

**IF ASKED:** the cost of this policing operation will be born by the MPS, in line with the MPA cost recovery policy for the policing of events in London.

IF ASKED: it is not possible to provide a cost for the policing operation until the operation has concluded.

IF ASKED: re estimates of £1million?

We are not in a position to provide a cost for the operation at the current time.

**IF ASKED:** Olympic Torch Briefing - 3.4.08.

Assistant Commissioner Tarique Ghaffur, Central Operations:

Welcome and introductions:

This is a busy weekend in London for the Met - on the 5th April we are policing six football matches including the FA semi cup final and on the Sunday the second FA cup semi final and the Beijing Olympic Torch Relay.

The Met is planning the operation for the Beijing Olympic Torch relay in the same way as the 4,500 that we police annually in London. We are hugely experienced in dealing with high profile events and have been working on a range of contingencies for this event. We have thoroughly reviewed our policing plan to make sure that we believe it is the best it can possibly be.

What I'd like to make clear is that we will support peoples' right to engage in lawful protest, but where people break the law or attempt to disrupt the event we will deal with them.

Commander Bob Broadhurst, Central Operations:

We've been working closely with the organisers of this event, BOCOG and the GLA, it's their event and we've dealt with this in exactly the same way as we would any event, we work with the organisers to do the policing plan.

The Met has a huge amount of experience in policing large scale, complex events often against a backdrop of demonstrations and that experience has been fully used in our planning process; The policing of this, it's a Met Police plan, I am responsible for this, I'm the Gold Commander on the day.

The route passes through 10 London boroughs and covers 31 miles in all. Obviously I've not been able to secure that in its totality; that would take far too many officers, far too many barriers and would cause chaos for the good people of London who want to go about their business.

What we essentially have is security around the torch as it moves through that 31-mile route and we'll be opening it up as quickly as we can behind it to minimise disruption on what is probably going to be a very busy Sunday for a lot of people. Extremely difficult to anticipate how many people will come into join the event as it passes through and indeed, a bit like the Tour de France some people will leapfrog across the front of it to watch it in different locations. Again we have precedence for this, some of you will remember we had the Athens torch pass through London in 2004.

Some areas of the route will be densely populated particularly in central London

around Trafalgar Square, Chinatown and Oxford Street and I would ask anyone who's coming along for the day to check the route in advance and get the best places, clearly we also have the potential of the added tube strike that could or could not be happening and people will need to factor that in and, of course, the weather - I believe the forecast is snow.

Critically, we've obviously been watching events around the world but the policing plan has not changed because of that. We'll have about 2,000 officers on this event, things are still not yet finalised but if we look about the 2,000 mark. But it had always been anticipated that it was roughly that to look after 31 miles of route, with a number of events along the way, with the potential of protest and the need to keep people safe, particularly in crowded areas 2,000 officers actually isn't that much. On the FA Cup semi-final on that same afternoon we've got something like 1,300 officers.

Those numbers are a big event but by no means an unprecedentedly large event for the Met - we deal with quite often. I was the Gold Commander for Tour de France last year and lot of the lessons we learnt last year in dealing with large crowds we've picked up and tried to put into effect on this. One new tactic we'll be using, that you may not be familiar with, it's been used in the past, is the use of police officers on cycles accompanying the torch as part of that security package - their flexibility and their mobility will help us with protecting the torch as we go through events.

In addition to that, I'll have a number of officers acting as a mobile reserve leapfrogging the route along the way to make sure they can deal with any incident/demonstration in a timely and appropriate fashion. We know this event has attracted substantial interest from protest groups and the planning team has been in regular dialogue, increasing dialogue and I'm sure that will continue again tomorrow and through Saturday, with groups who want to come out and demonstrate. I've made it clear all along that we will facilitate lawful protest and we have a long history of protecting that.

So if people come to us and say we want to protest lawfully we will accommodate that, we will put them somewhere and we will look after them on the day, provided of course, they stay within the law. I would ask anyone who wishes to demonstrate on Sunday, who has not yet got in touch, to please get in touch. I'm not touting for business here, but we would rather we knew about a protest and could manage it and accommodate people rather than be caught out on the day and have to deal with that. We have a number of protests and perhaps we can talk about the detail - it's about half a dozen, six at the moment. That's likely to increase and it includes the groups you'd expect - Free Tibet, Falun Gong, The Burma Campaign.. and it's our understanding that a number of these groups will want to themselves be leapfrogging the route so they'll start off at the western end and weave their way towards Greenwich at two or three sites as they go along. If people decide to act outside the law, particularly if they make any incursion towards the torch, they will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately by our officers.

Officers watching will make arrests where it's necessary, legal and proportionate. If people are trying to get hold of the torch we will have to be quite firm and that may mean keeping them in custody until the torch is gone -because obviously with a 31 mile route they could cause us all sorts of problems along the route. But again that will need to be on a case-by-case basis, as ever in accordance with UK law.

So essentially, the policing plan is designed to mitigate against individuals or

groups from interfering with the security and safe passage of the torch and torch bearers, obviously we have planned for a range of contingencies and that involves things as mundane as burst water mains, building collapses, the usual paraphernalia of London life. It's about getting this from Wembley to the Dome intact and in one piece and then off to Paris.

**IF ASKED:** The torch attendants' role is to protect the torch. Police officers are on hand to deal with any incidents around the torch.

The attendants do not have any executive powers whilst in London.

**IF ASKED:** re comments attributed to Commander Broadhurst in today's Evening Standard?

Commander Broadhurst was responding to specific questions from the reporter in relation to specific parts of yesterday's operation. Decisions regarding yesterday's event were made by the Met and BOCOG, as relevant.

Clear lines for decision-making were used during the course of the event. Fast time decisions were made by our officers on the ground regarding immediate threats to the safety and security of the torchbearer and, as the event owners, BOCOG and the GLA made decisions about the route and mode of transport used.

The decision in Fleet Street, junction with Fetter Lane, to place the torchbearer back onto the bus to complete the stage was taken after our officers became concerned for the torchbearers safety. The decision to complete other sections of the route on board the bus were made by the GLA and BOCOG.

**IF ASKED:** The MPS was responsible for the safety, security and safe passage of the torchbearer and torch as it travelled through London. The torch attendants had no executive power in London. Their responsibility was to maintain the flame as it travelled.

There were clear lines of responsibility between police officers and the torch attendants. This is not unique to this event - previously MPS officers have worked with the torch attendants for the Athens relay and we worked closely with the Garde Republicaine for the Tour de France.

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**IF ASKED:** re diplomatic immunity? NFPUB: REFER FCO.

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**IF ASKED:** Did we know who they were? The torch attendants had no executive power in the UK. There were clear lines of responsibility between them and our officers on the ground. Policing was a matter entirely for the MPS. NPTDF.

**IF ASKED:** re cost of policing the Beijing Olympic Torch Relay in London?

The torch arrived in London on 5th April 2008. The event on 6th April covered a

31 mile route. The cost is estimated in the region of £750,000 (including opportunity costs).

IF ASKED: where does the money come from?

This will come from MPS funds as this was a community event rather than a commercial one.

MPS FOIA Disclosure