

How police forces are learning to **THRIVE**



Our emergency services are under strain like never before, having to manage ever growing demand as resource pressures mount. This pressure can be seen on the frontline - in the control rooms across the country, where staff manage an average of 16.1 calls every minute*. In 2013-14 emergency vehicles responded to 6.33 million calls; 95.1 per cent (6.02 million) were responses to a 999 emergency call and 4.9 per cent (309,260) were in response to a call from a non-emergency number.

The increase in demand for our emergency services sees no sign of stopping. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) predicts that the number of people living in the country is projected to rise from 64.6 million in mid-2014 to 74.3 million in 2039. Both the government and emergency services are having to look at how they can enhance and adapt their control rooms to ensure they get the right people to the right incidents as quickly as possible.

While financial pressures have hastened the need to reform, the forces we are working with are keen to stress that saving money does not mean cutting corners – it means delivering a better customer service. This was emphasised in November by the chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners finance group, Paddy Tipping, who was responding to an announcement by the Chancellor that there would be no cuts to the police service budget.

Mr Tipping said: "We praise the government that during this difficult time they have taken the decision to not cut the police budget. We continue to be committed to innovation and reform to provide a secure service to the public who value neighbourhood policing. We will be working together, and with the government, to continue to invest in new technology; reduce back off costs and share resources where possible."

In addition to the financial constraints facing all forces, varying crime trends are also impacting how the police operate.

According to the ONS, there was a 6% increase in police recorded crime compared with the previous year, with 4.3 million offences recorded in the year ending September 2015. There was a 27% rise in violence against the person offences, while sexual offences recorded by the police continued to rise with the latest figures up 36% on the previous year. There was a 5% increase in the volume of fraud offences referred to the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) at the City of London Police. The rate of other crimes has decreased in recent years. Across England the number of recorded burglaries fell from 423,912 in 2013-14 to 392,341 in 2014-15.

Learning to THRIVE

The changing nature of policing combined with the requirement to maintain service levels in a challenging financial environment is requiring forces to modify their operational processes. A great example of this is through the use of a decision model known as "THRIVE".

The model - Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement - is used to assess the appropriate initial police response to an emergency call. The incident is graded as either scheduled, priority or immediate response and then passed to a dispatcher who uses an IT system and GPS to identify and deploy the most appropriate and timely resource. The dispatcher also has responsibility for relaying the background information that has been gathered, to the attending officers.

Rather than having a "one size fits all" approach to certain types of crime, THRIVE allows forces to service the needs of each victim and puts officers and staff where they are needed most. It enables control centres to make appropriate decisions about the required level of resource. For example, it could mean that a phone call from an officer may resolve a situation that in the past would automatically have required a home visit.

* According to the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC)



The role of technology

The potential of THRIVE is undoubted, illustrated by the growing number of police forces that are adopting the model. But to be a real success, the model relies on the technology in use by the contact centre and the officers in the field.

Many forces have already started to overhaul services by implementing new technologies – for example, officers are being deployed with remote cameras and body worn video facilities. In some of the more innovative forces, officers have even started to use social media as a way of connecting and engaging with the public, distributing important information and even gathering intelligence.

However there remains a frustration that forces have been slow to embrace change, keep up with the latest technologies and acknowledge the potential of digital solutions to transform frontline policing.

As outlined by Paddy Tipping, the police and government are seemingly committed to the use of technology in the drive for improvement. Indeed, at the Police ICT Company's suppliers' summit in January 2016 the Home Secretary Theresa May called on police forces to "exploit the potential of technology".

The ability to exploit technology is being enhanced with the development of a new Emergency Services Network (ESN), which aims to deliver integrated voice and broadband data services to police, fire and ambulance services. This will provide more bandwidth for emergency services, allowing them to take advantage of information rich data more quickly and effectively.

Making the most of THRIVE

The ESN will be of huge advantage to control rooms adopting the THRIVE model, providing call handlers with a big picture view so that they can make better informed decisions. A third vital piece of the puzzle is the platform used by call centres.

Our single solution for all police contact centre and control room operations, **ControlWorks®**, enables forces to cost effectively manage all of their operations from a central viewpoint. It improves the experience of callers and ensures that officers with the right skills and capability are safely, quickly, and efficiently despatched to incidents with the information they need delivered to their secure mobile devices.

A key module in this suite is **ControlWorks® Contact**. Interfacing to telephony services as well as social media, web portals, apps and email, **ControlWorks® Contact** manages all aspects of the contact history in a single Record of Contact (RoC). The RoC integrates with supporting intelligence and national databases to provide immediate information on previous contacts to the call handler together with scripting, warnings and the ability to initiate both emergency and non-emergency response based on the caller's needs and the information gathered.

Configurable scripts based on the type of call can be used to help guide the call handler to ensure the callers' needs are suitably addressed via a THRIVE-based model; flexible to be configured based on how a force wants to implement the process. **ControlWorks®** ensures that all the information relating to the issue is available to all personnel involved in the response, from the initial call handler to the officer arriving at the scene and any officer involved in subsequent investigations.

Earlier this year South Wales Police became the first UK police force to roll-out **ControlWorks®**, which is now in full operational use across the force. South Wales Police Assistant Chief Constable Richard Lewis said: "As we move forward, of paramount concern is that we ensure the safety of officers and the public despite the challenges we face. In addition to the recent improvements we have made to the force's mobile capabilities, such as issuing operational officers with smart devices, **ControlWorks®** will help ensure we are able to provide our communities with a quality policing service today and in the future."





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