



HM Inspectorate
of Constabulary
for Scotland

A light blue map of the Dumfries and Galloway region in Scotland is overlaid on the background. The map shows the coastline and major inland features.

Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary

Primary Inspection 2006

Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary

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A Report by Her Majesty's
Inspectorate of Constabulary

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS	Page 1
AREAS TO BE REVIEWED AT THE NEXT INSPECTION	4
GOOD PRACTICE	6
INTRODUCTION	7
LEADERSHIP	9
Background	9
Force Structure	10
Senior Management	12
Dumfries and Galloway Police, Fire and Rescue Committee	13
POLICY AND STRATEGY	14
Strategic Planning	14
Performance Management	16
Policy	17
PEOPLE MANAGEMENT	18
Overview	18
Recruitment and Selection	19
Training	20
Career Development	21
Vetting of Staff	21
Support Staff	22
Appraisals	23
Welfare and Sickness Absence	23
Working Time Regulations	25
Special Constables	26
Staff Motivation and Satisfaction	27
Flexible Working	28
Diversity	29
Health and Safety	30
Officer Safety	30
Cadets	31

	Page
PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES	32
Partnership Working	32
Community Planning	32
Community Safety	34
Antisocial Behaviour	34
Community Wardens	35
Financial Planning and Monitoring	36
Internal Audit Arrangements	37
Best Value	37
Efficiency Targets	38
Communications and Information Services (CIS)	39
Information Assurance, Data Protection and Freedom of Information	40
Airwave	40
Property Management	41
Fleet and Driver Management	42
Procurement	42
Projects and Programme Management	43
Environmental Issues	44
Court Escort	44
PROCESSES	45
Call Handling	45
Operational Policing	47
Crime Recording	48
Crime Management	49
Major Crime Enquiries	49
Intelligence-Led Policing	50
Forensic Science Support	51
Policing Diverse Communities	51
Community Tension	52
Victim Support	52
Vulnerable Persons	53
Family Liaison	53
Family Protection Unit	54
Missing Persons	55
Firearms Licensing	56
Liquor and Other Licensing	56
Drugs Policing	57
Fraud and Financial Investigation	58
Police Use of Firearms	58
Public Order	59
Underwater/Marine Support	60
Air Support	60
Mountain Rescue	60
Police Dogs	61
Road Policing	61
Collision Investigation	63
Specialist Search Operations	63
Emergency Planning	63

Ports Policing	64
Criminal Justice Process	65
Warrants	67
Care and Custody of Prisoners	67
Complaints and Professional Standards	69
Media	71
RESULTS	72
Crime	74
Criminal Justice	75
Race Issues: Internal	75
Race Issues: External	76
Attendance Management	76
Consultation	77
Service Delivery	78
Firearms	79
Conclusion	79

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Overview

1. Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary has a strong community focus and provides an efficient, locally based, policing service. HMIC found strong commitment to quality of service to the public and partnership working. The inspection team spoke with representatives of the council, partnership agencies, community groups, voluntary bodies and other stakeholders and found consistent positive comment regarding their support for the Chief Constable, senior management and force in general.
2. The performance of the force in terms of national indicators is generally very positive when compared with the Scottish average and the force's own historical performance. In key areas such as housebreaking and violent crime the level of crime is falling, while in other areas such as detecting drug dealing offences, the rise reflects the positive work of the force to identify and address this crime type.
3. The force's commitment to continuous improvement is reflected in the number of areas identified for review at the next inspection. HMIC found that although it does perform strongly, the force was addressing a number of areas for potential improvement at the time of inspection.

Key Issues

4. The purpose of HMIC's inspections is to add value and support continuous improvement. To that end, 12 recommendations have been made and 12 instances of good practice have been identified that HMIC would encourage other forces to consider.
5. Previously, the linkage between the force's strategic and financial planning has not been as clear as would be desirable – an issue that had been identified by the force, HMIC and Audit Scotland. At the time of this inspection, the force was about to prepare its next strategic plan, with the intention of drawing together several strands, including finance, within the process. The new strategic plan will be reviewed at the next inspection.
6. Several recommendations directed at the force reflect the growing importance of Best Value in the public sector. These include increasing the involvement of council members in Best Value and consulting with the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) to develop an ongoing Best Value regime.
7. HMIC has recommended that the force review its approach to internal monitoring, audit and inspection, and has identified four specific areas that it would expect to be addressed within that work. While the force does have several mechanisms in place already, there would be benefit in adopting a more systematic approach.
8. While overall performance is good, the force is aware that its performance in addressing road collisions is, like other areas with rural road networks, not achieving the desired reduction in those resulting in serious or fatal injury. HMIC's recommendation in this area encourages the force to work with its partners to address this matter in a structured way.

Conclusion

9. Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary provides a good service to the people of Dumfries and Galloway, while also making significant contributions to national policing matters.

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1 - To ensure greater resilience and distribution of tasks at executive level, HMIC recommends that the force examine the reporting lines for the operational and functional groups, with a view to reducing the demand on a single post.

(paragraph 1.8)

Recommendation 2a - HMIC recommends that to ensure confidence in the force's processes for delivering and monitoring its strategy, particularly those that are the subject of public performance reporting, a review be undertaken to clarify the ownership and frequency of monitoring, audit and inspection within the force.

(paragraph 2.14)

Recommendation 2b - The force should develop a structured approach to auditing force IT systems, which considers system support and maintenance arrangements, physical and logical access controls, input/processing/output controls, existence/operation/review of audit trail, back-up and recovery arrangements, business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements.

