

Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey – Decision Making Record

Report Title: Enhanced Vetting and Training for Independent Custody Visitors to Visit Terrorist and Counter Terrorist Detainees in Surrey

Decision number: 035/2013

Author and Job Role: Nicola Hall – ICV Scheme Manager

Protective Marking: Not Restricted

Executive Summary:

The Code of Practice on Custody Visiting, March 2013 includes detail for the selection and enhanced vetting and training of Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) who will be required to visit Terrorist and Counter Terrorist (TACT) detainees held in police custody. The PCC is required to 'have regard' to these Codes when establishing his local ICV Scheme. Only visitors with enhanced levels of vetting and training would be permitted to visit TACT detainees. These visits would therefore have to be made by special arrangement when custody notified the ICV Scheme Manager that a TACT detainee was being held in custody

In the past 10 years, Surrey Police advise there have been eight TACT arrests, only four of which resulted in admission to a custody suite (2x2007, 1x2008 and 1x2009); the others being de-arrested and not taken into custody. The detail provided suggests three of these detainees spent less than 5.5 hours at a police station before being de-arrested whilst the other detainee was held for 22 hours but was de-arrested for TACT sometime during the course of this period (archived records make it hard to be sure when).

Custody Visitors are volunteers who go into all custody suites to check on the welfare of detainees and comment on the conditions in which they are held. Operating on a rota system, an ICV would expect to go into custody every 4-6 weeks for an average of 1.5 hours. The Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) has produced training material covering this area suitable for training any ICVs who are prepared to accept this level of responsibility.

Surrey does not have a terrorist detention facility within its boundaries so in all likelihood, TACT detainees arrested here will initially be sent to Staines custody suite following the closure of Woking in November 2013. If they are held for any significant period of time, they would likely be transferred to a specialised centre out of county.

The historical evidence suggests that any ICV training in this area is likely to be forgotten before it is ever implemented due to the very low number of detainees and the relatively small amount of time ICVs spend visiting police custody. Additionally, the short period of detention in three of the historical cases, means that practically it would have been very difficult to organise an ICV visit to these detainees.

Recommendation

- No action is taken to enhance the vetting or training of any ICVs currently.
- The situation is monitored by the ICV Scheme Manager and the Staines Custody Inspector and reviewed if the numbers of TACT detainees or general situation around their detention changes.

Police and Crime Commissioner Approval

I approve the recommendation(s):

Signature: 

Date: 17th September 2013

All decisions must be added to the decision register.

Areas of consideration

Consultation

The ICV Scheme Manager has used discussions with members of Custody and Criminal Justice and Special Branch to inform this paper

Financial implications

No implications.

Legal

None

Equality and Diversity and Human Rights

TACT detainees held in Surrey custody suites would not have the possibility of an ICV visit to monitor their welfare and the conditions in which they were being held.