are accounted for.	✓		
That welfare debriefs and, where appropriate, health checks are conducted. There is also a requirement to ensure that staff have been refreshed and rested prior to return to the assisting force(s).			✓
Staff should be made aware of any pre-arranged feeding and/or resting points that can be used during their return journey.	✓		
Any post-incident investigation needs, for example, the collation of any outstanding evidence (eg, statements of evidence) and staff contact details.	✓		
Debriefing staff to identify opportunities for organisational and operational learning (eg, an assessment of whether the level of police resources used was appropriate, effective and efficient). Debriefing may also help support any intelligence and evidence gathering arising from the incident.			✓
An equipment check to account for any loss/damage sustained during deployment and, if applicable, to undertake any repairs, maintenance, servicing or replacements required to return to a state of readiness.			✓
Return-to-work arrangements for staff who have been deployed to a mobilisation, eg, rest days, re-acclimatisation, briefings.		✓	
Resolution of any misconduct or complaint issues.			✓

Deployment Structures

Although mobilisation of mutual aid assets can be for a variety of different skills, the most frequently utilised are Public Order Public Safety roles. Below outlines how these are structured:

General Police Deployment Unit structures

Basic deployment units (BDU)

A basic deployment unit consists of:

- one inspector
- three sergeants
- 18 constables who are not required to be public order mutual aid trained.

Not all emergencies require Public Order Public Safety trained officers and so forces should also have the capacity to provide BDUs where appropriate and at the request of NPoCC.

Police support units (PSU)

A police support unit (PSU) is a numerically fixed body of officers equipped and trained to a command minimum standard (Public Order Mutual Aid Standard).

The standard structure for a PSU is:

- one PSU commander (inspector)
- three serials – each serial comprises one sergeant and seven constables, three of which must be qualified protected carrier drivers.
- The PSU should be in three protected carriers with shields

The basic formation of a PSU allows for effective deployment of resources as a standard unit.

Basic mobilisation units (BMU)

To assist with the movement and deployment of general police resources, it is possible to build on existing structures. This enables large-scale and effective groups to be organised.

The core unit for grouping resources is the basic mobilisation unit (BMU). The BMU incorporates the structures associated with the PSU, as follows:

- one commander (eg, chief inspector) usually supported by a driver and loggist
- three PSUs (comprising three inspectors, nine sergeants and 63 constables).

Intermediate mobilisation units (IMU)

If required, the BMU can be grouped by multiples of three to form larger units.

As they expand, these BMU's become intermediate mobilisation units (IMUs).

An intermediate mobilisation unit consists of:

- IMU = one commander (eg, superintendent) and three BMUs

As an IMU expands they would become advanced mobilisation units (AMUs):

Mutual Aid Liaison Officer (MALO)

During are scale deployments MALO's could be deployed to provide support to assist where a senior rank can act as a liaison between donor forces, officers and the host force commanders, and to assist in communications. A MALO should be available to represent donor forces in instances of minor discipline, repatriation and officer welfare.

Interoperability and organisation

A key component of interoperability is that resources from different forces can work together during a mobilisation event.

Resources deployed to a Host force can be requested and may be deployed into larger teams. The advantage of this is that individuals form part of a team. This makes it easier for them to identify with colleagues and be linked to a chain of command. It also allows for more efficient briefing and debriefing.

Due to the diversity of professions within the police, there is no prescriptive model for grouping resources. The ethos of organising staff into groups does, however, apply to most deployments regardless of the numbers or roles involved.