(paragraph 4.43)

Recommendation 2c - HMIC recommends that the force review its procedures for allocating incidents to resources and the process whereby attendance is monitored.

(paragraph 5.10)

Recommendation 2d - HMIC recommends that to ensure compliance with accepted national standards and to retain public confidence in the force's performance figures in respect of crime, an appropriate Force Crime Registrar and Deputy be identified. It is anticipated that this would be combined with a programme to increase understanding of the SCRS throughout the force. HMIC accepts that due to the low levels of crime in the area, these roles are unlikely to be full-time commitments for the staff members identified.

(paragraph 5.24)

Recommendation 2e - HMIC recommends that the force review its processes for documenting, storing and auditing productions.

(paragraph 5.131)

Recommendation 3 - HMIC recommends that the force make the necessary changes to bring it fully into line with the Working Time legislation.

(paragraph 3.39)

Recommendation 4 - HMIC recommends that the force review the training and deployment processes for Special Constables, to ensure that they meet the needs of both the force and Special Constables themselves. This review should also examine the provision of storage accommodation for Special Constables' personal protective equipment, in terms of the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992.

(paragraph 3.45)

Recommendation 5 - HMIC recommends that the force introduce a comprehensive officer safety policy.

(paragraph 3.67)

Recommendation 6 - The force should encourage the active involvement of elected members in the Best Value agenda, and should ensure that its senior officers play an integral part in planning and monitoring Best Value.

(paragraph 4.33)

Recommendation 7 - A framework should be introduced, with reference to the ACPOS Best Practice Guide being developed by the Business Benefits Unit, for identifying and prioritising the service areas to be reviewed. Progress against this programme should be regularly monitored and reported to the Policy Group and members. In addition, a system of performance measurement and monitoring should be established to allow both senior officers and members of the Police Fire and Rescue Committee to confirm that actions agreed following review are fully implemented and are effective in meeting identified objectives and targets.

(paragraph 4.35)

Recommendation 8 - Given the current financial pressures faced by the force and rising targets for efficiency savings, it is important that a formal savings plan is approved to ensure that future efficiency targets are achieved.

(paragraph 4.36)

Recommendation 9 - HMIC recommends that to enhance officer safety, the force review its ability to pass safety-related intelligence to officers prior to arriving at incidents.

(paragraph 4.39)

Recommendation 10 - HMIC recommends that the force develop an overarching property strategy which brings together the disparate elements of work being undertaken and planned, prioritises them, clearly states the financial planning and funding arrangements, and considers exercising prudent borrowing powers.

(paragraph 4.52)

Recommendation 11 - HMIC recommends that the force enhance processes to allow road traffic collision information to be analysed regularly; the results should be disseminated within the force and amongst partners, and should inform how the Mobile Support group and Safety Camera Partnership resources are deployed.

(paragraph 5.107)

Recommendation 12 - HMIC recommends that improved CCTV coverage in custody areas be extended to include the point of entry to each custody suite, and that an appropriate level of lighting be put in place in these sometimes challenging working environments. Such improvements would not only facilitate prisoner handling, but would also provide more complete video coverage of the time an individual is in custody.

(paragraph 5.138)

Areas to be Reviewed at the Next Inspection

1. The force's revised strategic planning incorporating financial planning (para 2.5)
2. The force approach to training for both police and support staff (para 3.15)
3. The force approach to staff vetting (para 3.21)
4. The force's appraisal management (para 3.26)
5. The force approach to staff surveys (para 3.46)
6. Community Planning and Community Safety structures and processes in Dumfries and Galloway (para 4.10)
7. The force IT user forum (para 4.41)
8. Internet and E-mail monitoring software (para 4.45)
9. The force response to PITO Airwave report (para 4.47)
10. Use of status code to identify incidents for call back by FCC (para 5.14)
11. Proposals to develop SIOs by attachment to Strathclyde Police (para 5.31)
12. The revised structure of the Force Intelligence Bureau, the force response to MAPPA and its dedicated CHIS unit (para 5.38)
13. Force training for staff in relation to dealing with vulnerable persons (para 5.54)
14. The force response to incidents of Domestic Abuse (para 5.64)
15. Developments from the Drug Death Review Group (para 5.82)
16. Force Strategic Firearms Threat Assessment (para 5.86)
17. The secondment of police officers to UKIS (para 5.121)

18. Intervals between caution and charge and administration of restorative justice warnings
(para 5.129)
19. Supervisory oversight of custody matters
(para 5.140)

Good Practice

1. The use of facilitated team building following large staff change in the force.
(para 1.18)
2. Identifying and supporting staff at psychological risk.
(para 3.36)
3. The use of the Bonus system, in the absence of more appropriate mechanisms, to reward additional demands on staff.
(para 3.52)
4. The force approach to Health and Safety Training,
(para 3.63)
5. Force commitment to national IT strategy rather than short term local solutions.
(para 4.37)
6. Monitoring the development of SIOs by use of a matrix of formal training and experience gained.
(para 5.30)
7. Vetting and training of selected Victim Support Staff to enable direct access to appropriate force information to improve support to victims of crime.
(para 5.49)
8. Selecting staff on the basis of skill rather than rank, where appropriate.
(para 5.56)
9. Effective co-ordination of the mountain rescue group, police search manager, incident officer and, where required, family liaison officer.
(para 5.100)
10. Management of all police vehicle speed camera activations by the Complaints and Professional Standards Department
(para 5.109)
11. Co-location of police report management staff at the office of the Procurator Fiscal.
(para 5.126)
12. Providing explanatory notes detailing detention and custody processes in a variety of languages.
(para 5.139)
13. Recording both quality of service and non-statutory complaints alongside formal complaints in order to learn from them and improve quality of service.
(para 5.147)

