

SCOTTISH POLICE
AUTHORITY

Meeting	SPA Board Meeting Public Session
Date and Time	25 May at 13.00
Location	Golden Jubilee Conference Hotel
Title of Paper	Joint National Forensic Gateway Pilot – Update on Evaluation
Item Number	11.2
Presented By	Tom Nelson, SPA
Recommendation to Members	For Noting
Appendix Attached:	No

PURPOSE

To provide Board Members with an update on the progress of the Joint National Forensic Gateway Pilot.

1. BACKGROUND

A Joint National Forensic Gateway (JNFG) Pilot was undertaken between 24th October 2016 and 28th February 2017. The concept of the pilot was to introduce scientific evaluation and active case management into the JNFG, on the basis that this would provide enhanced forensic outcomes focussed on evidential value. This included the placement of dedicated Forensic Services staff (scientific and administrative) into the JNFG to enable them to evaluate and perform an up-front case assessment. During the pilot a range of different types of cases from a variety of relevant crime types and geographical regions were progressed through the JNFG.

At the outset of the pilot a set of key principles were established regarding the operation and purpose of the JNFG. Throughout the pilot an extensive set of data was collated relating to each submission from Police Scotland and COPFS and the value added through the Forensic Services Gateway. The following principles were agreed by all partners;

- ***Prioritisation***

To effectively prioritise new and ongoing Police Examination Requests (ERF) and COPFS Standard Forensic Instructions (SFI) to deliver efficiency in the management of examinations in accordance with threat, risk and harm and with the Criminal Justice process.

- ***Evidential Value***

To undertake scientific assessment of submissions to manage the complexity of business, delivering outcomes focussed on the evidential value of the request.

- ***Decision Making***

To make informed decisions based on relevant facts, data and information in accordance with respective organisational values.

- ***Active Case Management***

To engage with the investigating officer / instructing PF Depute to dynamically review approved submissions throughout the lifetime of the case, to ensure appropriate prioritisation is informed by other investigative or prosecution developments in the case.

- ***Business Outcomes***

Through effective Tasking and Coordination, monitor demand, including specific operations, reviewing and using all available levers to maximise

capacity, providing improved forensic science and contributing to an enhanced Criminal Justice outcome.

- **Best Value**

To strive to deliver Best Value investing in the people, processes and technological resources required to demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness.

A number of quantitative measures are currently being evaluated which include;

1. % of submissions amended, approved and not approved
2. % of productions approved vs. requested
3. % of submissions where the request has been enhanced administratively
4. % of submissions where the request has been enhanced scientifically
5. Average turnaround times for approval of submissions
6. Impact on the reduction in demand for any forensic services, in terms of total cases or analyses within cases

Data is in the process of being cross checked, where possible, across all partners to provide a full evaluation of the benefits experienced as a result of the pilot.

In addition a survey has been issued to key stakeholders within Police Scotland, COPFS and Forensic Services to assess more qualitative feedback as a result of the pilot. The closing date for this survey is 23rd May 2017.

The results of both the quantitative and qualitative evaluation will be combined into a collaborative report on the performance of the JNFG pilot with an associated recommendation. This report will be provided to the Forensic Management Advisory Group in August, following discussion and agreement from all partners on the benefits and issues identified.

Prior to the completion of this evaluation, the pilot processes are remaining in place within the JNFG, however this is subject to continuous review to ensure effective use of resource for all partners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members note the information presented in this update.