

A UNITED EMERGENCY SERVICE

SHARED SERVICES AND
ESTATES OPTIONS FOR
THE METROPOLITAN
POLICE SERVICE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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INTRODUCTION

We need to challenge the way we think about the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) estates. If much of our police property is "quite literally unfit for purpose in the 21st century"¹ then we need to think boldly and creatively about how the new estates will be fit for purpose, not just now, but in the future. This document does this by looking at whether the MPS should be sharing locations with other emergency services – the London Fire Brigade, hospitals and the London Ambulance Service – to facilitate joined up working to create a more synchronised, vigorous service.

This report will first look at what shared estates projects between emergency services are being developed around the UK. The national examples investigated in this document suggest that London is trailing behind several other UK forces in terms of the shared estates agenda. As a major global city where robust resilience is paramount, London needs to start leading on this front. This document will look at what co-locations are being developed in London and investigate the feasibility and benefits of implementing shared estates models in London.

BACKGROUND

The responsibility of the Metropolitan Police Service's estates now falls under the remit of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). The Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime announced his intention to look more creatively into how to manage the Metropolitan Police Service's estates. His aim – to reduce costs but increase public access to the police.

In response, as Chairman of London Fire and Emergency Service (LFEPA) and as a member of the Police and Crime Committee, I suggested that concerns about MOPAC's plans were based around retaining public-facing community access buildings that are operational 24/7. I therefore, suggested that MOPAC look at the broader provision of 24/7 public access buildings in London and challenge bureaucratic barriers that are in the way of collaborative work. I believe there should be more co-ordination between all emergency services with 24/7 real estates² and it is these suggestions that I have investigated in this document.



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1. Kit Malthouse, THE MPA/MPS Estates STRATEGY, 2010-2014, <http://www.policeauthority.org/Metropolitan/downloads/committees/finres/101021-07-appendix01.pdf>

2. Page 33 and 34, Transcript, 5 July 2012, Police and Crime Committee

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SHARED ESTATES

In future, London's emergency services must share their bases. This will ensure there is better co-ordination and information-sharing between them. It will also make them more efficient and stop us from wasting tax payers' money on underused police and fire stations, ambulance estates and SNT bases across London, as is currently the case.

SINGLE PROPERTY UNIT

MOPAC now has responsibility for the MPS estates. Therefore, they will be offered a unique opportunity to look at the property portfolio with a fresh pair of eyes. They must, first and foremost, aim to look at this portfolio, not in isolation, but with 'eyes' from all of the emergency services.

A GLA 'single property unit' will help to create this vision. The estates plans of all key London emergency services should not be seen, as individual projects, but should automatically all be co-ordinated and integrated to ensure London has the first class, synchronised emergency services it requires.

JOINED UP EMERGENCY SERVICES

Joined up working was initiated highly effectively during the Olympics. This 'Common Situation Awareness' work should be reviewed and taken forward as a standard way of working for the future, not as an exception.

There have been numerous references to the weaknesses in the communication between emergency services following the 7/7 bombing and the disorder in August 2011. London must not face this criticism again. London emergency services need to embrace sharing their properties as the norm so that improved communication and co-ordination between emergency services is a prerequisite aim within any estates planning project.

PROPERTY PLANS

- Across the UK, SNT bases have been successfully located in hospitals and fire stations, facilitating more joined up working and improving the safety of those on the premises. This must happen in London as SNT base leases end.
- Fire stations and front counter police stations can and would also benefit similarly from being situated together in the future.
- We should look into whether a shared call and command centre could be created between the emergency services. This would encourage vital solid co-ordination between services during any future emergency situation in London by forcing Gold and Silver commands to work more closely with each other.
- We need a new configuration of resources. Sharing communications technology and fuel contracts between services are just two examples touched upon in this report.
- As emergency services work more closely together other efficiencies will also come to light. For example, is there a case to merge the Marine Policing Unit and fire boat service?



FEEDBACK

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