Introduction

1. This primary inspection of Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary was conducted in November 2006 by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, Andrew Brown, CBE, QPM and Her Majesty's Lay Inspector, Peter Daniels, with the assistance of staff officers.
2. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) works to a programme of regular inspection: five-yearly primary inspections are interspersed with 18-month reviews involving updated risk assessments and the option of focused field visits. In the initial stages of a primary inspection HMIC sends out a questionnaire for the force to complete. The questionnaire – or overarching protocol as it is known – covers all areas of policing and organisational activity, and requires a comprehensive and detailed response. Having received and analysed the response, HMIC then carries out an options appraisal.
3. The options appraisal process means that areas of activity may not be examined in detail where HMIC is satisfied from the force response that little would be gained from detailed scrutiny. Inspection attention is focused on issues of strategic significance and those areas where good practice has been identified, approaches or performance results appear less impressive, or where additional evidence is required to allow accurate assessment. Those areas not examined in depth may be revisited during subsequent review inspections or national thematic inspections, as appropriate.
4. Through the options appraisal process, HMIC determined that the inspection fieldwork and detailed scrutiny should focus primarily on:
 - the structure of the force executive;
 - the strategic planning process, performance management and accountability;
 - community partnerships and planning;
 - crime management;
 - operational support functions, including road policing and police use of firearms;
 - complaints and professional standards;
 - results.
5. In collaboration with Audit Scotland, HMIC also examined the force's finance and Best Value arrangements. This joint scrutiny allows both organisations to discharge their respective statutory responsibilities while minimising the overall inspection burden on the force. HMIC continues to work with Audit Scotland to examine approaches to Best Value in the context of the Scottish police service. For the time being though, HMIC's method of inspection this area remains unchanged. For this inspection HMIC also collaborated with the Commissions for Racial Equality, Disability Rights and Equal Opportunities, each of whom provided valuable guidance in assessing the force's compliance with the respective duties relating to Race, Disability and Gender equality.

6. Prior to the primary inspection, compliance Auditors from HMIC England and Wales inspected the force's use of the Police National Computer (PNC). Their findings and recommendations have been reported separately to the force and will lead to a separate action plan being drawn up. To date seven of the eight Scottish forces have been subject to such audit, amongst whom Dumfries and Galloway has received the highest grading.

7. During the inspection, HMIC consulted a number of statutory and voluntary bodies operating across Dumfries and Galloway with whom the force performs joint work. HMIC was particularly keen to learn the opinions of communities and to hear of their experiences of contact with the force. To this end, the inspection team reviewed information from public surveys and consulted with community representatives and organisations across the force area. Feedback was very positive and supportive of the Chief Constable and of the police and support staff members of Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary.

8. HMIC also met with members of the Dumfries and Galloway Police, Fire and Rescue Committee, and consulted force representatives of the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents, the Scottish Police Federation and support staff unions. In the course of the inspection, members of the inspection team also spoke with police support staff and officers of varying ranks and roles, both individually and in focus groups.

9. While this report is an informed assessment of Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary, it is a snap-shot and does not purport to be a full account of all organisational activity. More detail can be found in force publications, in particular the Chief Constable's Annual Report which can be accessed from the force website (<http://www.dumfriesandgalloway.police.uk>).

10. As a consequence of this inspection, HMIC has made 12 recommendations; these are included in the body of the report and summarised on pages 2-3. The recommendations are intended to be constructive and to assist the force in delivering a continuously improving service. HMIC also highlighted 19 areas currently being developed by the force, to be examined further at the first review inspection.

11. HMIC acknowledges the support of the Chief Constable and the Police, Fire and Rescue Committee, and appreciates the assistance and co-operation it received throughout the inspection process. HMIC would similarly like to thank those consulted, both within the organisation and in the communities of Dumfries and Galloway, for their valuable contributions.

12. For some years, HMIC has concluded the introduction of its primary inspection reports by indicating whether the inspected organisation was found to be 'efficient and effective'. It did so because that is the language of the 1967 Police (Scotland) Act. In 2006 this language is dated and does not reflect the increased focus on quality of service to the public. Consequently, HMIC has decided to replace those words with a comment that will give a general description of the organisation and the service it provides.

13. Dumfries and Galloway is the smallest of Scotland's eight police forces if measured by staff numbers, but covers a large geographic area. It has a strong community focus and provides an efficient, locally based, policing service. It works well with partners and is contributing to a decrease in reported crime and an increase in the rate of detection. Overall, it provides a good service to the people of Dumfries and Galloway, while also making significant contributions to national policing matters.

1. Leadership

Background

1.1 Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary is the oldest of Scotland's eight police forces, having been formed in 1948. It covers the single council area of Dumfries and Galloway which has a population of approximately 147,000. It is, along with Fife Constabulary, one of only two forces in Scotland where the force serves a single council area. Despite being the smallest of the Scottish forces in staff terms, it covers an area of 2,649 square miles.

1.2 The force has a Grant Aided Expenditure budget for the financial year 2006-07 of £29.129 million. On top of this it also receives £2.67 million from the Scottish Executive for policing the Stranraer and Cairnryan ports. At the time of inspection, the force staff strength in fulltime equivalents was 478 police officers, 109 Special Constables and 275.88 support staff.

