

## Step six: Establish reporting arrangements

Step six uses the Experienced, Evidenced, Potential framework for reporting locally, regionally and nationally. The system exists to support better tension monitoring locally – facilitating information sharing, analysis and appropriate interventions at the local level. Reporting through the local governance structure will ensure accountability, broader understanding and connectivity with other related issues.

There are structures in place to report regionally and nationally. These have the benefit of picking up ‘cross border’ issues, or issues affecting more than one authority either adjacent, within the same region or in another region. Reactions and interactions can move from one area to another, depending on the issue - tensions can be mobile, manifesting themselves similarly or differently in different places.

The structures that are in place can benefit local areas particularly where the information that is reported up the line is collated and transmitted back down to local areas.

Here we consider what to report, to whom and when – in order to have a co-ordinated approach and benefit from feedback.

### Report format – The Community Tension Assessment Return

A single, shared format is suggested.

The Tension Assessment Return uses the Experienced, Evidenced, Potential format.

The types of tension listed on page 12 are a guide to the areas to consider but they are not designed to be prescriptive or constraining. It is better that people describe the tensions as they are perceived and experienced locally, rather than conforming to a central description.

**Appendix 2** provides a **template for tension monitoring reporting** – the Community Tension Assessment Return. The cover page is for Metropolitan Police Service Returns.

**Appendix 3** gives a cover sheet for the return to Government Office. Both can be adapted for local use elsewhere.

Sections 1 – 3 cover the descriptive reporting of the Experienced, Evidenced and Potential.

Section 4 is a tension summary table grading level (from 1 – 6) and trend (falling, static, raised) on specific groups within the population which may be vulnerable. This is collected to maintain an overview and to identify ways of supporting those communities particularly where there is a trend of raised tensions. The categories are collected and analysed nationally, and may change subject to what is happening.

Where levels of tension are 4,3,2,1 – the four higher levels – a Community Impact Assessment and Action plan will be necessary.

The Community Tension Assessment Return is principally to inform the local situation, but routine sharing of returns regionally and nationally will enrich the wider picture.

## Timing of reports

Police community tension reports are compiled weekly and forwarded to the Police Service each Wednesday and on to the National Community Tension Team (NCTT) by Thursday noon. Ideally all assessments should be forwarded to NCTT on completion.

Local authorities share tension monitoring information and assessments monthly to the government office for the region, normally by the last working day of the month. (Although currently only areas considered 'at risk' report monthly, wider assessing of tensions and sharing with government office from all authorities is preferable).

Reports from both sources are shared by government offices with the Communities and Faiths Unit in the Department for Communities and Local Government for an overall assessment to be made for reporting to ministers and senior government officials.

Ideally the Tension Monitoring Group will time its activities to support this timetable.

Where tensions are raised in any way there should be exception reporting to the Chief Executive and Leader and, where applicable, the Community Safety Manager. The Borough Commander will be informed.

## Feedback

The National Community Tensions Team feeds back information on the national picture every Monday to local police services in the Operation Element Bulletin. The information is restricted. The open source digest can be separated and unrestricted and police colleagues may share other information on a verbal basis with the local tension monitoring group. There is also now a partners' version of Operation Element designed for sharing in Tension Monitoring groups.

Government offices are happy to feed regional assessments back to local authorities in the region once they have been compiled – this would only be shared subject to the prior agreement of the individual authorities providing the information. Similarly the national overview from the Department of Communities and Local Government is fed back to regional government offices month by month.

The more information that can be fed back locally to those putting information in to the system, the more trusted the process will be and the more useful information will flow. Information can usefully be shared down the chain (to those providing information) and sideways (to neighbouring areas). But also the wider tension monitoring is shared, the greater the risk of it inadvertently finding its way into the public domain – possibly leading to heightened tensions or, for example, retaliatory activity. Partners should therefore have an explicit agreement about how tensions monitoring information is shared, and who will receive it.

## Principles of sharing tensions information

- Partners should have an explicit agreement about how tensions monitoring information is shared, and who will receive it.
- Information passed down the reporting chain should be marked 'not for onward distribution' and be shared only for the purposes of the partner organisation receiving it and should not be shared further outside that organisation. (It will be best to copy information to a single named contact in an organisation, who understands the sensitivities of the information, rather than to staff in general who may not understand the context and may share it with others inadvertently.
- Partner organisations with whom tensions monitoring is shared should agree with those responsible the general purpose to which they will put the information (generally, for effective policy development and service delivery of the organisation) and should advise the group of any specific action they intend to take in relation to a particular piece of information or the issues raised by it.

### Tips:

- ▶▶ The more information is shared between partners before submission, the richer the picture.
- ▶▶ The more information that can be fed back locally to those putting information in to the system the more trusted the process will be and the more useful information will flow
- ▶▶ Establish a 'virtual team' of people who are sharing information on tensions
- ▶▶ Where reports are, of necessity, restricted or confidential, share a sanitised version