



# NATIONAL POLICING STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



*“With you, making Mauritius safer”*

## Enhancing Reactive Capability

(a step change in the quality of reactive activities)

# Mauritius Police Force

## National Policing Strategic Framework

# Blue Print

## “Enhancing Reactive Capability”

(a step change in the quality of  
our reactive activities)

This ‘Blue Print’ is one in a series of six strategic documents, each of which deals with one pillar of the National Policing Strategic Framework (NPSF). The others are:

- Community Policing – greater accountability to the community
- Achieving a Human Rights Compliant Organisation – a commitment to professional standards
- Human Resource Management Capability – modernising our human resources management
- Permanent Strategic Planning Capability – strategic direction at Force and Divisional level
- Intelligence-Led Policing – development of proactive responses

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# ENHANCING REACTIVE CAPABILITY

## (a step change in the quality of reactive activities)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Mauritius Police Force (MPF) is at the crossroads of change. One of the focuses will be the need for enhancing our reactive capability. We are aware that we have to improve our level of service to meet the expectations of the community. To this end, the MPF has to enhance its strategic capabilities and to ensure greater accountability and higher professional standards, particularly aimed at a step change in the quality of its reactive services.

The Police usually respond to a wide range of public requests, incidents and enquiries daily. Some are simple and can be resolved immediately, while others need investigation. Being given the nature of occurrences, mere reactive intervention often proves to be inadequate. Hence, a certain degree of proactive inputs in terms of intelligence is necessary in order to deal with potential policing problems prematurely.

One of the major policing problems is crime. Since criminality has become increasingly sophisticated, the police need to continuously review its strategies and tactics in order to maintain an edge over criminals. The Police have to evolve new methods to address these problems.

### 2. AIM

We are aiming at a 'step change' in our reactive policing activities. This means a complete review of how we will go about meeting public expectations. We intend to set a minimum standard of service in terms of:

- Making it easier to contact us;
- Dealing with initial contact;
- Providing a professional and high quality service;
- Keeping the public informed; and
- Ensuring that the needs of the public count.

In the short term, we will be assessing the requirements and resources necessary to ensure that in the years to come, everyone who needs us, receives the same level of service and in the longer term, we aim to maintain a safer and more secure community by substantially enhancing the standard, reliability, consistency and responsiveness in respect of the services we offer. We will set new targets for all services that will be provided to the community and visitors alike.

### **3. GREY AREAS IN REACTIVE POLICING**

In so far as reactive policing is concerned, there are certain grey areas that prevent the organisation from optimal functioning. The four major areas that have been so far identified have been enumerated in the succeeding paragraphs.

#### **AREA 1: Emergency '999' Call System based at the Police Information & Operations Room (PIOR)**

There has been an increase of about 30% in the number of '999' calls over the past four years and the existing telephone system is often overloaded and does not meet present public demands. The system is often jammed thus leading to delays in responding to emergency calls. Upgrading the present telephone system and making provision for non-emergency calls will undoubtedly enhance our response capability.

#### **AREA 2: Visibility, Accessibility and Responsiveness**

The issue of public satisfaction with regard to visibility, accessibility and responsiveness, remains high on our agenda. Although there appears to be an acceptable level of satisfaction with our response and performance in solving serious crime, yet the level of community satisfaction with the performance of the police when dealing with street crime still remains low.

#### **AREA 3: Investigative Practices in the Force**

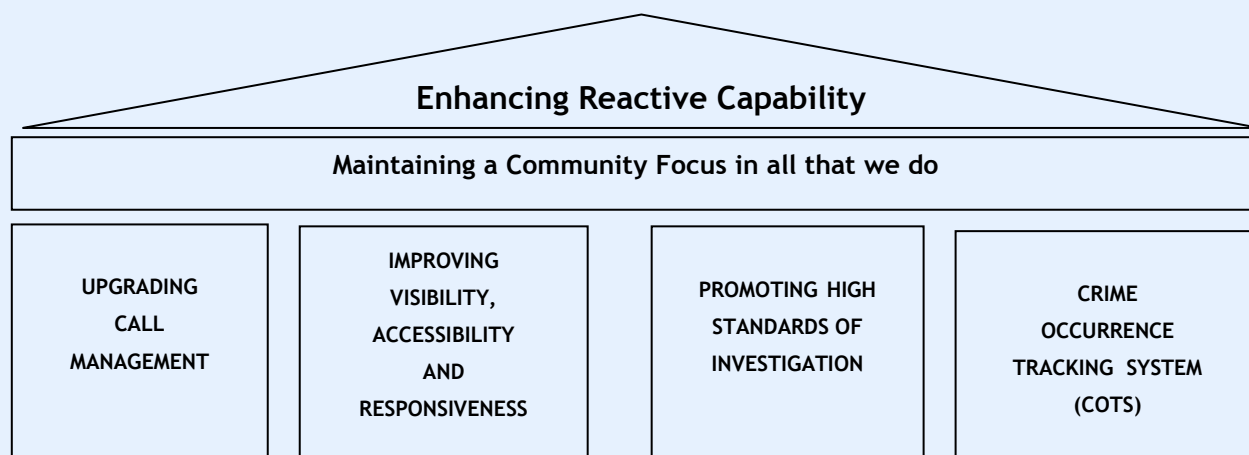
Since some time now, there has been an over reliance on confession in order to solve cases in the absence of technical and scientific means available to us. This has the result of undermining police credibility as the general perception is that the police are using unlawful means to obtain evidence. This is projecting a negative image of the Service in so far as our investigative practices and Human Rights issues are concerned.

