



Stabilisation Unit

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Annual Review 2018/19

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Executive summary

Throughout 2018/19 the Stabilisation Unit (SU) further embedded itself in the HMG policy process, ensuring early engagement on priority national security issues. We agreed workplans with eight National Security Strategy Implementation Groups (NSSIGs), delivering directly against National Security Council (NSC) priorities and objectives.

SU has continued to bring together civilian, police and military expertise and staff from 12 government departments. We have also established new capability on transnational threats, providing critical delivery capacity for the international Serious Organised Crime (SOC) and CONTEST (Countering Terrorism) strategies. The SOC Joint Analysis ensures a fusion approach, providing HMG's most comprehensive understanding of the international SOC threat as well as identifying early wins in combatting it.

We have built on our thought leadership with the [Elite Bargains and Political Deals research](#) and the [UK Approach to Stabilisation](#) Guide. These have both been positively received and have proved instrumental in shaping the approach of international partners. Particularly, the SU relationship with Germany has strengthened via initiatives such as joint analysis, advice and a German secondee in the SU.

374 participants from across HMG, the UK military and international partners attended our specialised training on conflict and stability, including courses on gender, peace & security and monitoring & evaluation.

On the civil-military side we provided 960 adviser days to 14 military exercises, ran sessions on at least 10 separate training courses, presented 45 lectures and inputted to four prioritised NATO and UK military doctrine products.

We deployed 738 members of our civilian roster and core staff to more than 40 locations around the world in support of HMG policy and programming on national security priorities.

Our roster of deployable civilian experts has grown with the recruitment of 90 new members, primarily in support of our growing offer on transnational threats. We now have 533 experts on our roster.

The rebranded Government Partnerships International (GPI) has worked with partners across the former Soviet Union, Afghanistan and Iraq and has become a critical enabler of the wider Department for International Development (DFID) Partnership for Development (P4D) programme, brokering partnerships between HMG institutions and overseas governments.

Peter McDermott
Acting Deputy Director, Stabilisation Unit

Stabilisation Unit: 2018/19 in numbers



Our budget: **£12.82m**

Our People: We are made up of staff from **12** Government Departments, as well as serving police and military personnel and members of staff seconded to us from international partners.



We agreed workplans with **8** National Security Strategy Implementation Groups, ensuring we are delivering directly against National Security priorities and objectives.



We continued to grow our roster of deployable civilian experts, recruiting **90** new members – primarily in support of our growing offer on transnational threats. We now have over **530** experts on our roster.



374 participants from across HMG, the UK military and international partners attended our specialised training on conflict and stability, including courses on gender, peace and security, and monitoring & evaluation.



We deployed over **738** members of our civilian roster and core staff to **40+** locations around the globe in support of HMG policy and programming on national security priorities.



5 Serious and Organised Crime Joint Analyses examining SOC in over **20** countries completed and disseminated across government.

Introduction

The Stabilisation Unit is an agile, cross-government unit providing expertise to build stability, prevent conflict and meet security challenges internationally. We support the integrated co-ordination of UK Government activities in fragile and conflict-affected states by being a centre of expertise on conflict, stabilisation, security and justice.

We recruit, train and deploy qualified and experienced Deployable Civilian Experts (DCEs) to support UK Government activities in fragile and conflict-affected states, and to multilateral missions on behalf of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

Our team captures and analyses evidence from practical experience to identify and share best practice, inform the UK Government's strategy and policy development, improve our operational delivery and increase the impact of our work.

