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Higher GIS and Business Analyst  
Metropolitan Police Service



## What does your company do?

The Metropolitan Police Service is a Police Service, tackling and reducing crime across London

## What is your role?

My title is “Higher Geographical Information Analyst” The team in which I work is a Mapping development team, so rather than working as an Intelligence Analyst to analyse data and produce maps, my team puts in place

the tools and data for others to be able to use to analyse data and produce maps.

## Describe a typical mapping or spatial analysis task conducted in your role?

My role has been very varied. I wrote a programme to run within MapInfo which takes MPS crime address data, geocodes it and plots the data on the map interface. The data is stored in a SQL database and the Analyst uses a query dialogue box to specify date ranges, crime types and areas to map crime data. On the data side of my role, we look to ensure that there are sufficient datasets available for analysis such as OS map layers data, MOSAIC profile data, pictometry for 3D etc. Part of my role is spent updating datasets and distributing them to users across the MPS. I regularly attended conferences to keep up to date with mapping software that is available that may benefit our users. I also spend time training users to use various GIS systems – MapInfo and ESRI mainly and helping them to get the most out of their data.

## What career path did you follow into your current job?

I did a BSc in Geography at the University of Liverpool followed by an MSc in applied Meteorology. I worked at the Environment Agency for 3 years in Flood Defence which was a GIS role and from there took a GIS job in the MPS.

### **What advice would you give a student wishing to start a Geographic Data Science career in your industry?**

I have found that GIS is competitive and there aren't many jobs around because it is quite niche. The MPS has 25,000 Police Staff, yet there are only 3 GIS posts. Gaining any skills and experience in computer programming and Business Analysis would be advantageous for a GIS development role.

### **Where do you see the Geographic Data Science industry going in the next 10 years?**

A lot of GIS roles in other companies are moving towards being quite GIS development focused and require a range of programming skills to implement the software and hardware. When I started my career, work was more about creating maps and showing how spatial data can be used. Companies are a step ahead now and want the production of maps to be automated rather than Analysts doing the work and certainly at the MPS most of the maps are now produced by our systems as PDF's over night. Google maps has made data so readily available on your phones that there is no longer the same need for GIS like there used to be.