



Agenda Item  
4.6.2

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Policing Performance Committee</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>6 December 2023</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Video Conference</b>
<b>Title of Paper</b>	<b>Operational Use of Stop and Search Update: Stop and Search Public Facing Dashboard</b>
<b>Presented By</b>	<b>ACC David Duncan</b>
<b>Recommendation to Members</b>	<b>For Discussion</b>
<b>Appendix Attached</b>	<b>No</b>

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the ongoing work being conducted within the Demand and Productivity Unit to produce a Public Facing Dashboard containing stop and search data which will be accessed via the Police Scotland website.

Members are invited to discuss this paper.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In 2015 Police Scotland implemented a Stop Search Improvement Plan following the use of the tactic being subject to significant public debate as a consequence of extensive reviews, both internally and externally, specifically by the HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, Scottish Police Authority and the Independent Advisory Group.
- 1.2 In 2017, the Code of Practice was introduced ensuring the individuals rights remained at the centre of any decision made to conduct a stop and search. Furthermore since this date to ensure full transparency, Police Scotland publish all stop search data on their internet site on a quarterly basis for the public to access in an excel format. This has proved beneficial with the continued external scrutiny on the use of the tactic through Scottish Government, Scottish Police Authority and media outlets. Comparable to other forces across the country, Police Scotland have been progressive by publishing this data with the intention of improving public confidence on the tactic.
- 1.3 In 2023, following the employment of a data scientist, opportunities were sought to improve our data sharing presentation to ensure accessibility for all. Given the data already publicly available for stop and search, this subject matter was identified to create a dashboard prototype which was subsequently approved for progression to be uploaded to the Police Scotland website.

## **2. UPDATE**

- 2.1 An early duty for the newly appointed data scientist was to conduct a review of the stop and search page on the internet to ensure the dashboard compliments information already available. The intention of the dashboard is to present the data in an accessible format which contains various tabs allowing the user to select the data they wish to explore and filter it to suit their specific needs. The data can thereafter be downloaded as a 'csv' file. There are information buttons alongside the charts which contain further detail about the data source and definitions used or provide guidance on how to interpret the data.
- 2.2 As the data is populated from quarterly management reports it allows the user access to a wide variety of information from across the force and it can be filtered down to: number of searches, geographical areas, demographics (specifically age group, ethnic group or gender) as well as objects found and positive and negative searches.

- 2.3 In May 2023, the National Stop Search Unit (NSSU) was allowed access to the test site to review the database and provide any feedback for consideration. An update was thereafter provided to ACC Johnson through the Stop Search Mainstreaming and Assurance Group.
- 2.4 On 4 July 2023, the NSSU hosted an in person presentation and demonstration of the new dashboard at Dalmarnock to ACC Johnson, Scottish Government, Scottish Police Authority, Scottish Institute of Police Research, Corporate Communications, Analysis and Performance Unit and divisional stop and search SPOCs.
- 2.5 The presentation generated a positive discussion on the dashboard with valuable feedback gained to make further amendments to the data filters. Additionally the 'notes' section was to be extended to provide further explanations on the categories, along with added caveats to highlight the self-defined ethnic groups are based on 2011 Census data.
- 2.6 Following these updates, on 10 October 2023 a further presentation was held for ACC Johnson, Corporate Communications and the Scottish Police Authority which resulted in further discussions and amendments to the dashboard.
- 2.7 This included adding the compliance rates for the Code of Practice, further search filters for age groups, objects found during a positive search and further caveats on self-identification for recording a search.
- 2.8 ACC Johnson has requested the dashboard is presented to the Independent Advisory Group through PPCW's Equality and Diversity colleagues. The next scheduled National Independent Strategic Advisory Group (NISAG) is scheduled to take place in December 2023 and it is the intention of NSSU to present the dashboard and provide a briefing paper for the members to review and discuss.
- 2.9 It was further requested that an update on the dashboard was provided at the SPA Policing and Performance Committee on 6 December 2023 for awareness and comment prior to establishing a confirmed 'Go Live' date on the Police Scotland website.

### **3. DATA INTERPRETATION**

- 3.1 When accessing data from the dashboard it is important to note that filtering locations to smaller geographical areas, especially when combined with filters for certain demographic groups and time

periods, can lead to a very small number of stop and searches. This can potentially make the figures presented by the dashboard highly variable and therefore less informative.

- 3.2 The ethnic group field in the database classifies the person according to their own perceived ethnic group and cultural background. This information is required to obtain an accurate reflection of stop and search activity and to help improve ethnic monitoring, tackle discriminatory practices and promote effective use of the tactic. It is important to note that the trends for groups with small populations should be interpreted with caution as they will be subject to greater variability due to small numbers. Searches are reviewed from a qualitative perspective by local policing management to ensure compliance with the code of practice.
- 3.3 It is important to consider that ethnic group rates per 10,000 population have been calculated using the 2011 Scottish Census figures. Ethnic minority individuals are less likely to reveal their ethnicity in the Census. These two factors may impact on the ethnic group rates. As data from the Scottish Census becomes available, hopefully in 2024, and the dashboard will be updated to reflect any revised statistics. This will improve the accuracy of the rates per 10,000 population calculations when compared to the 2011 census data.
- 3.4 The stop and search Code of Practice defined gender as, "In law, the gender (and accordingly the sex) of an individual as their gender as registered at birth unless they have been issued with a Gender Recognition Certificate under the Gender Recognition Act 2004, in which case the person's gender is their acquired gender. This means that if the acquired gender is male gender, the person's sex becomes that of a man and, if it is the female gender, the person's sex becomes that of a woman and they must be treated as their acquired gender." More information can be found within Annex B of the Code of Practise.
- 3.5 In conclusion the addition of the dashboard to the already publicly available data on stop and search will further enhance the transparency on the use of the tactic within Police Scotland, therefore ensuring public trust and confidence.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications in this report.

**5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no personnel implications in this report.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no legal implications in this report.

**7. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The use of the stop and search tactic undoubtedly requires robust governance and scrutiny, without which the reputation of Police Scotland could be questioned. The governance, scrutiny and the transparency with which data is published provides confidence that our processes are both necessary and effective.

**8. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no social implications in this report.

**9. COMMUNITY IMPACT**

9.1 There are no community implications in this report.

**10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Police Scotland recognises the sensitivity around the use of the stop and search tactic and closely monitors proportionality amongst age, gender and ethnicity through robust governance measures.

**11. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no environmental implications in this report.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are invited to discuss this paper.