

Understanding and using data speaker notes

Slide 1: Welcome and introductions

My name is Melissa Pepper and I am a research analyst here at MOPAC. I work in the Community Engagement Team with James and Natasha and work closely with your MOPAC borough contacts. I'm here today to talk to you about the data pack that is provided to SNBs. I should say up front - I'm not a data expert and I certainly do not know all of the answers (although I will find out and come back to you if I don't know the answer). I've learnt a lot about the type of data provided to you as the process of developing SNBs has gone along. I know a little bit about data, a little bit about SNBs and an awful lot about being presented with lots of numbers and not really knowing where to start! Hopefully this puts me in good stead to talk to you today. I've got a fantastic wingman with me today who will help me to answer questions. David Kemp is a higher business analyst in the MPS and has been working with and analysing MPS data for many years. What he doesn't know probably isn't worth knowing so we're in good hands.

Slide 2: Today's session

A quick rundown of what we're going to cover today:

- Using data as part of your evidence base
- Some tips and pointers when thinking about your data
- What's inside the SNB pack
- A bit more about the data included, how you can use it, what it can say, what it can't say

I'm going to talk about the data that is currently included in the pack but will also talk about how to approach data in general. The data that is in the pack and the way it is currently presented may change in the future. We are exploring ways to make more up to date, quick and easily accessible data available to you. For the time being though, we have this pack which is presented in a word document.

I should say here that it isn't my job to tell you what each individual piece of data means or what you should say about it. My role is to give you a few tips and tools to get you started in your conversations. You will see that the data in the pack is largely focused around recorded crime and ASB, and indications of treatment – that is, confidence, satisfaction, complaints, stop and search and Independent Custody Visits. This focus aligns with what we know from the research about good policing and the type of policing that communities value and makes them feel confident. That is policing that tackles crime and ASB, is fair and includes chances for the public to engage with the police and influence matters in their local area. I'll speak a bit more about the MPS confidence model later but it's useful to bear these things in mind when you are starting your conversations – tackling crime and ASB, fair treatment and opportunities to engage with the police and influence the debate. By being a member of your SNB you are engaging – you can also encourage and facilitate further engagement through your work.

So, here we go...

Slide 3 Starting from the evidence base

SNBs have many functions, some of which are helped by having a bit of evidence to understand what's going on.

This data pack is not a factual account of absolutely everything going on in your borough. It isn't the complete story. It is a reflection of some of the things that the police do and some of the things that the public do. It's not perfect. It's not fool proof but it's a good place to start your conversations from the evidence base.

BUT is only the start of the story - it is only a snap shot of some very high level data. Together with your local police, partners and community members - you can start to develop the story. For example, does what you see in the data reflect how you and your community feel on the ground?

Slide 4: Thinking about data

There are many factors that limit an understanding of the 'true' picture of crime, ASB, complaints or any other data set you look at. This can't be helped - data has caveats. However, knowing about those caveats helps to make your evidence base as useful as possible.

There are a few things that it's always worthwhile considering when you look at any data. This list is not exhaustive but there are a few of them here:

- Title, time period, measurement, source of data - what are you actually looking at and where did it come from?
- Survey methodologies - how are opinions and views collected?
- Definitions
- Whether differences or changes in data are random variations or 'true' differences
- The effect of seasonality - what happens in summer and at Christmas may be different to the rest of the year
- Correlation or causation - are things happening at the same time by coincidence or because one is genuinely causing the other?
- Understand when you can and can't make robust causal statements – you may need additional data and analysis to ascertain whether there is a relationship between changes.
- Whether good performance in one area is masking different performance in another area

And all the while thinking about how this data reflects what you, your neighbours and wider community think and feel on the ground, and working with officers and partners to understand any specific operations or initiatives that may be having an impact. Data can sometimes oversimplify things - it is important to understand the basis of the data through the things that are actually happening in your borough and sometimes wider structural or organisational changes in the MPS and other partners.

As you can see - it's more than just a page of numbers but it is only a page of numbers until you bring it alive with this type of understanding and application of local knowledge.