1.3 The constabulary divides the area into two divisions, namely Galloway division and Dumfries Division. Despite having the larger land area, Galloway division has a lower population and crime level and therefore a smaller staff contingent. Dumfries division has a larger staff to deal with its larger population and workload.

Figure 1 – Map of Force Area Showing Divisions



Map courtesy of Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary.

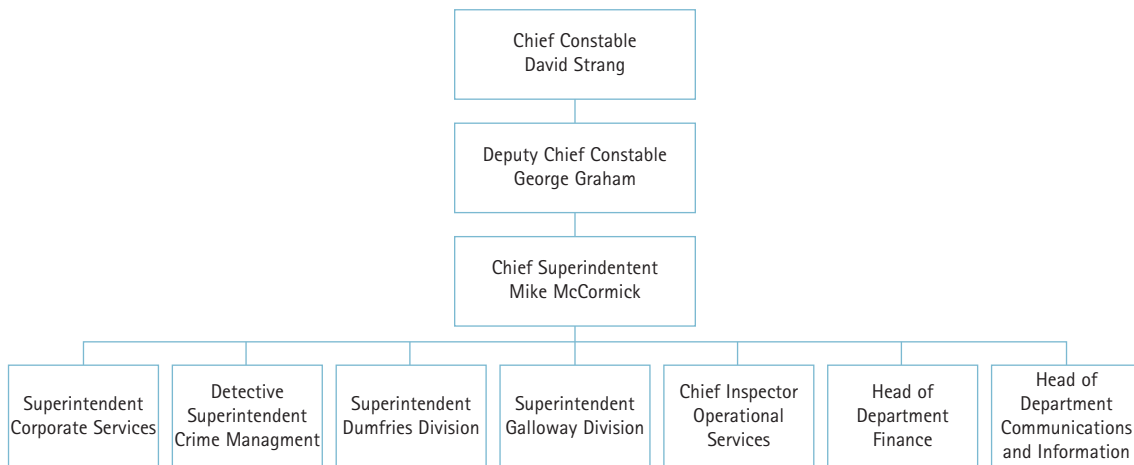
Force Structure

1.4 The force is currently headed by Chief Constable David Strang, QPM, BSc, MSc, who will be leaving in March 2007 to become Chief Constable of Lothian and Borders Police. The Chief Constable is supported in the force executive by the Deputy Chief Constable and the force's Chief Superintendent.

1.5 Executive responsibility for the ACPOS business area portfolios is split between these three executive posts. The Chief Constable holds the portfolios of Performance Management, Finance and Personnel & Training, and is currently chair of the Criminal Justice business area and ACPOS representative on the National Criminal Justice Board. The Deputy Chief Constable represents the force in the ACPOS General Policing, Crime, Professional Standards and Information Management business areas. The Chief Superintendent represents the force on the Diversity and Road Policing business areas.

1.6 However, as can be seen from Figure 2, all line management responsibility for the functional areas of the force falls to the Chief Superintendent. Although the Deputy Chief Constable has a key role in managing professional standards and complaints against the police, even there, line management of the staff involved is effected through Corporate Services and therefore through the Chief Superintendent.

Figure 2 – Force Executive and Responsibilities



1.7 HMIC is aware of the force's recent review of senior management in headquarters-based functions, and understands that in the near future an additional Superintendent post will be added and the above structure revised. Under the new structure the heads of Communication and Information Services and Finance will report to the Superintendent, Corporate Services, thereby reducing the number of functions directly reporting to the Chief Superintendent. However, the Chief Superintendent will remain the single point of line management at executive level.

1.8 This executive structure, which has all functional heads reporting to a single executive member, is unique in Scotland and, in HMIC's view, does not represent a sustainable spread of responsibilities at executive level.

Recommendation 1

To ensure greater resilience and distribution of tasks at executive level, HMIC recommends that the force examine the reporting lines for the operational and functional groups, with a view to reducing the demand on a single post.

1.9 Operational policing in Dumfries and Galloway is delivered in two divisional areas, each of which is led by a Superintendent.

1.10 The Dumfries Division Superintendent is supported by two Chief Inspectors, one of whom is Area Commander for the immediate Dumfries area and line manager for Operational Support including the Mobile Support Group and Community Policing Unit. The other is the Operations Commander, covering the Lockerbie, Annan and Sanquhar areas of the force and providing local line management of the divisional Crime Management Services' detective officers.

1.11 The Galloway Division Superintendent is supported by a single Chief Inspector, with the areas of Stewartry, Newton Stewart and Stranraer each managed by an Inspector. Additionally, the functions of Operational Support and Crime Management Services are led by an Inspector and Detective Inspector (DI) respectively, each reporting to the Chief Inspector.

1.12 The force structure also includes Corporate Services, Crime Management Services, Operational Service, Finance, and Communications and Information business areas.

1.13 Corporate Services is led by a Superintendent. It co-ordinates the functions of Personnel & Training, Complaints & Professional Standards and Performance Management, all of which are based at police headquarters.

1.14 Crime Management Services, led by a Detective Superintendent, is divided into two areas: those identified as HQ-related, including the force intelligence bureau and Special Branch; and those delivered in parallel with divisional policing, but still requiring specialised resources within the Crime Management Service (CMS). The 'non-HQ' CMS are Scenes of Crime, Drugs Squad, Fraud and Financial Investigation Unit, and Family Protection Unit. Each division has CMS officers located within it. Although these staff are managed on a daily basis within the division, central co-ordination is maintained to ensure that incidents requiring a wider force response are managed appropriately.