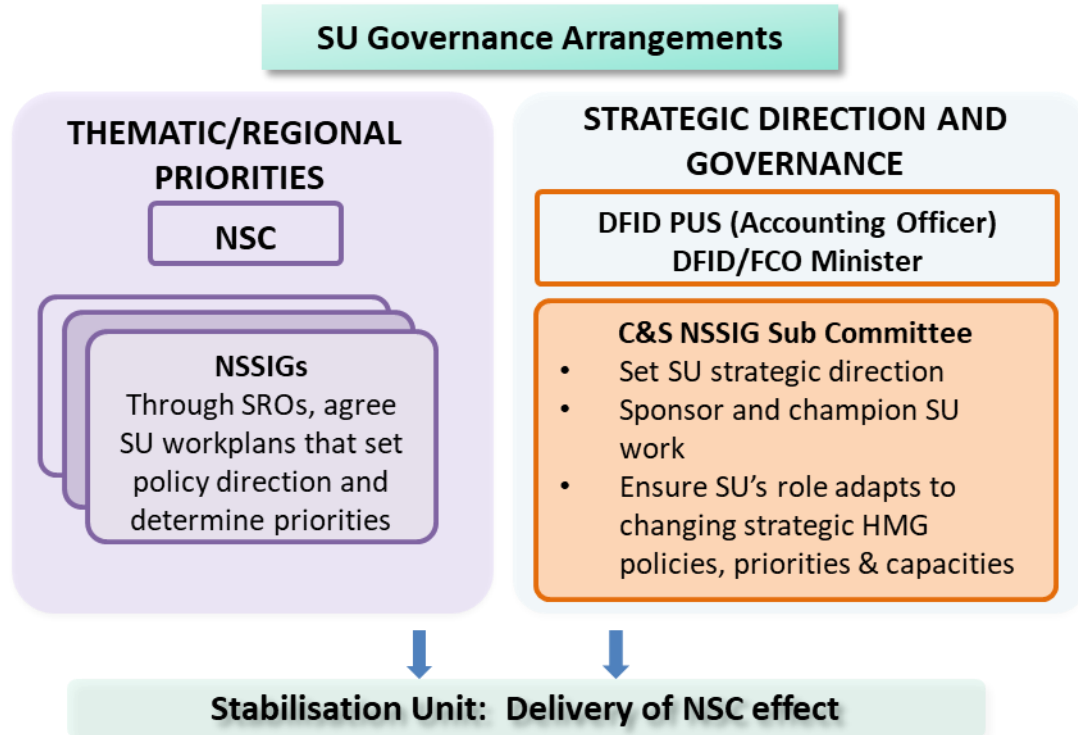
The National Security Strategy Implementation Group (NSSIG) for Conflict & Stabilisation is responsible for setting overall priorities for SU. Those priorities are captured in a series of regional and thematic work plans agreed with the relevant NSSIG Senior Responsible Owners (SROs) (see figure 1 below).

These workplans inform the four key strands of activity, articulated in the SU Business Plan, that are in place for SU to deliver results. These are:

- **Enablers:** The enabling functions that ensure we have the right platform, people and resources to find the right deployable civilian experts, with the right experience, deploy them safely, with the right equipment, to the right place at the right time. Every time.
- **Policy into delivery:** Ensuring our expertise informs UK Government conflict, stability, security and justice policies and programmes in NSC priority countries and strengthens the capability of partner government institutions through better reform interventions.
- **Strengthening international partnerships:** Ensuring UK Government efforts to improve the international system are strengthened by SU expertise and relationships with multilateral organisations and bilateral partners.
- **Learning from experience:** Supporting the UK Government to learn lessons from experience and apply best practice to conflict, stability, security, justice and institutional interventions.

This annual report provides a summary of achievements and impact against each of these areas.

Figure 1: SU Governance arrangements



Enablers: Making it happen

Establishing a stronger digital presence: Our digital presence has significantly increased through our use of social media. Our branding and internal communications has also been a major focus throughout 2018/19. Our [Twitter account](#) was established in December 2018 and has since generated over 27,000 impressions. Our engagement via LinkedIn has also increased substantially with an increase in followers by over 300% to more than 4,000 followers. Ultimately this means we are reaching more people with our key messages, increasing understanding of stabilisation.

Growing our civilian roster: We continued to develop our roster of DCEs, recruiting 90 additional members in 2018/19, bringing the total number of experts on the roster to over 530. A key achievement over 2018/19 has been to establish, with flat costs, a substantial cadre of expertise on transnational threats. This includes expertise on countering violent extremism, counter terrorism, serious and organised crime, and migration and modern slavery.

We also ensured our operational training offer prepared our civilian, police and military experts for multiple eventualities, responding to unique challenges such as the need for Maritime Security Training to the UN Verification and Inspection Mission (UNVIM) in Djibouti, and Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) training for monitors posted to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Ukraine.

Deploying and ensuring the security and welfare of deployed civilian experts and secondees to multilateral missions: SU's deployments team

supported the deployment of over 730 members of our civilian roster and civil servant staff to more than 40 locations around the world in support of UK Government policy and programming on national security priorities. We have continued to provide leadership on Duty of Care, chairing the 5th Duty of Care Roundtable in Vienna, attended by over 100 representatives from more than 20 organisations.