#### **AREA 4: Crime Occurrence Tracking System (COTS)**

The COTS is in the initial process of implementation. It will transform the mode of crime reporting and recording, monitoring of enquiries/improvement of case file management and compilation/generation of crime statistics. However, the user requirements are limited to the above and do not include processing of crime intelligence to enable proactive and reactive policing.

## 4. DEVELOPING THE AREAS OF REACTIVE POLICING

We will bring a number of reforms in our response activities with a view to enhancing our level of service. The chart below shows how we intend to deal with those areas: -



### 4.1 Upgrading Call Management

Over the years, the number of '999' calls received at PIOR has risen significantly. As a matter of comparison, whereas for the period July 2003 to June 2004, the figure stood at 6,401, for the corresponding period 2007-2008, it rose to 9,234; showing an increase of 30%. There is no doubt that it will continue to rise and the existing system which can hardly accommodate two telephone lines, will be obviously overburdened.

#### 4.1.1 Management of the Emergency '999' Call

We intend to upgrade the present '999' telephone system into a new IT-based system, similar to the existing PABX system, capable of accommodating as many as 50 calls. An in-house preliminary survey is being undertaken. The system will create a link with Police Divisions/Branches/Units Ops Rooms and emergency services through an intranet system, so that a coordinated and rapid intervention is provided.

It is our belief that the standard of service in response to calls for emergency assistance is so important that we will set a Quality Service Commitment for the two stages of the process. These stages are:

- Answering calls/requests
- Attending to calls/requests

We are considering setting the benchmark for answering at least 95 % of the 999 calls within the target time of 15 seconds and attending to all public emergencies within 15 minutes as our goal. To that end, we will harmonize and coordinate the actions of all our units on the ground in order to achieve the above standards.

#### ***4.1.2 Non-Emergency Calls***

We intend to introduce ‘dedicated’ Non-Emergency Numbers commonly known as hot-lines. This will improve our ability to prioritize our response to the public and also, enable the local authorities and other stakeholders to become more responsive and to effectively tackle issues though not falling within our jurisdiction but within the scope of our community policing. It is our intention to pilot this project by early 2010. Our telecommunication partner is being approached to dedicate ‘easy to remember’ numbers to existing/new telephones lines which we will publicise for general information of the public. In the medium term, all Divisional Operations Rooms will be endowed with such a response capability.

We also believe that our response to non-emergency calls as well as to written communication should be subject to Quality Service Commitment. Our response will be benchmarked as follows:

- Attending to non-urgent incidents within 45 minutes;
- Acknowledging receipt of all letters of complaint within 48 hours; and
- Replying to correspondence from the public within 15 days or less, depending on the nature of the complaint.

#### ***4.1.3 Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Facilities***

We will also provide the public with alternative channels of communications in order to relieve PIOR of the heavy pressure from the public. In that respect, we will popularise the use of Email as a medium for communicating complaints, requests, etc. Similarly, consideration will be given to the use of Short Message Service (SMS) for seeking police assistance.

### **4.2 Improving Visibility, Accessibility and Responsiveness**

The MPF is committed to 24 hours a day service. Such service includes patrol, traffic law enforcement, report taking and preliminary investigation. The key indicator of a quality service is our ability to respond to requests, emergency calls etc. promptly or within a reasonable delay. We will ensure that we are accessible and responsive to such requests and calls for assistance from all those who need our services.

We will, through the T& CG, direct, coordinate and monitor targeted action at Force and Divisional/Branch level through increased visible presence, proper supervision and effective response to areas where policing is most required.

Eventually, Divisional Commanders and Branch Officers will be required to submit their threat assessment, policing strategies and performance reports for the Force Annual Policing Plan, Force Annual Report and PBB<sup>1</sup>.