Glossary

AMU - Advanced Mobilisation Unit

BDU – Basic Deployment Unit

BMU – Basic Mobilisation Unit

ECHR – European Convention on Human Rights

EGT – Evidence Gathering Teams

FIT – Forward Intelligence Teams

FOI – Freedom of Information

HMICFRS – Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services

IMU – Intermediate Mobilisation Unit

JESIP – Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Programme

JTAC – Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre

MALO – Mutual Aid Liaison Officer

MOU – Memorandum of Understanding

NDM – National Decision Model

NMC – National Mobilisation Coordinator

NPoCC – National Police Coordination Centre

NPCC – National Police Chiefs' Council

NPPOTC - National Police Public Order Training Curriculum

PFEW – Police Federation of England and Wales

PLT – Police Liaison Team

POPS - Public Order Public Safety

POPSA - Public Order Public Safety Advisors

PRT – Protest Removal Teams

PSU – Police Support Unit

SAG – Safety Advisory Group

SIB – Strategic Intelligence & Briefing team

SCTAP – Specialist and Counter Terrorist Armed Policing

SJC – Standing Joint Command

SPFA – Scottish Police Federation

Annex A - Framework of Principles for deployment of Mutual Aid officers

1. Rotas, Shift Patterns and Notification Periods

- 1.1** Mutual aid deployments should be for no more than nine operational days, including travel days.
- 1.2** Police Regulations shall be adhered to, with proper reference to Working Time Law and Health and Safety at Work provisions.
- 1.3** Shifts should be rostered as 8 hour tours of duty. ¹
- 1.4** Recognising the impact of 1.3 above on operational planning, a maximum of 4 hours pre-planned overtime may be factored into the rostered working day.
- 1.5** With regard to 1.4 above, the host force must take cognisance of Health and Safety Legislation relating to working time. The donor force must also take into account duty commitments of officers in their home force at either side of the deployment and work with the host force and NPoCC on a case-by-case basis where needed.
- 1.6** The host force must aim to have a shift pattern and their completed resourcing requests with NPoCC (via Mercury) for all disciplines no less than 4 calendar months from the start of deployments. This gives NPoCC and RICCs the ability to populate requests and notify officers of a change of shift pattern by the 3 month cut-off date as per regulations. ²
- 1.7** Duty time whilst deployed on mutual aid commences and finishes at the time the officers leave or return to their accommodation, not at a staging post or place of duty.

2. Rest Days

- 2.1** Rest Days as part of a shift pattern during a mutual aid deployment should be avoided.
- 2.2** In order to ensure adequate rest period is provided consideration can be given to commencing and finishing the mutual aid deployment on a rostered Rest Day and finishing the deployment

¹ Temporary rotas for the purposes of mutual aid will not have attracted full consultation and due process as required for any VSA agreement, therefore the starting point must be 8 hour shifts as per regulations.

² It is recognised that the intelligence picture and therefore resource requirements change and that requests may be amended and that officers / staff may be deployed at shorter notice on the lead up to the event (thus be paid or recompensed differently for cancelled rest days etc.) however the starting point must be a well-planned, timely and regulation compliant approach to resourcing.

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on a rest day (to be taken in the home force) prior to and following travel days). This decision is for the host force to make and must not be made by the donor force. 3

2.3 If, having considered the principles thus far in this document, there is no remaining option but to request officers for a period of time which necessitates building in rest days whilst out of force, the aim should be that these are true rest days (unless absolutely necessary and approved by the Gold Commander) and the officers will therefore not be subject to the provisions of the 'Away From Home Allowance' (AFHA) restrictions of being immediately available for deployment. 4

2.4 A consequence of 2.3 above is that officers will not be eligible for the nationally agreed AFHA payment (£50 or £80 currently) on the rest days. Host forces should instead consider exploring opportunities within regulations in respect of bonus payments (regulation 34), agree a recommendation through early consultation with Staff Associations, NPoCC and RMLs. The NMC will ultimately agree a consensus position and write to all donor forces recommending a consistent approach. 5

2.5 Should rest days need to be cancelled, police regulations must be followed in respect of recompense, based on the notification timeframes set out in regulations.

2.6 The use of 'shadow rotas' in donor force must not be used to attract payment for rest days.

2.7 Officers must not be paid overtime unless they are physically working and reporting for duty.

3. Allowances and Bonuses

3.1 It is best practice for host forces to engage at an early stage with NPoCC and other key stakeholders to agree a set of recommended allowances and bonus payments, within regulations, and publish these through the RICCs. These should include:

- Use of Targeted Variable Payment (TVP), for example for Inspecting and Superintending ranks
- Use of reg 34 Bonus Payments
- Application within Police Regulations of the Away From Home Allowance (AFHA)
- Host Force agreement, within Police Regulations, in respect of overtime payments
- Application of pre-determined allowances should an officer report sick or need to isolate during a deployment.

³ This allows the host force to legitimately build in the cost to the deployment, but also allows the officers a true rest day at home.

⁴ It must be noted however that host forces must have a clear policy in place, including financial and travel considerations, should no restrictions be placed on 'rest days' for officers in receipt of AFHA. Any travel home on these 'rest days' will in fact revert to this being a duty day. This is another reason rest days should be avoided mid-deployment.

⁵ Chief Constables are asked to note that whilst officers will not be paid on these rest days, the force will re-charge the host force at full mutual aid rate for each rest day. Therefore the adoption of a reasonable bonus payment attached to the whole deployment, cognisant of the overall impact of length of time away (not just the rest day) will not leave the donor force out of pocket. Good practice during COP26 saw a pro-rata payment of £100 per rest day paid by most forces and we consider that this is a good baseline on each occasion.

