

THOUGHT  
LEADERSHIP

# A new perspective on Police Contact Management



## Fully integrated, end-to-end contact management, shaped around the needs of the public is highly achievable for UK policing, says John Torrie, Chief Executive Officer, Sopra Steria UK.

In today's 24/7 society consumers are used to getting what they want, when they want it. But how does this manifest itself in modern policing? Last year's election of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in England and Wales raised the level of public expectations. Subsequently, one area under increasing scrutiny is responsive contact management, shaped around the needs of the public.



Policing has always had a strong ethic of local public service delivery and I believe that adopting a similar rigorous approach to the management of all public contact to that which has long been in place for 999 contacts will reap dividends. Logging and tracking all interactions with the force will have some profound effects, not least an improvement in public perception, confidence and satisfaction.

I firmly believe that by more 'joined up' service delivery through the integration of contact and incident management, forces will achieve improvements in these three areas. Perception will be based on results and the visibility of officers out in the community; public confidence will come from instilling the belief that the police are doing what is expected; and improving the way that all contacts between the public and the police are handled will increase satisfaction levels.

Joined up policing isn't a new concept. I say this from first-hand experience of our work in police Control Rooms. Our STORM Command and Control solution has been linking the logging of incidents with officer dispatch, resourcing and information on the frontline in a fully joined up fashion for many years. But the concept of joined up policing has moved on in response to changing public attitudes as well as through the localism agenda with its move towards greater community engagement.

### Multiple channels, multiple contacts

It is no longer just about an integrated approach to managing incidents; it is about providing a joined up and consistent approach to all public contact across the force, no matter what channel of interaction. And on this point about channels, modern policing has to align itself with the multi-channel world in which the public conducts its everyday life.

Online shopping, mobile payments and social media have led to a change in attitude, especially amongst young people. People expect to be able to interact with their service providers how and when they want and that includes their contact with the police. Are you equipped to manage this change in attitude? Are you able to provide a consistent response, whether it's on-line, via phone or at the front-desk? Because that consistency is what it's all about.

A member of the public who's rung 101 with a complaint about vandalism now expects you to know who they are and what their complaint was about if they happen to pop into the station for an update or call from a mobile in their lunch break.

They want the confidence that they'll get the same answer whoever they speak to and by whatever channel. They also don't expect to have to repeat their issue afresh every time they make contact. They'd be delighted if, by viewing just one screen, you could tell them that a number of their neighbours have made similar complaints and the local Neighbourhood Policing Team has added the road to their list of target areas.

Many forces aren't currently able to deliver such a holistic view of contacts, but in the world of joined up policing this will all have to change. If repeat contact has not been recorded, or is handled and ends badly, force reputations will be put on the line.

So how can we make change happen and what benefit will it bring both to force efficiency and public satisfaction?

### Enabling technology

Let's look first at the 'how'. As you'd expect, this is something Sopra Steria has been discussing in detail with forces across the UK and Europe and our solution is built on technology enablement. We're already supporting many forces with Control Room Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) through our STORM solution. But what if we could build on this to allow forces to link information streams beyond the Control Room, to record every customer contact and build a complete picture of the person or incident being handled, as we've described with our 101 caller above?

In the private sector this customer knowledge is a crucial differentiator in highly competitive markets, such as retail and banking. Here, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) technology has been proving its worth for many years. In policing, however, fewer than a third of forces use CRM as part of their contact solution. We've forged a partnership with APD to deliver this customer insight to forces in a fully integrated, end-to-end contact management solution.



---

SmartContact® allows forces to seamlessly manage interactions with the public, from the first call, social media contact, or station visit, through every subsequent point of contact.

---

#### **We've called this 'SmartContact®' because that's precisely what it is.**

It gives you the compelling Command and Control capability of STORM, along with APD's CORTEX Communications Management solution that helps Control Room staff manage radio calls. Importantly, SmartContact® also features APD's ASPIRE CRM solution that logs all interactions, both in the Control Room and beyond.

SmartContact® gives forces the ability to integrate contact management, incident management and communications management functions in a single platform. Forces can configure its appearance and operation in a way that best suits their organisation and the varied users of different functions.