1.15 Operational Services, currently led by a Chief Inspector, takes in the areas of Road Policing, the Force Communications Centre, Emergency Planning, management of warrants and headquarters-based Community Services.

1.16 The Finance group covers three functions: finance, property services and fleet and procurement. This group is managed by the force Head of Finance who reports to the Chief Superintendent.

Senior Management

1.17 With the exception of the Chief Constable, who has been in post since August 2001, the force has seen a considerable change in senior staff in the 18 months prior to inspection. As a result of a number of retirements, vacancies arose both at Deputy Chief Constable and superintending levels. Although the force sought and attracted applications from out with Dumfries and Galloway, all successful applicants were internal. With the Chief Constable shortly to move to Lothian and Borders Police, the selection process for a new Chief Constable for Dumfries and Galloway was just getting underway at the time of writing this report.

1.18 The net effect of retirements is such that between the ranks of Deputy Chief Constable and Chief Inspector inclusively, the force has had a 66% change in staff in 18 months. In response to both the challenge and opportunity that this presented, the force organised an externally facilitated team-building event in January 2006. *Change of this volume is not a regular occurrence and HMIC commends the force for seeking to maximise the opportunity to build and focus the management team in a manner that has been positively commented upon by many of those interviewed during the inspection.*

1.19 The Chief Constable, Mr David Strang QPM, BSc, MSc, has a high profile within the force and with the council and other stakeholders. In addition to the ACPOS functions already mentioned, he attends the Dumfries and Galloway Council Corporate Management Team meetings, is a key partner in Community Planning and chairs both the Alcohol and Drug Action Team and the Youth Justice Strategy Group. He is seen by the stakeholders consulted by HMIC to be a highly visible and accessible asset to the force and communities it serves.

1.20 The Deputy Chief Constable (DCC), Mr George Graham BA, has been in post since January 2006, having served in Dumfries and Galloway throughout his police career. Like Mr Strang, he is seen as a key partner by stakeholders who have regular contact with him. His role of 'Deputy' was also acknowledged by partners, who had frequent contact with Mr Graham in relation to strategic planning developments. Due to the compact nature of the force executive, the DCC post necessitates a large commitment to ACPOS work, representing the force on the four business areas already noted. The DCC also has a key role in managing the Complaints and Professional Standards department, particularly as the force has had a small number of locally high profile criminal cases involving police officers.

1.21 The Chief Superintendent, Mr Mike McCormick BA, was attending the police Strategic Command Course and was therefore absent from the force at the time of inspection. However, he was interviewed during the inspection. As with the Chief Constable and DCC, it was evident that the Chief Superintendent enjoyed a similarly high profile with local partners, having developed productive links with service delivery heads and major stakeholders.

1.22 HMIC was impressed by the strong commitment to partnership working in the Dumfries and Galloway area as a whole. There was a very strong sense of community and an understanding that co-terminosity of council, health, fire & rescue and police was a strong basis on which to build productive joint working across a wider group of services. The focus on customer service is further underscored by the force having achieved Charter Mark status this year for the fifth consecutive time.

Dumfries and Galloway Police, Fire and Rescue Committee

1.23 Where more than one council falls within a police force area, the force will report to a Joint Police Board comprising locally elected members of each council. While this is the case for the majority of Scottish forces, in Dumfries and Galloway the council is the Police Authority. Consultation with the Convener and Vice Convener of the Police Fire and Rescue Committee during the inspection revealed a strong positive working relationship between the Committee and the force. The Committee receives regular performance updates from the force, and financial matters are reported to both the Committee and the council's finance group. The Police, Fire and Rescue Committee does not have a separate finance sub-group.

1.24 At a time of budgetary pressure in the Dumfries and Galloway Council area, a strong commitment to policing was apparent. Examples of this include above GAE-level funding from the council's 'Policy Head Room' budget for officers carrying out specific functions including anti-social behaviour work, and for a pilot project in Annan Academy. The Scottish Executive has also provided additional funding for two officers for the Noise Enforcement Team.