- 3.2** The NMC will seek to secure early agreement and national consistency with regards to the application of allowances with the RMLs.
- 3.3** A 'role not rank' based approach must be taken to the awarding of allowances and bonuses, recognising that rank does not change the personal and family impact on officers deployed.
- 3.4** NPoCC will work with host forces and RICCs to ensure that these agreements and learning are taken from event to event, in order to achieve long term consistency of approach.
- 3.5** Special Constabulary – forces will adopt a consistent approach to the payment of allowances to Special Constables deployed on mutual aid. ⁶

4. Inclusivity and Wellbeing

- 4.1** Inclusivity and Workforce Representation considerations must be threaded through the core of any operation, from the planning stage through to delivery and debrief.
- 4.2** Historically and understandably the approach often taken is to allocate duties to officers who are known to be keen to deploy for periods of out of force aid. Whilst pragmatically there is a place for this approach, we recommend that Chief Constables require Gold Commanders to ensure that local Planning Teams are exploring ways of including people with a variety of backgrounds, commitments and needs in these high-profile deployments. ⁷
- 4.3** Host forces must seek advice, through staff associations and other suitable advisors, in relation to ensuring that the personal, religious and cultural needs of all staff are factored into the planning of events. This is a non-negotiable position and reflects the diversity of our service and our communities. A key part of any peer review (discussed further on in this document) must be a focus on this aspect of planning.
- 4.4** The 'Blue Light Wellbeing Framework' provides a useful reference point for Gold Commanders and Planning Leads. Host forces are encouraged to engage with the National Police Wellbeing Service at www.oscarkilo.org during the planning stages of an event, where guidance and support (for example Wellbeing Vans) can be explored. Gold Commanders should ensure that welfare considerations are threaded through their Gold / Silver / Bronze meetings.
- 4.5** Host forces should consider the use of Wellbeing Impact Assessments and Equality Impact Assessments to assist with and shape their plans. Donor forces should consider their own return to force debrief plans, with particular focus on officer welfare and event experience.
- 4.6** Forces should ensure any staff exposed to traumatic events and / or physical harm have the right post incident support provided whilst on mutual aid and also ensure their home force Occupational Health unit is notified so that continued support can be offered post-deployment.

⁶ Of note work is ongoing through Operation Unity (CWG), NPoCC and NPCC Lead for Specials to achieve a national position on this. Chief Constables are asked to note this and to sign-up in principle to a national position, subject to NPCC lead DCC Debicki final recommendations post-CWG.

⁷ Research through NPOPS (Supt S Johnson) has shown that the nature of deployments (length, conflict with caring responsibilities, culture) plays a part in the failure to attract enough female officers to public order roles.

- 4.7** Sickness – Host forces must have a plan in place for the initial care of officers and staff who fall ill during a deployment. However, repatriation considerations remain the responsibility of the donor force. Plans must also include provision for officers and staff who need to return home for other welfare related reasons.
- 4.8** Accommodation provided must be approved by the Gold Commander and they must put steps in place to quality assure its suitability for mutual aid staff. Host forces must communicate the type of accommodation, room arrangements and meal provision arrangements as soon as far in advance of the deployment as possible.

5. Governance and Support – Implementing the Principles

- 5.1** Chief Constables are asked to promote these principles in their forces, and in particular ensure through their RMLs and Gold Commanders that the application of the principles is monitored during the planning stages of all mutual aid operations.
- 5.2** Host forces are encouraged to request peer review not only in relation to their operational plans, but following agreement of these principles a regular, supportive review of the application of the principles during the planning and deployment phases of all such operations.
- 5.3** NPoCC will develop a pool of ‘volunteers’ with relevant skills and experience (to include resourcing, staff associations, wellbeing, pay and regulations) equipping them with the ability to constructively and supportively review and advise on aspects of host force plans contained within this framework. Chief Constables are asked to actively support this ‘independent advisory’ approach both in the requesting of and the providing of such advisors.

6. Review and Continuous Learning

- 6.1** Each event provides new challenges. Debrief must include not only the operational element of the deployment, but also the application of principles within this framework. Learning, best practice and proposals to amend this framework will be passed to NPoCC for consideration by the NMC.
- 6.2** NPoCC will provide a central repository for access to debriefs, as well as a library of good practice and practical application of the principles. They will also facilitate contact between command and planning teams on request.
- 6.3** It is agreed across stakeholders consulted in the process of producing this document that further work should be considered in respect of how ‘fit for purpose’ some regulations and payment levels are, for example the AFHA regulation. NPoCC will ensure that feedback in these areas is captured and briefed to the NMC and NPCC for further consideration.