#### ***4.2.1 Enhancing Visible Police Presence***

The Police Act 1974 provides that one of our responsibilities is to save life and property. A swift and effective response to an emergency is therefore a basic police requirement and we appear to be generally achieving a reasonable level of satisfaction amongst people who call for our help. However, far more contact takes place outside emergencies. Patrolling, especially foot and other contact policing, seems to score an unsatisfactory public rating. This illustrates that our accessibility and visibility in the various areas of our Divisions are important and therefore critical, for enhancing public reassurance.

We will therefore, review our patrol strategy with a view to reinforcing visible police presence and thus, reassuring the public and reducing fear of crime.

#### ***4.2.2 Reviewing Deployment of Resources***

Under the existing structure, it is found that resources at station level, that is at the lowest operational level, are employed more in indoor duties such as preparation of reports and case files, and miscellaneous duties than in street/beat duties. Consequently, we will review our structure down the line and therefore revisit our work practices in order to optimise resources with a view to ensuring greater visibility and accessibility.

To that end, we intend to consider the following:-

##### ***4.2.2.1 Reorganisation of the Emergency Response Service (ERS)***

The ERS used to operate from a central command but later it has been placed under the direct command of Divisional Commanders. It however continues to attend to requests and emergency calls as well as to provide Police presence in remote corners in the various Police Station areas in the Divisions. The ERS will be reorganised. Its operational philosophy however, will be maintained.

<sup>1</sup> See Blue Print on Permanent Strategic Planning Capability.

#### **4.2.2.2 *Foot and Mobile Patrol Scheme***

Presently, as per Standing Orders, the station area is divided into several beats and blocks which are covered by foot and mobile patrols respectively. With the current socio-economic transformation, there is a need to redesign our beat and block systems so as to provide a thorough coverage of the station area on a 24 hour basis. For that purpose, we will apply a three-tier concept whereby the station area will be divided into three layers; the inner, the intermediate and the outer.

To that end, we will rely on feedback obtained from T&CG process and from survey conducted by Police Strategic Planning Unit so as to work out the appropriate patrol scheme.

#### **4.2.2.3 *Enhancing Road Policing***

The recent setting up of the Traffic Field and Motorway Patrol Police and the Divisional Traffic Police, has provided an integrated approach to road policing and therefore enhanced road safety. The Standard Operating Procedures which are being worked out, will in turn provide a co-ordinated approach among the various stakeholders led by the Police in the effective management of road incidents with a view to ensuring better response to road victims and restoring normal traffic flow at the earliest.

#### **4.2.3 *Enhancing Response through New Technologies***

**4.2.3.1 *CCTV Street Surveillance*** – In line with the Government Programme to curb crime, the Government of Mauritius, under a Chinese Line of Credit, is proceeding with the installation of a CCTV system covering the city of Port-Louis and the coastal areas of Grand Bay and Mont Choisy. A total of 339 cameras will be installed. In the meantime, a CCTV system was implemented in the region of Flic-en-Flac and the main road leading thereto, with effect from 4 April 2009. It had a strong impact on crime as the rate of crime in that area fell by more than 70%. Similarly, another CCTV project involving some 39 cameras along the Royal Road from St Jean to Candos and initiated by the Ministry of Tourism in conjunction with the Police Department, has been undertaken. Being given the success of the system, we expect a fall in crime of the same magnitude in Quatre Bornes, Port Louis and Grand Bay areas as at Flic-en-Flac. This will relieve police resources and enable a redeployment of such resources to areas where hitherto police visibility was meagre.

**4.2.3.2 *Radio Communication System*** – A modern communication system is necessary. The present communication system dates back to the year 1991 and is basically an analogue

system limited to a single point-to-point contact at any one time. Very often, incidents require response from various Police units and their inability to communicate is a major handicap. Under a Chinese Line of Credit, we are in the process of introducing a new police digital radio communication system to complement our response capabilities. The installation works will start by January 2010 and are expected to be completed by May/June 2010.

#### **4.2.4**      *Natural Disaster Management*

In view of the geographical position of the Island in the Indian Ocean, Mauritius is prone to cyclones. Due to climate change, we are now further exposed to flooding. We also face the risk of tsunamis. As a lead organisation, the MPF will maintain its general preparedness, enhance its response capability and provide a coordinated approach in disaster management.

### **4.3 Promoting High Standards in Investigations**

Police Officers have a duty to secure detection and conviction of offenders. To achieve this, we need to conduct proper enquiry with a view to collecting quality evidence to secure a successful prosecution. Therefore, it is vital to set the highest standards of investigation practices. These will strengthen our ability to respond to service demands especially when dealing with emerging crime such as high tech crime, computer crime, white collar crime, etc.

To that end, we will bring new measures as given in the succeeding paragraphs to boost up our investigation practices.