Policy into delivery

Whitehall departments, embassies and country offices directly request support from SU for high-level policy advice, scoping missions, programme design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation and tailored strategy, programme and performance reviews. Throughout 2018/19 we have provided:

Integrated analysis and evidence on conflict and security issues: We facilitated analyses of conflict drivers and dynamics in Somalia, Pakistan, Libya, Somaliland, OPTs, Burma, Sudan, Central Asia, South Caucasus and Moldova, Iraq, Yemen and the Western Balkans.

In partnership with the Home Office we launched the Serious Organised Crime Joint Analyses (SOCJAs). The SOCJAs focus on identifying the drivers of serious and organised crime in particular contexts and highlights entry-points and vulnerabilities to inform HMG programming to tackle serious and organised crime.

Technical advice and support to policy and programming: We have used our expertise to support UK Government policy and programming in response to conflicts across the globe, including Nigeria, Yemen, Libya and Syria, ensuring this is based on up-to-date evidence and lessons from other contexts.

Support to the Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) portfolio: We provided technical expertise and recommendations to improve CSSF programmes including by reviewing high value and high-risk programmes. We undertook 27 Annual Reviews in total, covering a range of thematic areas, including Policing, Gender, Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and defence engagement programmes.

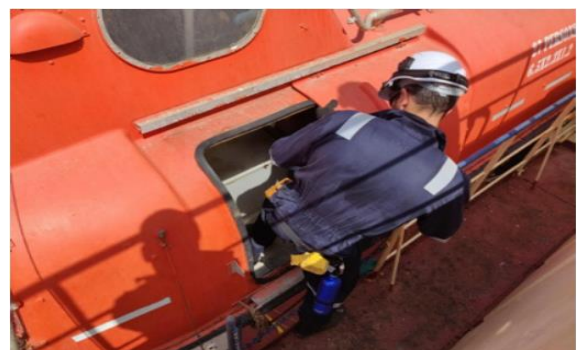
Focus on Yemen

Yemen has been a priority for SU throughout 2018/19.

We provided advice to UK and international partners on the conflict dynamics and options for stabilisation programming.

SU also facilitated the UK's contribution to the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism.

The UK deployed team participated in over 80% of UNVIM inspections since the mission began in May 2016. UK DCEs have had a role in over 300 inspections since they were deployed, clearing over 5.8 million metric tons of food and fuel shipments into Hodeidah.



International Development Gender Act

SU helps to deliver HMG priorities on gender equality in fragile and conflict-affected states. As outlined in the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review, Women, Peace & Security (WPS) “is a UK priority, and we will ensure that women’s rights are fully taken into account in our overseas counter-extremism work, in humanitarian emergencies, in our early warning and conflict analysis, and in our new military doctrine. We will continue to promote the active participation of women in peace-building discussions, including through work with governments such as in Afghanistan and Iraq.”

Failure to ensure conflict, stability, security and justice work in fragile and conflict-affected states is gender sensitive results in less effective contributions to desired outcomes and the potential for unintended harm. SU uses a combination of training, expert advice and programme support to integrate gender into its own and wider UK Government work. SU supports departments to comply with the Gender Act. Through a Gender and Conflict Adviser, the Gender, Conflict and Stability Civilian Stabilisation Group (CSG) cadre and the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI) Team of Experts, SU delivers and supports HMG to deliver gender sensitive programmes based on gender sensitive conflict analysis and gender disaggregated monitoring and evaluation.

Strengthening International Partnerships

Through 2018/19, the UK, through SU, continued to provide thought leadership on stabilisation internationally. We worked closely with international partners through fora such as the Stabilisation Leaders Forum (SLF) agreeing core stabilisation principles, sharing lessons and best practice, and carrying out joint analysis and learning with international partners.

We also worked closely with multilateral partners such as NATO, the European Union and the United Nations. In 2018/19 we facilitated the deployment of 37 UK experts to multilateral platforms around the world.

Our advice and expertise have supported UK Government departments to strengthen their engagement with international and multilateral partners, with SU working to ensure that the latest analysis and evidence on effective stabilisation informs the UK’s engagement with its partners.

Learning from Experience

Capturing and sharing conflict-related evidence and guidance: 2018/19 saw SU continue its thought leadership on conflict and stabilisation with the launch of two flagship products: The [Elite Bargains and Political Deals research](#) and the [UK Approach to Stabilisation: A Guide for Policy Makers and Practitioners](#).

