



THE BULLETIN

NABIS NEWSLETTER FOR STAKEHOLDERS
AND PARTNERS | SEPTEMBER 2012

WELCOME TO BULLETIN,
THE STAKEHOLDER
NEWSLETTER

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Introduction from Head of NABIS

This is the last time that I will write the introduction to this newsletter as I am due to retire from the police service at the beginning of October. I have recently been reflecting on how the nature of gun crime in the UK and our efforts to tackle it has changed over the course of the past 30 years.

Gun crime was nowhere near as big a factor in daily life in the early 80's as it has become today in some of Britain's big cities. The comparative calm was shattered in the late 80's and early 90's as Jamaican 'Yardies' began to arrive on the streets of the UK, bringing with them that most destructive of drugs 'crack cocaine' and a gun culture that had not been witnessed before.

Yardies used extreme violence to take over the drug market place, and in order to counter this threat, local criminals found that they needed to arm themselves with firearms to preserve their share of the market. The end result was an escalation in gun crime that took some years for the UK to come to terms with.

Although there were geographic differences, nationally the decade between 1995 and 2005 saw a series of high profile shooting incidents, the emergence of increased gun use by criminals, and the complicated issue of gang rivalry. This manifested itself at different times in different cities and called for a national as well as a local response.

A key part of that response was the establishment of NABIS, which has truly changed the way in which we share intelligence nationally about the criminal use of firearms. The work of NABIS is completely underpinned by the forensic analysis of ballistic material recovered from crime scenes, but it is the way that we use that information to develop the intelligence and to drive operational activity that is key to maintaining long term success.

Gun crime is about people and communities. It is about the true stories of families devastated by the loss of loved ones, by the courage of people who want to make a stand against the presence of guns and about ensuring that the most robust action can be taken against those who supply, store or use illegal firearms.

That is why tackling gun crime is so important, it is why NABIS needs to exist and go from strength to strength. I am sure that it will continue to do so.

Det. Chief Supt. Paul James
Head of NABIS

NABIS visits a glock factory in Austria

Members of NABIS were invited to visit a Glock factory in Austria in July this year. The increase in usage and recovery of Glock pistols in the UK means that NABIS needs to be at the forefront of knowledge about this pistol.

The visit to the factory enabled NABIS to build on existing working relationships with Glock employees, some of whom the NABIS team speak to regularly. In addition it allowed the team to gain a greater understanding of how this organisation works and the processes involved in the manufacture of the Glock pistol.

The NABIS Intelligence Cell regularly conducts traces on Glock pistols through the factory to establish their origins as part of the intelligence gathering processes.

Martin Parker, Lead Forensic Scientist for NABIS said:

"It was useful to see how these traces were conducted by the factory and the timescales involved. It was also useful to see what is needed to help this process run smoothly. We were also interested in establishing which countries the factory supplies Glock pistols to on a regular basis, which will help inform intelligence gathering around possible supply routes into the UK."

During the visit, members of the NABIS team completed the Glock Armourers course, which provided a further expansion in knowledge. Joanne Godley from the NABIS Intelligence Cell said:

"Personally the Glock Armourers course helped me to expand my knowledge of firearms significantly, and it is knowledge which I am able to use on a day to day basis when working in the Intelligence Cell."

Krishna Gandham from the NABIS Northern Hub said:

"For a ballistics technician like myself, this visit was invaluable because the factory tour answered so many questions that we come across on a day-to-day basis. Furthermore, the Glock Armourers Course is extremely useful in casework and has enabled me to learn more about the way in which this pistol works."



Head of Knowledge and Communications Matt Lewis leaves NABIS

Matt Lewis, Head of Knowledge and Communications for NABIS left his role in early August where he had been since the inception of NABIS in 2006. He said: "It has been a privilege to develop NABIS from the project phase into the service that law enforcement uses today. I am proud to have been part of the team that has created a highly respected and operationally capable approach to tackling gun crime."

"I wish everyone who continues to contribute to making NABIS the 'stand out' organisation that it is, all the very best for the future."

Detective Chief Superintendent Paul James the Head of NABIS said:

"It has been a pleasure to work with Matt, not just in the strategic phase of creating NABIS but also when it became an operational reality. He has made a huge contribution to the way NABIS has developed and ultimately to the way it provides a service to law enforcement.