#### **Where possible 'add on'**

"How can we achieve this within our current budgetary constraints," I hear you ask. Our close relationship with forces across the UK means that we're very aware of the financial pressures you are under. SmartContact® will allow a force to build on existing STORM and other contact centre investments, rather than having to start procuring a new solution from scratch. You can maximise existing investments by, where possible, upgrading what you have, from partners you already trust. Forces needing a wider investment in contact management can be confident that our combined track record has enabled us to, firstly, create a new, highly functional, but also very cost effective proposition; and, secondly, that Sopra Steria has the resources and experience of implementing, integrated, force-wide solutions which will ensure your solution is right for you from the word go.

Sopra Steria has been working with APD for over a decade and Steve Denison APD Managing Director, agrees our partnership for SmartContact® will enable forces to deliver cost savings to help address their budgetary constraints whilst also providing significant operational and customer service improvements.

#### **Best practice**

So what will this new world of integrated contact management look like? Taking social media as an example, a force tweet asking for information about a fight outside a nightclub the previous evening might be responded to by a student who witnessed the incident. The tweet could provide some additional identification details about one of the people involved. A member of staff monitoring the incoming replies will be able to research the details of the incident, make a connection with a nominal recorded against the incident and then pass details to the officer dealing with the investigation. They can then directly message the student to thank them for their information and confirm it has been of use to the investigation.

With all interactions recorded and linked in a single platform, a force will be able to make follow-up calls to let people know the status of their contact. They will be able to determine the preferred method of contact for feedback: telephone, email, or text. We're already using a call back service in our solution for Cleveland Police where a dedicated team in the Control Room calls back citizens to get feedback on their experience of the 999 service, as well as to update them on the progress of their call. SmartContact® will extend this proactive contact into other technologies and other business areas.

Forces will see a reduction in time spent dealing with incoming contacts and fewer re-contacts from members of the public regarding the same issue. The use of a single platform for all contact will remove silos of reporting and information that have previously been a barrier to information flows across the force.

Members of the public will really get what they want: the ability to interact via channels of their choice and to receive a consistent experience when they do. This will help forces meet the measurement criteria of perception, confidence and satisfaction.

#### **The way ahead**

I've been talking here about an integrated end-to-end contact management approach within a single force. But this is just the start. We are also able to embrace contact management collaboration between different forces. And the potential to extend it beyond purely the policing landscape to include inter-agency collaboration involving local authorities and the relevant community teams interacting with the public is exciting.

This is our future vision and I believe a joined up approach will deliver savings and significant improvements to policing and local communities.

## About APD

Innovation is the very essence of APD - 30 years of experience in communications technologies is testament to that. Each of our employees takes pride every day in what we achieve for our customers. With offices in the UK and the Middle East, APD is a global leader in control room, mobile information, resource location and tracking solutions. We specialise in delivering mission-critical and business-critical solutions to organisations within the public sector; transport, security and logistics industries. APD's products are used in over 100 client sites in the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Our solutions are in daily operational use in every UK Police force; other customers include the Swedish Police, Abu Dhabi Police and leading organisations such as The Emirates Group and London Underground Limited. Our success is based on a simple philosophy - we listen. We work with our customers to create an understanding of their business and develop this into real solutions that work.

## About Sopra Steria

Sopra Steria, European leader in digital transformation, provides one of the most comprehensive portfolios of end to end service offerings in the market: Consulting, Systems Integration, Software Development and Business Process Services. Sopra Steria is trusted by leading private and public organisations to deliver successful transformation programmes that address their most complex and critical business challenges. Combining high quality and performance services, added-value and innovation, Sopra Steria enables its clients to make the best use of information technology.



[www.soprasteria.co.uk](http://www.soprasteria.co.uk)

**SOPRA STERIA**  
1010 Winnersh, Winnersh Triangle, Reading, RG41 5TS  
+44 (0)370 600 4466 - [info.uk@soprasteria.com](mailto:info.uk@soprasteria.com)

PB024V03

**sopra  steria**