Slide 5: The SNB data pack - what's inside

So this is what the SNB data pack currently includes and this has been developed to reflect the data mentioned in the SNB guidance:

Crime/ASB

- Police recorded crime data
- Police recorded ASB data

Fair treatment/engagement

- Confidence
- Satisfaction
- Complaints against borough officers
- Some stop and search data
- Information from your local ICVs

As I mentioned earlier, the way the pack looks at the moment and the data that is included is not set in stone. We are always exploring new ways for you to access data and new data content. This is an iterative process and things will change along the way.

Slide 6: Recorded crime - 2 main sources

There are 2 main national sources that crime data comes from - the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) which is a face to face household survey asking people about their experiences of crime over the last 12 months, and police recorded crime data.

Your data pack only includes police recorded crime data only - CSEW data doesn't go down any lower than force level - but I thought it would be useful to highlight these main sources to you as you will often hear them mentioned in the media.

Slide 7: Police recorded crime

So our main source of borough crime data is police recorded crime data. As I said earlier - first things first when looking at data - title, time period, measurement, source. So this is MPS recorded crime data on borough X for the rolling 12 months compared to the same period the previous year and the source of this data is the MPS. We use rolling 12 month data to the end of the most recent month available as this provides us with more robust information which is less likely to be affected by seasonality or random trends. You may find that your borough police use more up to date data (to the most recent day sometimes) and this is important for operational purposes but for monitoring purposes, longer term trends are more reliable. We have absolute numbers and percentage change at borough level together with percentage change at MPS level for comparison. The table uses a very crude colour coding system - green is down and red is up. Nothing more complex than that. I'll speak a bit more about this later, but green doesn't automatically mean 'good' and red 'bad' - there are some crime types that we want communities to become more confident to report and this may be reflected in recorded figures. Don't just rely on the colours- use this as your starting point but look at the numbers. A volume change in a very small number can look like a huge percentage change - for example on the data we can see a 100% increase in homicide.

The data pack includes definitions for all of the categories included in the table (some of which you have to go to the Home Office Counting Rules to access).

The data shows MOPAC 7 (or sometimes you might hear these called 'key' or 'neighbourhood' crimes.). These are the crime types for which the MOPAC Police and Crime plans sets out the 20:20:20 Challenge - to see a reduction in these crime types across London of 20%. These 7 crime types have been selected because:

- They are high volume (they make up around half of all notifiable offences)
- They have a sizeable impact on Londoners and
- They are clearly understood by the public

These aren't the only crime areas that MOPAC are committed to addressing and the data below sets out some of the other priority areas. Some of them are a breakdown of the MOPAC 7 crimes (e.g. Robbery/burglary so you can keep an eye on composite categories) and some of them are completely different, for example sexual offences, domestic violence and hate crime. MOPAC is committed to tackling these offence types however did not want to include them in the offence reduction 'basket' as some of these areas are often under reported and are affected by repeat victimisation and both the MPS and MOPAC want to encourage reporting in these areas. This brings me neatly on to some of the caveats of recorded crime data.

Recorded crime data is a reflection of what comes to the attention of the police (either through reports from the public or police work) and is recorded by the police - nothing more, nothing less. This can be a reflection of police activity and the public's decisions to report.

The general principle in the NCRS is that where a victim makes a report of crime it will be recorded where there is no credible evidence to the contrary. However there are many reasons why some crimes don't come to the attention of the police, and some crime types are significantly less reported than others.

For example, some crimes have no victim or witnesses and don't come to the attention of the police through their day to day work so no one will ever know they've been committed.

The relationship between the victim and offender (for example crimes committed by partners or parents), might make offences less likely to be reported to police than those offences committed by strangers.

The perceived seriousness of an offence might determine the likelihood of a particular incident being reported.

The status of the victim or witness may also reflect likelihood to report. If a person has been the subject of police attention for other reasons, they may not wish to draw further attention to them self by reporting, or they may feel that they won't be taken seriously.

Furthermore, crime and methods of offending are changing all the time - particularly with technological and online developments. Sometimes the law enforcement side can't keep up as quickly as they'd like to so offences may be committed that aren't even classified as offences yet.

These are just a few reasons why a crime might not appear in recorded crime data.

These characteristics result in some crimes having higher reporting rates than others. Offences resulting in death or serious injury, or those that require reporting to police for insurance claims (stolen motor vehicle or break and enter of a residential premise) are likely to have higher reporting rates than offences where the victim knows the offender (sexual assault and domestic violence, for example).