2. Policy and Strategy

Strategic Planning

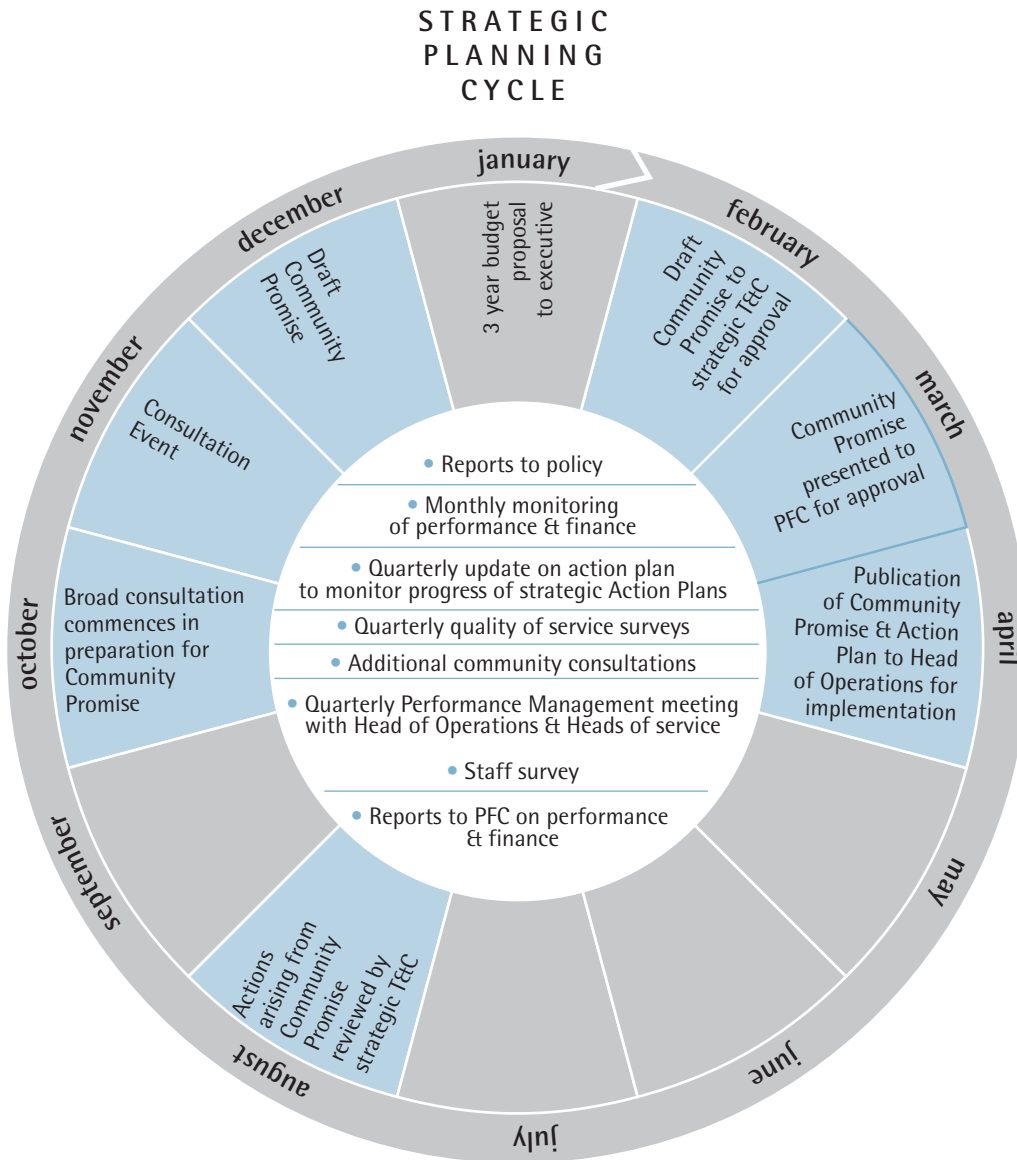
2.1 The force publishes its current 'Community Promise' and Strategic Action Plan in a simple, easy to digest form that addresses the needs of staff and public. These can also be accessed on the force website, at www.dumfriesandgalloway.police.uk. The documents show the five priority areas for the force: Community Policing, Service Delivery, Drugs & Alcohol, Road Policing and Crime. The 'Community Promise' clearly sets out 'What we'll do', while the Strategic Action Plan reproduces these headings and goes on, with similar clarity, to detail 'How we'll do it'. All officers in the force complete role requirement forms in respect of their annual appraisal cycle, the content of which is directly linked to the Strategic Action Plan. This ensures awareness and ownership of the strategy at operational level.

2.2 The inspection took place at a time of change in the force strategy development and planning cycle. Although the force has previously adopted a three-year planning period, from 2005 to 2008, the current year 2006-07 was described as a transitional one, and a single year plan published. The intention is for the year 2007-08 to be the start of a new three-year period which will consider a more cohesive planning approach to incorporate the needs of Community Planning, the National Intelligence Model (NIM), revised ACPOS Strategic Priorities for 2006/9, anticipated changes to national statutory performance indicators and a co-ordinated strategic financial plan.

2.3 As part of the process of developing its strategic plan, the force arranged an Annual Strategy Day to which representatives from partner agencies and stakeholders were invited. It is evidence of Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary's commitment to community engagement and consultative partnership working that 50% of those attending this event were not police staff. Attendees from out with the force were active participants in the proceedings. Stakeholders provided inputs to the audience, presenting the perspectives of young people, recent immigrants and those affected by disability. Workshop groups at the event covered the topics of Community Policing, Crime, Drugs & Alcohol and Road Policing, and in each group there was a broad mix of police and community members.

2.4 In previous years, this event has been held in February. However, a desire to co-ordinate the planning cycle with the financial year and National Intelligence Model Tasking and Co-ordinating programme, has brought this forward to November. HMIC was able to attend the event during the inspection and observed a very high degree of participation by individuals and community groups. The timing of this and subsequent stages of the revised planning process are illustrated at Figure 3.

Figure 3 – Dumfries and Galloway Planning Cycle



OWNERSHIP OF FORCE STRATEGY
 Force Strategy is implemented by Head of Operations
 via the strategic and tactical Tasking and Co-ordinating Groups

2.5 HMIC was encouraged by the proposal to develop a revised strategic plan that would co-ordinate strategic objectives with financial planning, NIM and the adoption of associated action planning and risk management procedures. The need to integrate financial planning, including the replenishment of general reserves, into wider force planning was also highlighted by the work of Audit Scotland during this inspection and is discussed at paragraph 4.27. [HMIC will review the outcome of this new process at the time of the review inspection.](#)

Performance Management

2.6 Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary produces an annual report in two parts. The main report is an informative document that details force activities relating to the priority areas of its Community Promise, and to national performance indicators as set by Audit Scotland. The second part is a supplement entitled '*How did we do?*', which provides a more concise statistical report of performance in the five areas of the 'Community Promise', in addition to finance and personnel data. Force performance against national targets is also clearly presented.