We launched our Elite Bargains and Political Deals (EBPD) research project at Chatham House in June 2018. The research was delivered in two phases. Phase one focused on the development and synthesis of a robust set of 21

case studies considering the relationship between elite bargains, political settlements and peace agreements, given the degree to which the interactions between all three shape transitions out of conflict. Phase two sought to disseminate these findings, working closely with policymakers and practitioners to use it as a tool to analyse conflict. Since the launch we have been supporting HMG efforts to understand and respond to conflict, through targeted application of the EBPD framework in several contexts.

The UK Approach to Stabilisation was published in December 2018 and forms the basis for HMG policy and programming in stabilisation contexts. The Guide compiles advice into an accessible 'one-stop shop' for policy makers and practitioners seeking to understand how the UK 'does' stabilisation. It also provides guidance on the political, service delivery and security and justice aspects of stabilisation, and the interplay with actions to address transnational threats. The Guide situates the UK's latest analysis in the current policy landscape and sets out some of the dilemmas and trade-offs that simultaneously pursuing these policy goals entails.

Specialist training on conflict, stability, security and justice issues: In total, we reached over 370 people from across government, the military and our international partners with our specialist training courses in 2018/19. This included courses on gender, conflict and security; security and justice; and monitoring and evaluation in conflict and stabilisation contexts.

Civil-military: We engage closely with the UK Military, helping to strengthen the civil-military element of the UK's integrated approach to tackling conflict. We deployed advisers to 14 military exercises both in the UK and overseas. We also provided civilian input to prioritised NATO and UK military doctrine, ensuring they are informed by HMG's integrated working practices, objectives and policy commitments. Coordinated by our liaison officer at the Defence Academy, our training, lectures, workshops and exercise support were delivered to over 700 military leaders in 2018/19, helping to promote lessons from the Chilcot Inquiry and improve civil-military integration.

Government Partnerships International

Government Partnerships International (GPI), formerly the National School of Government International (NSGI), was officially launched by Ministers in December 2018. GPI sits physically within SU and uses the SU platform for managing the deployment of civilian expertise. GPI's work contributes to SU's objectives on Policy into Delivery and Learning from Experience.

GPI delivers quality strategic advice and support on centre of government and cross-cutting institutional reform, collaborating with other peer to peer partnership providers across HMG. GPI also shares expertise and lessons learned on partnership approaches, tools and techniques to influence the design, delivery and evaluation of UK and international partnerships

Joint International Policing Hub

The Joint International Policing Hub (JIPH) brings civil service, police, law enforcement and other stakeholders together to coordinate and develop the UK's international policing offer. The JIPH is hosted by SU which provides oversight along with the National Police Chiefs' Council. During 2018/19 the JIPH has considered a range of international requests for non-operational police assistance in fragile and conflict-affected states, built relationships with strategically important countries and institutions and provided training to international police audiences. The JIPH has led on bespoke pieces of work, including a police-focused programme to tackle modern slavery in Vietnam, with the dual aim of reducing instances of victimisation and associated criminality there and in the UK.

Risk and Financial Performance

Risk

The SU's approach to risk is designed to ensure we are sufficiently flexible and agile to respond as required to support NSC priorities effectively in fragile and conflict-affected states. SU operates in sensitive, dynamic and often fast-moving environments, which is acknowledged in our risk probability and impact ratings. By the nature of our work in support of the UK Government's stabilisation agenda, SU places people in locations of increased risk. The safety, security and welfare of the people we deploy is a fundamental concern to us and so we have a robust approach to our Duty of Care obligations. This includes ensuring that deployees are appropriately trained and briefed, and that ongoing assessments are carried out on risks and how to address them. The mitigation measures we put in place, as outlined in the SU Risk Register and security assessments, are designed to address each situation individually to ensure that informed decisions are made with a clear understanding of the net risks.

SU maintains and regularly reviews a detailed risk register which lists our key risks and the mitigation measures we have in place. Our identified risks cover all major areas of SU activity, including our ability to deliver quality expertise; the impact of our work in informing and shaping the UK Government's approach to stabilisation; and financial and reputational risks.

Financial performance

Financial year 2018/19 spend was £12.89m against a cross-government allocation of £12.82m (+0.55%).

Value for money

Delivering Value for Money (VfM) remains a priority for SU, be that through building an internal transnational threats capability at no extra cost or continuously refining our processes, ensuring we are making best use of technology. The Deputy Head of the Stabilisation Unit is the VfM Champion in SU's Senior Leadership Team.