Academics argue that police recorded crime data only represents 'the tip of the ice berg'. Some argue that statistics in general are socially constructed - the result of a complex decision making process between the public, police and other partners.

However, we work with what we've got and this is part of what we've got - this table does not include all crime types recorded by the police (I will tell you a bit more about other crime data sources later) - and it's always important to bear these caveats in mind, understand that this only represents part of the story and how important it is to use other sources of information to build up a picture.

Slide 8: Police recorded anti-social behaviour (ASB)

The pack presents borough and force level ASB data. The bars refer to the borough and the line to the MPS allowing you a bit of a comparator.

ASB data was defined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. An accurate picture of ASB is incredibly difficult to capture. The data in the SNB packs includes calls recorded on the MPS Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) or Contact Handling (CHS) systems excluding duplicate reports. It does not include ASB incidents reported elsewhere - and ASB can be reported via a variety of channels including Safer Neighbourhood Teams, local authorities or Registered Social Landlords. These are not captured in the police recorded ASB in this chart.

A review by HMIC in 2012 raised some concerns about how ASB incidents are recorded (generally - not just by the MPS). These included:

- Some incidents recorded as ASB should have been recorded as notifiable offences
- There is poor identification of repeat, vulnerable and intimidated victims
- Some duplication of occurrences of singular ASB incidents where multiple calls have been made
- Some discrepancies in how forces categorise incidents

Furthermore, reports of ASB are likely to suffer from considerable under reporting and this might be linked to different tolerance levels in different areas. Another difficult data set to fathom! However, as I said before - this is the start of the conversation. Your borough officers, partners and community members can add to this picture.

Slide 9: Understanding survey data

Recorded data such as crime and ASB isn't the only source of information of what is going on in your borough. Surveys are used to understand people's views or opinions and, particularly in the crime and policing field, to measure public confidence, satisfaction, identify priorities and develop new initiatives.

But what if the people you survey are not representative of the public or what if the differences between answers given are by chance rather than real differences?

This is where a robust survey methodology is required. A robust survey (amongst other things) is one that is ethical, has well designed, clear questions and adopts a random sampling approach which means that everyone has an equal chance of being selected to take part.

When a survey is properly designed and adopts a random sampling approach it is possible to make inferences about the population as a whole by calculating confidence intervals. A confidence interval is an indicator of uncertainty - the extent to which the survey estimates are likely to differ from the true population. So you might see a confidence interval of plus or minus 5% - in layman's terms this pretty much means 'if we spoke to absolutely everyone they would say about the same thing as the sample we did speak to - give or take 5%'

There are three main surveys that the MPS and MOPAC use to explore people's opinions (all of which are very robust) the CSEW, the Public Attitude Survey (PAS) and the User Satisfaction Survey (USS). The CSEW doesn't go down to borough level (only force level) but the PAS and USS does. I should say here that the MOPAC 20:20:20 challenge target to boost confidence by 20% is based on the CSEW to allow national comparison, however at force level we use the PAS. Both the CSEW and PAS ask exactly the same question around confidence.

Slides 10 & 11: Public Attitude Survey (PAS) & User Satisfaction Survey (USS)

The PAS is a face-to-face survey of 12,800 randomly selected Londoners per year, approximately 400 per borough. At force level the confidence intervals are plus or minus 1% and at borough level (depending on the question) between plus or minus 4 & 6%.

The USS is a telephone survey of 16,500 randomly selected victims of burglary, violent crime, vehicle crime and racially motivated crime in the MPS area. Confidence intervals are around plus or minus 4% (depending on the question) at borough level.

Slide 12: Measuring overall confidence and satisfaction

Both surveys have a number of questions in them however there is a key question in each that we use to measure overall confidence and overall satisfaction.

Confidence in borough policing is measured via the percentage of respondents answering 'excellent' or 'good' to the question in the PAS 'Taking everything into account how good a job do you think the police in this area are doing?'

Satisfaction in borough policing is measured via the percentage of respondents answering 'completely', 'very' or 'fairly' to the question in the USS 'Taking the whole experience into account, are you satisfied, dissatisfied or neither with the service provided by the police in this case?'