#### **4.3.1**      *Code of Practice for Investigators*

We will formulate a Code of Practice for Investigators which will comprise standard procedures for Arrest, Search, Detention, Interview and Identification. As part of our investigative strategy, the Code of Practice will constitute a major step towards improving transparency and accountability of police attitude and behaviour when dealing with investigation. It will also provide a succinct reference to the use of ethical methods in investigation. It will not only be a reference to the community in matters of fundamental rights and freedoms of the individuals but also provide a safeguard to investigators against frivolous allegations. All said, it is only a strict adherence to the provisions of the Code of Practice that will provide the necessary safeguard.

#### **4.3.2**      *Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Forensic Science Laboratory, Prime Minister's Office (FSL, PMO)*

Advances in forensic science have no doubt brought enormous improvements in the collection and analysis of scientific evidence with the result that there has been a quality improvement in

investigation. Since FSL, PMO is an independent organisation and its contribution is determinant to the outcome of police enquiries, a modus operandi needs to be found out so that both the Police and the FSL, PMO can work jointly in the solution of crimes.

In the recent past, certain shortcomings have come to light and these have been prejudicial to police enquiries. It is proposed that an MoU or a Service Level Agreement be worked out between both organisations in order to address the following issues:

- i. Coordinated approach and action at the scene of crime;
- ii. FSL, PMO response to the scene of crime as appropriate;
- iii. Collection of evidence from scene of crime;
- iv. Contribution of FSL, PMO in investigation through On-Scene Tactical Meeting and Case Conferencing; and
- v. Submission of interim and final reports within delay.

### **4.3.3 Career Path for Investigators**

There are some 1000 detective Police officers in the MPF. By the very nature of our system, many have to be moved in and out of detective work during the course of their career as a result of which, highly experienced officers often have to move to other higher policing responsibilities thus leaving a vacuum in detective work. It then takes years to fill in the gap. To overcome this problem, we are contemplating to introduce concepts of career path, succession planning, Communities of practice and security of tenure of post with some flexibility at senior position level.

### **4.3.4 Providing Scientific and Technological Support**

**4.3.4.1 Empowering SOCO** – SOCO will be called upon to play a crucial role in the fight against crime through the proper collection of evidence from scene of crime. The unit needs to be empowered through proper training, restructuring and provision of down-to-earth equipment. We will ensure that the unit is adequately upgraded with an Officer of a fairly senior rank but not less than an Assistant Superintendent of Police to take charge. Personnel will be appropriately trained and equipped. Eventually the unit should be able to collect evidence on the ground independent of FSL.

**4.3.4.2 Technological Support** – The MPF will draw the maximum benefit from the use of science and technology. Recently, we were provided with an Electronic ‘Photo Fit’ Description System. The electronic portraits of suspects which were used by investigators, have proved to be decisive to the outcome of enquiry.

The recent operationalisation of the electronic Fingerprint Analysis Crime Tracking System (FACTS) based at the Crime Records Office has provided investigators with an important tool in the tracking of criminals through automated fingerprint recognition. This means for the first time we have a practical method of comparing unknown fingerprints found at the scene of a crime against the national collection of fingerprints of convicted persons. We will also consider upgrading the present system, by adding a 'palm print' recognition system in order to broaden the range of marks that can be used as evidence. We will also introduce a 'Livescan' system to capture prints directly from suspects.

It is therefore, vital that such new investigative tools be introduced to enhance investigative capability.

#### ***4.3.5 Training and Development of Investigators***

The Police Training School will be tasked to develop targeted training and developmental programmes to promote new standards in investigation particularly for investigators. Compatible development will be made in the recruit training package. These developments will help to promote best practices in crime scene management, victim and witness handling, investigative interviewing, etc.

#### ***4.3.6 Media Strategy***

The media can play a key role to support police in solving crime. It can also assist in informing and reassuring the public. We will develop a positive and open relationship with the media and will provide timely and accurate information about crime and police initiatives. We will through the support of media, get the community involved in the fight against crime.

We will revamp our media and communication strategy. One of the aims is to create the link between the public and police, specially with regard to investigation.

### **4.4 Developing the Crime Occurrence Tracking System (COTS)**

The MPF is presently in the process of implementing COTS. From a criminal investigation perspective, we propose to optimise the use of this system and to that end, we intend to expand the existing system so as to enhance crime analytical capability. Consequently, the contractor will be approached with a view to developing the appropriate software in order to meet our requirement.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the proposals in this Blue Print will help to enhance our reactive capability. In view of the fact that criminal environment keeps on changing, there is a need for the police to change their policing style in order to adapt and to meet the new policing challenges of such environment.

We will prioritize our response in favour of those who are the most in need of our services. The new initiatives being proposed will contribute to improve our response capability and the quality of our call handling against the standards set in our Quality Service Commitment. As a result, we expect increased public confidence and trust in the police as improved visibility, accessibility and responsiveness will go a long way to reassure the community and help to reduce fear of crime.

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