

News Release

ISSUED ON BEHALF OF HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY FOR SCOTLAND

January 26, 2008

RECOMMENDATIONS ON POLICE USE OF FIREARMS

All forces should work to implement the National Police Firearms Training Curriculum and get to at least provisional status within six months – that's the main recommendations from a report out today.

The report from HM Inspectorate of Constabulary - which provides an update on the implementation of the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland's (ACPOS) Capability and Capacity Review on the Police Use of Firearms – finds that some progress has been made but in certain areas is too slow.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland Mr Paddy Tomkins said:

"It's an unfortunate reality that improvements in the police use of firearms all too often follow shootings by the police. Such incidents and the inquiries following them have provided valuable and necessary lessons for the police.

"It is right that, where an officer or member of the public is killed or injured during police operations an auditable and highly structured review follows. We in HMICS have conducted this inspection, not because of a specific incident but to ensure police use of firearms is as robust and evidence based as possible.

"It's worth pointing out that in Scotland only those who volunteer and are trained for the role of Authorised Firearms Officer (AFOs) can be issued with firearms. The average percentage of AFOs is 3.7 per cent of officers across Scotland.

"However, we recommend that all Scottish Forces should work towards achieving the National Police Firearms Training Provisional License within the next six months. This will require them to embrace the necessary scrutiny and improvement processes and collate important data to inform decisions about baseline and specialist services."

NOTES FOR NEWS EDITORS

1. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (commonly known as the Police Inspectorate or HMICS) is responsible for inspecting the eight Scottish police forces and five police services. HMICS operates independently of the police forces, police authorities and the Scottish Government and exists to monitor and improve the police services in Scotland.

2. The report is available from www.scotland.gov.uk

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