So the confidence measure explores views of the police more generally while the satisfaction measure asks about a specific contact with the police.

The SNB data pack includes a series of graphs showing direction of travel for both of these measures and the four composite parts of the satisfaction measure – satisfaction with contact, treatment, actions, and follow up.

Slide 13: What drives confidence?

The MPS has carried out a lot of analysis of the PAS to understand what drives confidence in policing. They have identified four key drivers – effectiveness in dealing with crime, engagement with the community, fair treatment and alleviating local ASB. Of these four drivers, fair treatment and engagement with the community are the strongest. There is lots of wider academic research that supports this suggesting that if the police treat people fairly, demonstrate that they hold similar morals and values as the community and give people a say in policing in their area, people are more confident in their police, more likely to see their authority as legitimate and more likely to cooperate with the law and comply with the police.

MOPAC and wider GLA analysts are exploring new ways of making confidence and other data sets available to you at local neighbourhood level. We are in the process of developing an online interactive tool that will allow you to view confidence, PAS and other data at neighbourhood level and compare this to performance in other neighbourhoods similar to yours on the basis of a variety of socio-demographic data. This will hopefully be coming soon and we'll keep you updated on this.

Slide 14: Complaints against officers/staff

Complaints data is also an indication of views of fair treatment by the police and this is included in the SNB data pack. The data included is taken from a wider report that the MPS put on their website. We have selected some key measures from that report for the SNB data pack, however you can look at the full report if you are interested in getting hold of more data.

In the SNB pack we include the volume of allegations, allegations per 100 workforce (this normalizes the data and makes comparisons between borough more accurate), the type of allegations and allegation outcomes. The pack includes definitions of the different allegation types and outcomes.

When thinking about this data it is important to think about what is perhaps going on behind trends – does an increase in complaints reflect a real increase or increased confidence in the community to report or the accessibility of the complaints system? These are all things that we would encourage you to explore further.

Slides 15 to 19: Stop and search

Stop and search is a highly intrusive policing tactic and a key encounter when fair treatment is very much put to the test. The MPS produce a monthly report including various cuts of S&S data called the stops and searches monitoring mechanism. This is updated monthly on the MPS website. There is a report for the MPS overall and one for each borough. You may or may not have your borough stop and search community monitoring lead on your SNB. These people are the experts on this data and wider picture of S&S in your area. The SNB pack just includes a snapshot of S&S data. The full MPS S&S monitoring mechanism is available on the MPS website at this link. There are also a whole heap of other documents on here covering the policies and the procedures that the MPS use around stop and search.

The data we have in here includes the volume of stops and searches and stops and accounts and the disproportionality rate of people searched – that is the difference in the number of searches conducted on different ethnic groups relative to their respective population bases. There is also a quick month snapshot of search volumes, arrest rate, % of weapons searches and % of key or MOPAC 7 crime searches.

Slide 20: Independent Custody Visitors

The final set of information included which also gives some indication of fair treatment by the police is ICV. ICVs are members of the community who volunteer to visit police stations unannounced to check on the treatment and welfare of people held in police custody. Your pack includes details of recent visit, the number of detainees spoken to, the ICVs observation and any issues raised.

Slides 21 & 22: Further information

As I said earlier, the information in your data packs is just part of the picture. There are a multitude of other sources you can access data from – here are just a few. Some of these are crime and policing specific and others are focus on wider socio-demographic issues.

Slide 23: Engaging with your evidence, engaging with your police

As I've said throughout this presentation, the data in this pack and indeed data in general is just the start of the conversation. It's just part of the picture. It's part of your role as an SNB member to get underneath this data, explore the wider evidence base and to triangulate the numbers with more qualitative information from your community, local police and partners about what is happening on the ground. We know that tackling crime and ASB, fair treatment and engagement is what matters to people – use this to frame your thinking and discussions at your SNB meetings. Finally, I would really encourage you to just embrace the data, embrace the evidence, get stuck in to it all and paint the wider picture. The numbers tell you a bit about what is recorded and a bit about what a sample of people think. You know your boroughs - they are the places you live, work and socialise. Use this fantastic knowledge to bring these numbers alive, engage with your officers and encourage others to do so.