



Information Commissioner's Office
Promoting public access to official information
and protecting your personal information

The Development and Maintenance Initiative (DMI)

Police Circular

Circular 1

Police

(London 04_05_07)

1.1 Draft Classes

Discussion was based around the information which should be contained within each class. The list of draft classes suggested is listed below:

Organisational Information

Who's who
Force structures by role
Neighbourhood policing by name and contact

Financial Information

Annual Report Info
Statement of Accounts
CC's Expenses
ACPO Expenses
DCC/ACC/Director Personnel etc.
Everything that is provided to PA for discussion at public meetings

Strategy and Performance

Department and Divisional force strategy documents
Stop and Search information
Generic Monthly Performance statistics provided to the Home Office.
Beat and Ward level Crime Stats (under generic headings)

Communications

Minutes of 'open' meetings (ACPO, SMT Dept and Div)

Lists and Registers

Disclosure logs

Contract Information (List of present Contracts, start date, finish date, Value, Provider)

Policies and Procedures

List of available policies with 'selected non tactical' procedures
(Needs explanation about review periods – Met)

Information of Significant public Interest

Reports and reviews of significant topics

1.2 General issues arising

A suggestion was made that the ICO should liaise with Police Authorities regarding information which is provided to them and which should be included in the scheme.

The Police sector would welcome more prescriptive model schemes and guidance particularly in relation to the information contained within classes. If this is not done, there is room for inconsistency across forces as interpretation is broadened and narrowed to suit individuals at a senior level.

With regard to information contained within the publication scheme which is provided to the Home Office, the ICO needs to liaise with the Home Office to establish what should be provided. This will help to ascertain what should be provided by the Police Forces and what should be provided by the Home Office. This is particularly in regard to the Generic Monthly Performance Statistics.

Discussion took place regarding a class of information which presently exists labelled 'Fees and charges'. This class includes information which was historically charged for. There are concerns that some of this information would/should not be in the public domain and therefore should not be included. Dawn Monaghan agreed that she would have a look at the list on the Derbyshire website and consider what should happen with regard to the new schemes.

Guidance and perhaps a standard statement around 'timing' would be appreciated i.e. if the information is to be 'on demand' what is expected in terms of the time for production and postage.

Also information within each class may have 'timescales' for release. For instance meetings may only be held quarterly and then a delay for the acceptance of minutes may take place. The ICO will consider how to deal with such issues as they are relevant to all public authorities.

Discussion surrounding an audit of compliance a 'mystery shopper' approach took place. The need to have FOI Key Performance Indicators was welcomed.

1.3 Maintenance and Dissemination

Dawn Monaghan explained that the intention was for the ICO to provide various 'model options' within the guidance. She stressed that it would not be mandatory to adopt one of the options, rather they would be given as a suggestion for forces who may be finding it difficult.

It is up to each force to ensure they have in place a system and process to ensure they meet the commitment made in the publication scheme. How this is achieved will be left to the discretion of individual forces.

With regard to policies, The Met explained that they have a large volume of policies which would require review before release. However they could commit to beginning the review, releasing policies as they became available. In principle Dawn Monaghan agreed that this could probably be accommodated. The ICO would need to consider the wording of timescales within the scheme itself.

It was suggested that the best way to disseminate policies would be to provide a list of what is available (some may have hyperlinks through the website others may need to be provided hard copy or electronically 'on demand')

1.4 Further Input

If you have any comments on this circular or anything you would like to contribute to the initiative, please contact Paul Damerill at paul.damerill@ico.gsi.gov.uk