

SCOTTISH POLICE
AUTHORITY

Meeting	Audit Committee Public Session
Date	22 January 2018
Location	Pacific Quay, Glasgow
Title of Paper	SPA Whistleblowing Assurance Actions
Item Number	8.2
Presented By	John MacLean
Recommendation to Members	For Noting
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update in relation the following Audit Committee Actions in relation to whistleblowing assurance:

- 230817 – PAUDIT – 018: Internal Audit to provide both Police Scotland and SPA feedback on how other organisations report on Whistleblowing.
- 230817 – PAUDIT – 020: Provide a progress report with evidence of Metrix on SPA’s Whistleblowing Policy to the January Audit Committee.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 In April 2017 an update was provided to Audit Committee Members in relation to:

- The reporting of monitoring information;
- The policy review process; and,
- Training and Communication

1.2 Following this update the Chair of the Audit Committee sought further detail in relation to the metric used by Police Scotland and SPA in relation to Whistleblowing. As a result it was agreed that Internal Audit would meet with SPA and Police Scotland representatives to provide feedback on how other organisations report on whistleblowing.

2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

ENGAGEMENT WITH INTERNAL AUDIT

2.1 SPA and Police Scotland Representatives met with Scott Moncrieff on 27 September 2017, which resulted in the following outcomes:

- Scott Moncrieff carried out benchmarking and identified that there is such a variance between organisations that it would be best to discuss principles for monitoring;
- In principle it is important that a process is in place to distinguish between operational matters and whistleblowing in order that this can be reported;
- Advice was provided that annual summaries to the Audit Committee would be appropriate; and
- Advice was provided that this annual summary should include how many there had been, high level breakdown of types of issues raised, the lessons learned and any trends.

2.2 This summary has been provided to Internal Audit and it has been confirmed that this is a shared understanding of the outcomes from the meeting.

SPA WHISTLEBLOWING METRIC

- 2.3 In light of the advice from Scott Moncrieff it is recommended that the SPA report to the Audit Committee on an annual basis highlighting the number of whistleblowing concerns raised, the type of issues raised and any trends/lessons learned.

Categorisation of Concerns

- 2.4 Given the size of the SPA and the number of whistleblowing concerns raised to date it is difficult to develop a sophisticated high level list of whistleblowing categories. Therefore it is proposed that the categories outlined within the relevant legislation provide a good basis for defining categories, with recognition that suitability of these categories can be reviewed on a regular basis when attempts are made to use this list to categorise actual concerns that are raised. The proposed current list of categories are as follows:

- Criminal Offence
- Failure to Comply with Legal Obligation
- Miscarriage of Justice
- Endangering Health and Safety of Individual
- Damage to Environment
- Deliberate Concealment of information in relation to any of the above.

- 2.5 With regards to the proposed annual summary it is anticipated that more focus is likely to be placed on lessons learned rather than trends, however this will be fully dependent on the amount of concerns raised throughout the year.

PROPOSED TEMPLATE

2.6 The proposed template is as follows.

Reporting Year	No. Raised	Type(s) of Concerns Raised	Trends	Lessons Learned
2017/18				
2018/19				
2019/20				

2.7 In this current year there has only been one whistleblowing concern raised and in the event that the numbers are low it is proposed that annual reports are provided in the form of a qualitative written lessons learned report as opposed to a table. If this is agreed then a guide on the minimum number of concerns raised that would merit the need for a table would be helpful.

2.8 Internal Audit have reviewed the proposed template and offered an additional suggestion to include additional information which confirms the number of the concerns raised that were investigated in accordance with the whistle-blowing policy and procedures. The rationale being that this provides the opportunity to access if practice mirrors policy. This also provides the opportunity to outline any relevant rationale, impact and/or further action that may be required as a result or practice not following the policy. If members are supportive then this assessment can be included in the annual report to support the proposed table/lessons learned assessment.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no financial implications in this report.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this paper.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no further legal implications in this paper to those listed above.

6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no reputational implications associated with this paper.

7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no social implications associated with this paper.

8. COMMUNITY IMPACT

8.1 There are no community implications associated with this paper.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no environment implications associated with this paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to consider whether the proposal within this paper appropriately addresses the relevant SPA Whistleblowing Assurance Actions.

On the basis that the proposal of an annual summary is agreed by members, confirmation is sought as to which stage of the year this annual summary should be provided.