2.7 It is refreshing to note that the language and presentation used are consistent in areas where targets have been met and exceeded and also in areas where they have not. This gives readers a clear understanding of force performance.

2.8 Initially, the '*How did we do?*' document was also available to the public on a quarterly basis. However, consultation suggested that the public would prefer a more narrative format. As a result, the force publishes two updates each quarter: '*How did we do?*' is still produced for internal purposes, while '*Quadrant*' is produced for both external and internal audiences.

2.9 The '*How did we do?*' quarterly reports are clearly set out, referring to the service delivery areas contained within the Strategic Action Plan and detailing how performance compares with any targets. In some cases the targets are numeric, while in others they are less quantifiable. HMIC appreciates the merits of a culture that promotes continuous improvement rather than one where achievement of specific numbers is the goal.

2.10 '*Quadrant*', provides further details of operations and activities undertaken by the force that have contributed to its performance, and of their interactions with the community. The community itself appears to value this publication as a means of being updated about local policing matters; its circulation is increasing and it is now available at local branches of major supermarket chains.

2.11 The force was recently short-listed for a Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) award in relation to public reporting and accountability.

2.12 At a divisional and departmental level, the Chief Superintendent holds regular meetings to monitor performance. In the case of superintendent ranks, this also enables correlations to be made between personal performance appraisals and departmental and divisional performance. This ongoing monitoring is supported by internal monthly performance reports at divisional level. In the force's view, this process is as effective and less bureaucratic than tasking divisions and departments to prepare action plans.

2.13 The force carries out quarterly satisfaction surveys of a sample of those members of the public that it has had dealings with over the previous months. This ensures that available information in this regard remains current. In addition to seeking the views of these individuals, the force website encourages comment from anyone who wishes to use the email facility.

2.14 The force is strongly committed to performance monitoring and reporting. That said, HMIC found the potential for some uncertainty or overlap between local supervision and central monitoring in the audit and control of certain processes underpinning this monitoring. This was found to affect issues such as:

- the approach to auditing computer systems – see Recommendation 2b (para 4.43);
- incident management – see Recommendation 2c (para 5.10);
- crime recording – see Recommendation 2d (para 5.24);
- control of productions – see Recommendation 2e (para 5.131).

Recommendation 2a

HMIC recommends that to ensure confidence in the force's processes for delivering and monitoring its strategy, particularly those that are the subject of public performance reporting, a review be undertaken to clarify the ownership and frequency of monitoring, audit and inspection within the force.

Policy

2.15 Force policy is developed through the Policy Group, which is chaired by the Chief Constable, or in his absence, by the Deputy Chief Constable. It comprises the force's senior management as illustrated at Figure 2, in addition to the Police Federation Joint Branch Board Secretary, the force HR Manager, and the force Executive Support Manager who acts as secretary to the group. Depending on agenda items, additional staff members may attend as required.

2.16 The meetings are held monthly, with papers circulated well in advance to all concerned including trade union representatives. This allows group members to respond electronically to a group access 'comments' folder, where they can note their views and read the responses of others. This promotes a better understanding of issues prior to the actual meeting and is effective in managing the length of time of meetings.

2.17 A force template has been prepared for matters requiring the attention of the Policy Group. This is accessible to all members of staff, who are then able, subject to line management support, to raise issues that they wish the group to deal with.

2.18 The force had previously identified the need to improve its process of monitoring policies to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. In the course of the inspection the Policy Group adopted a revised process that is to be managed by the Executive Support Manager.

2.19 In common with other forces, Dumfries and Galloway has a well established intranet giving all staff access to current policy and procedural information in a searchable format.