"Matt has also been responsible for overseeing the ACPO Criminal Use of Firearms portfolio and has been a great ambassador for the police service. I am sure that I speak on behalf of all the team and our partners and stakeholders in thanking him for his hard work and wishing him all the very best for the future".

Head of NABIS to Retire

The Head of NABIS, Detective Chief Superintendent Paul James will be retiring from the police service when he reaches his 30 years of service on 3rd October 2012.

Paul has been with NABIS from the very early days of the programme in 2006, serving as Business Change Manager, Programme Manager and subsequently becoming the Head of NABIS when the service went live in 2008.

Paul said:

"It was a really difficult decision to decide to stand down at this particular time because I really wanted to see NABIS securely integrated within the National Crime Agency before I moved on. Unfortunately because of my retirement it will not now be possible to do this.

"I have been involved with NABIS since the beginning. Many of you will know that I live in Bristol and whilst I will miss the work, my colleagues and the unique challenges of the role, I will not miss my regular commute down the M5 every week. The novelty of working away from home has faded and it will be good to spend some more time back in the West Country.

"However, there is no doubt that any inconvenience caused by working away from home have been more than compensated for by the honour and privilege of being involved with NABIS and seeing it grow into the world renowned agency that it is today.

"I have worked with some great people and can't thank everyone on the NABIS team enough for their support, hard work and friendship over the past six years."

The role of Head of NABIS has been advertised nationally, with the aim of finding a replacement before Paul retires.

NABIS Present to the Forensic Science Society

Head of NABIS Detective Chief Superintendent Paul James and Head of NABIS Forensic Services Martin Parker both presented to the Forensic Science Society in a special firearms meeting earlier this year.

The aim of the presentations was to give the current perspective on the Criminal Use of Firearms in the UK. Paul spoke about the change over the past five years in the way that the criminal use of firearms has been tackled in the UK. He highlighted how NABIS had played an important role in providing an understanding of the way that illegal firearms are supplied and used, which has subsequently influenced legislative change.

Paul went on to highlight how ballistic intelligence underpins nearly all of the pro-active work undertaken by NABIS to target the criminal use of firearms. He emphasised how this has led to a change in the 'investigative mindset' away from reactively investigating incidents where guns have been used in crime to actively targeting the threat posed by weapons that have been repeatedly used to commit crimes.

Paul's presentation considered the challenges faced by the police service, partner agencies and the forensic firearms community in the battle against gun crime, whilst identifying the opportunities to improve the way that law enforcement works, specifically the importance of working together to understand the 'bigger picture.'

Martin Parker gave a presentation on three investigations that NABIS had been involved in, all of which have concluded at court; Operations Newhaven, Smolen and Bezant.

Martin highlighted how NABIS had been able to provide crucial

evidence and intelligence in all three investigations. The NABIS Intelligence Cell had been able to use the analysis provided by NABIS Forensic Services to provide an intelligence picture for the investigating officers about where weapons had been used and who had used them. In addition a number of inferred weapons were created, which is where a firearm is identified from ballistic material, but the actual firearm has yet to be found. This information enables forces to know what firearms are being used on their force area and have yet to be recovered.



Meet The Team

Krishna Gandham NABIS Ballistics Technician, Northern Hub

Krishna is a Ballistics Technician in the NABIS Northern Hub and has been working there for over four years. Her role is to examine ballistic material and weapons and generate test-fires from the weapons.

Krishna undertook a two year training programme to become a qualified Ballistics Expert and as such she initiates and carries out small research projects looking at various problems that the Hub team come across.

Krishna's work is used by the NABIS Intelligence Cell to enable them to create intelligence products for forces and law enforcement agencies. An essential part of her role is to ensure the NABIS Database is kept up to date with all the ballistic information the Hub identifies.

Krishna really enjoys her role:

"I am a natural problem solver and I am really enjoying working on weapons that have come into the Hub in a condition that means they have to be fixed in order to be test fired.

"I would rather be busy with casework all the time, but I fill any downtime I have with the research projects that I am currently working on."

If Krishna wasn't doing her excellent work in the Northern Hub she would settle for being an Events Planner, which couldn't be more different to her current role.

This is your
space to fill.

If you have something you would like to feature in the next edition of The Bulletin then please get in touch.

Email Louise Hewitt on:

nb_snapshot@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

Got something to say
about NABIS?

We want to hear from you about the service provided by NABIS.

If you have feedback on any aspect of NABIS work please send your comments to:

nb_snapshot@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk