

INTEL NOTE

Subject: Policing Representation within CJSSC and Structural Linkage to Operation Talla

Classification: Open-source documentary analysis

Source: Witness statement INQ000188838 (COVID Inquiry disclosure)

1. Purpose

To identify and document the presence, participation, and functional role of UK policing bodies within the Criminal Justice System Strategic Command Structure (“CJSSC”), and to assess the structural implications of that participation in relation to Operation Talla.

2. Establishment of CJSSC

CJSSC was established by the Ministry of Justice Departmental Operations Centre as a multi-agency strategic command body tasked with:

“overall responsibility for the multi-agency management of an incident or crisis”

and

“establish[ing] a common policy and strategic framework within which each contributing agency’s command function will operate.”

This wording confirms CJSSC was not advisory, but directive and coordinating in nature.

3. Identified Structure

CJSSC operated on a formal:

Gold (Strategic)

Silver (Tactical)

Bronze (Operational)

command model.

This mirrors established UK policing command doctrine (Gold/Silver/Bronze critical incident structure), indicating operational compatibility and integration with police command processes.

4. Evidence of Policing Participation

Direct references

The statement identifies policing bodies as active participants within CJSSC working structures, specifically:

(a) Technology / Video Enabled Justice Group

Participants included:

Police

HMCTS

Prisons (HMPPS)

Function:

Remote hearings

Video capacity

Custody and court process continuity

This demonstrates direct police operational involvement in CJSSC-coordinated justice delivery measures.

(b) Custody Time Limits Group

Function:

Management of custody pressures

Prevention of time limit breaches

Management of detainee flow

Custody management is inherently a policing responsibility, and therefore necessarily required police operational input and coordination within CJSSC.

(c) Legal Decision Making & Charging Framework

These groups addressed:

Charging decisions

Case throughput

Resource allocation

These areas require:

Police file preparation

Investigation handover

Charging collaboration with CPS

Again evidencing embedded policing interface within CJSSC processes.

5. Functional Role of Policing inside CJSSC

Based on the above, policing within CJSSC was not peripheral but operationally integral, including:

Custody management

Case preparation and charging interface

Court attendance logistics

Video justice implementation

System demand control

Cross-agency crisis coordination

This reflects active participation in coordinated national criminal justice policy delivery, not passive information exchange.

6. Structural Implications

CJSSC:

set common policy

established national frameworks

directed participating agencies

Policing:

participated in CJSSC operational and tactical groups

implemented those coordinated frameworks

Therefore:

CJSSC decisions - influenced policing practice.

7. Linkage to Operation Talla

Operation Talla was:

a nationally coordinated policing response to COVID-related matters

directed through NPCC structures

implemented using Gold/Silver/Bronze command principles

CJSSC:

operated simultaneously
used identical command architecture
included policing representation
coordinated justice-system operational policy nationally

Accordingly:

Policing activity under Operation Talla cannot be analytically separated from CJSSC coordination.

Where:

the same agencies
the same command model
the same timeframe
and the same operational objectives
are present,
the structures are functionally interlinked.

8. Conclusion

Documentary evidence confirms:

Policing bodies were represented within CJSSC.

Police participated in operational and tactical CJSSC groups.

CJSSC set system-wide frameworks affecting criminal justice delivery.

Operation Talla simultaneously directed policing through national command structures.

On a structural and operational basis:

CJSSC and Operation Talla are not independent systems but overlapping components of the same coordinated national response framework.

Separation of the two is not supported by the evidence.

AIC

29/11/2025