

Investigation Plan

The investigation plan is usually the first key document prepared in a case following its acceptance by the Director. It follows on from and builds on the vetting note to set out key aspects of the investigation as planned at this early stage

- scope
- timescales
- costs/resources
- quality

The plan is the case manager's although the case manager will usually wish to use other team members in helping to draw it up. Since it commits to an effective investigation using specified resources it must be accepted and approved by the Head of Domain. It is therefore a matter for the Head of Domain and Case Manager to agree when the plan will be prepared. Since drafts may be prepared version control should be maintained and the final agreed plan should be clearly identifiable and agreement recorded by the case manager and Head of Domain signing it.

The plan is not a living document but changes to the investigation will be recorded in subsequent position papers.

1. **Background**

- when the case was referred to the office and from whom;
- when the case was accepted by the office;
- additional points of note from the vetting file such as involvement of other agencies.

2. **Reconsider whether this is an appropriate case for the SFO and if not whether it or a part of it should go to another agency.**

3. **Summary of Facts**

4. **Suspects**

- Identify suspects and describe role of each.

5. **Suspected Offences**

- give brief definitions, identifying essential elements of each;

- apply definitions to the facts outlined above.
6. **The legal ingredients of the suspected offences and how to prove them in this case.**
[This overlaps with item 7 below]
7. **Determine broad scope of investigation.**
- (1) **Sources of evidence**
- Identify main sources of documents
 - Identify methods of obtaining/securing documents (search/Section 2, etc)
 - Identify main witnesses of fact and possibly preferred method of obtaining their evidence (section 2 or voluntary – bearing in mind that some witnesses may turn out to be suspects in due course)
 - Overseas evidence
 - Identify need for any expert assistance
 - Consider desirability of early PACE interviews
- (2) **Areas not being investigated**
- Identify areas not being investigated or lines of enquiry not being pursued and give reasons for the decision particularly where the focus of the investigation has been narrowed for manageability reasons (and there is a risk that at a later stage it may be alleged that the failure to pursue such lines of enquiry was unreasonable).
8. **Refer to task list (produced on the TMS).**
- The detailed task list will flow from the general investigation plan and it should allocate specific tasks to specific individuals with a timetable for completion.

9. **Restraint/confiscation**
 - Determine whether any application should be made for restraint orders (in conjunction with the Restraint and Confiscation Unit) and if so, when;
 - Determine what work should be carried out during the course of the investigation to identify, quantify and locate the proceeds of crime and the assets of the main suspects.

10. **Docman/Shared Drives/Databases**
 - This may well be dealt with separately – but ensure that everyone uses these systems in the same way.

11. **Disclosure**
 - Outline overall approach to disclosure; nominate any members of the team who are to have particular responsibility for assisting the case manager; and possibly produce a separate briefing document in this regard.

12. **Resources and Budget**
 - identify the resources you have and any additional resources that you need;
 - prepare and attach (or cross-refer to) a detailed case budget. Additional Guidance on Budget Processes and guideline costs is available.

13. **Timetable**
 - The likely timescale of the investigation should flow from this narrative investigation plan and the detailed task list and some indication should therefore be given as to how long the investigation is likely to last, when a proceed or abandon decision might be taken, etc.
 - a date for preparation of the first position paper should be included

14. **Risk Assessment**

- Any particular risk facing the investigation should be identified, preferably by reference to a separate document and an explanation given as to how any risks would be addressed. [Common risks include flight risk for suspects; loss or destruction of documents; delays caused by foreign enquiries, etc]

15. **Quality**

- Identify how the quality of the investigation will be maintained e.g. gathering appropriate evidence, reviewing lines of enquiry
- Consider what role the AD and G6 PFI will have to ensure quality
- Consider when counsel will be instructed and for what purpose

16. **Media/Confidentiality**

- Identify the approach to be taken to the media and agree an appropriate press line with the Press Office.
- Consider any particular need for confidentiality, e.g. in the run up to search operations.

17 **Any other issues**

- E.g. jurisdictional problems.