

Greater Manchester Police signs multi-million pound contract to digitise interview recordings

26 April 2013: Greater Manchester Police has selected Sopra Steria for a £3 million (€3.5 million) digital interview recording managed services deal. Part of a wider framework deal worth up to £13m (€15m), the contract will transform the way that interviews are being processed and accessible everywhere by officers, saving valuable time spent on management and administration in addition to considerable cost and efficiency savings.

Sopra Steria, a leading provider of IT-enabled business services, announces the signing of a five year contract with Greater Manchester Police for a digital interview recording managed service. The £3 million (€ 3.5 million) agreement will help reduce the large quantity of physical tape recordings built up by the force and will result in considerable cost and efficiency savings. The agreement forms part of a wider framework, potentially worth up to £13 million (€15 million), from which forces around the country can buy directly.

Historically, forces have used compact cassettes to record interviews. Greater Manchester Police has around one million tape recordings currently in storage. These recordings require constant management and administration, draining valuable resources which could be better utilised elsewhere.

Under the agreement with Sopra Steria, Greater Manchester Police will have equipment installed in custody, voluntary attendance and witness interview rooms, enabling the digital recording of all evidence provided by witnesses and suspects. Portable and handheld recorders will also be provided to support the recording of statements outside of the Greater Manchester Police premises. The digital recordings will be stored in a central repository, allowing officers to access content from wherever they are based in the region. This new functionality will significantly reduce time wasted by officers who currently have to travel to hear recordings taken elsewhere. Legal representatives and other authorised parties will also have access to recordings via a secure portal, reducing costs further by removing the need to issue interviews on physical media.

Under the agreement, Sopra Steria will provide Digital Interview Recording as a managed service to Greater Manchester Police, taking responsibility for the design, build and operation of a robust, high availability networked system, as well as overall project and service management. Sopra Steria will work alongside Reliance High Tech, who is responsible for the design and installation of the interview room equipment as well as Indico Systems, providers of the system that manages the recordings. The partnership will ensure that Greater Manchester Police has access to reliable, state of the art technology to meet its ongoing interview needs whilst benefiting from cost and efficiency savings.

John Torrie, CEO, Sopra Steria UK commented: *"We are excited to be working with Greater Manchester Police to digitise all its future interview recordings; helping modernise the force. With budgets under increasing pressure, forces have to examine every area of their operations in order to identify efficiency savings and the recording of interviews is no exception. As a result of this contract Greater Manchester Police will see considerable benefits in this area for years to come."*

Chief Superintendent Mary Doyle at Greater Manchester Police commented: *“The agreement with Sopra Steria, Reliance High Tech and Indico will ensure that our officers can continue to follow best practice in gathering evidence through interviews. The agreement will remove our dependence on obsolete tape technology and provide us with higher quality, more reliable interview recording technology, adhering to Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) and Achieving Best Evidence guidance. This will maintain and improve the quality of evidence provided to courts whilst costs are saved through the replacement of physical media. Delivered by Sopra Steria and its partners, this service is an important step in the continued modernisation of Greater Manchester Police.”*

Contacts

Sopra Steria: Catriona McCallum, catriona.mccallum@soprasteria.com

Agency: Maureen Conlon, +44 (0)20 7300 6206, maureen.conlon@bm.com