3. People Management

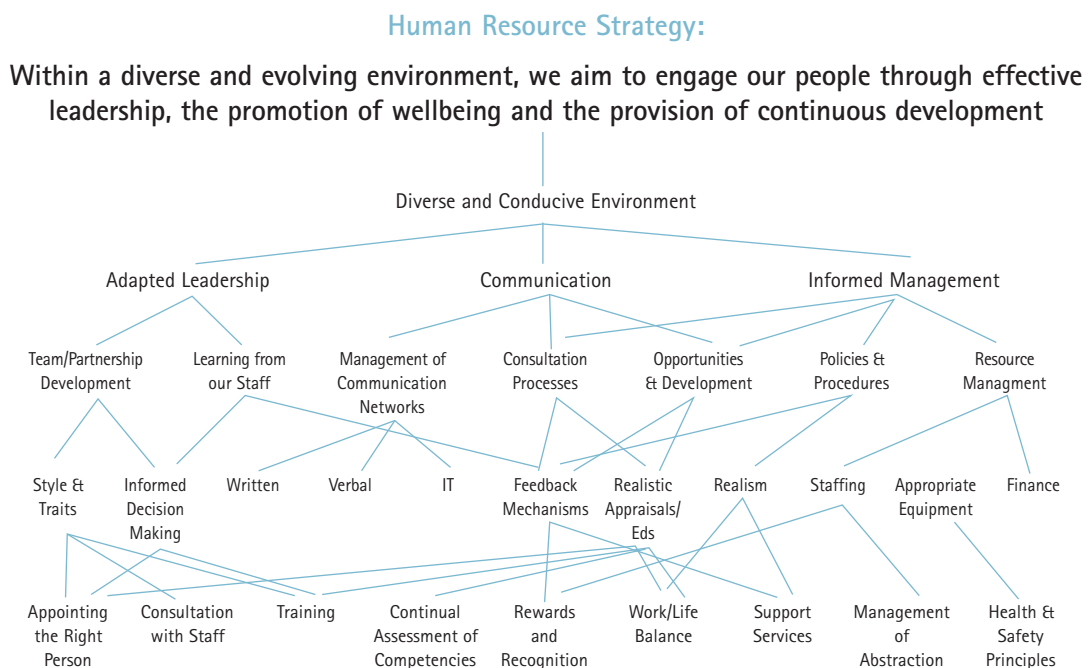
Overview

3.1 The force has developed a Human Resources Strategy for 2005-2008. This strategy conforms to the ACPOS Scottish Police Service People Strategy 2003-2013; "Fit for the 21st Century". While accepting that all eight of the strategic goals within that document are relevant, the force has used the Balanced Scorecard methodology to identify what it considers to be five key theme areas or perspectives. These are:

- Leadership;
- Recruitment and Retention;
- Management and Development;
- Fit and Healthy Environment;
- Diversity.

3.2 The Human Resource Strategy provides the force with the following overarching strategic aim: *"Within a diverse and evolving environment, . . . to engage our people through effective leadership, the promotion of wellbeing and the provision of continuous development"*. The aim is underpinned by a clear understanding of what it is built upon and how it might be achieved. This is best illustrated by the strategy map shown within the strategy document itself and which has been reproduced at Figure 4 below.

Figure 4



3.3 In line with the ethos of the Balanced Scorecard approach, performance indicators have been identified for each of the perspectives. These are monitored by the Personnel and Training Department on a regular basis, and by the Force Executive by way of a formal report to the Policy Group every six months.

3.4 To support the HR Strategy, a Resource and Business Continuity meeting takes place each week. This meeting is chaired by the Chief Superintendent and consists of the Heads of service from both headquarters departments and operational divisions.

3.5 The Personnel and Training Department is responsible for implementing the strategy. This Department is led by a Chief Inspector, who is the line manager for the Human Resource (HR) Manager and who is also responsible for in-force training. The HR Manager is responsible for personnel, career development and diversity. Each of the areas within Personnel and Training has established an action plan to address the major priorities. These plans are updated regularly and reported to the Head of Department.

3.6 In recognition of the work carried out in relation to managing and developing its people, the force continues to be recognised as an "Investor in People".

Recruitment and Selection

3.7 Within Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary the Training Unit is responsible for all police recruitment, while the personnel department is responsible for recruiting support staff. This is carried out in close liaison with the Diversity Officer who, in addition to monitoring the process and the results, will help to ensure that all vacancies are advertised as widely and appropriately as possible. This will involve distributing advertisements to minority and diversity groups such as the local Multicultural Association and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) Youth Group.

3.8 The police officer recruitment process follows a selection process flow chart which was introduced in 2006. This process is reviewed every three months to ensure that it is fit for purpose and reflects changing legislation and identified learning points. Candidates successfully completing the selection process will then be placed in the recruitment pool.

3.9 Although the force monitors and identifies vacancies for police officers, it is for the Resource and Business Continuity meeting to decide, on the basis of available budget, when recruitment can take place.

3.10 The force accepts officers transferring from other forces. All those of Constable rank will go through the entire recruit selection process with the exception of the Standard Entrance Test. While the principle of transfer in rank is accepted, this has not actually happened. The caveat would always be that there must be a vacancy in that particular rank. The force does not normally advertise vacancies for promoted posts externally, although in 2005 it did for the first time advertise vacancies at Superintendent rank.

3.11 The Resource and Business Continuity meeting will consider each support staff vacancy prior to it being advertised. Each vacancy must be supported by a business case to justify the post being re-filled. The force sees this as an important opportunity to review the relevance and value of posts and, if necessary, to ensure that any adjustments in role, terms or conditions are made.

3.12 The process of selecting people for posts within the force has undergone some important changes over the last few years. Every interview panel is of mixed gender, irrespective of the gender of the candidates being interviewed. This is rigorously applied to the extent that, when interviewing for superintendent posts in 2005, Dumfries and Galloway had to approach another force to find a female member for the panel. All members of interview panels must also complete a bespoke two-day interview skills course before being allowed to participate. This course consists of formal inputs on interviewing as well as role playing and scenarios dealing with diversity and discrimination themes. Interview panels have to submit their questions to the Personnel and Training Department for screening, prior to them being used in an interview.

Training

3.13 The Personnel and Training Department is responsible for delivering local training and co-ordinating external training. The department delivers driver, officer safety, firearms and public order training. This training is delivered by either members of the department or specialists brought in for that purpose. The department also delivers local probationer training and some distance learning packages. HMIC was pleased to note that local training is kept under review and that there is a willingness to ensure that courses remain fit for purpose. An example would be the training needs analysis (TNA) that was carried out in 2006 into the then allocation of three blocks of two-week probationer training. This TNA, carried out in consultation with operational supervisors and tutor constables, led to the training being reduced to three blocks of one week. This was achieved by realigning the focus of the training to include only those elements essential for the operational requirements of the probationers.

3.14 With the exception of the leadership modules provided by the Scottish Police College, little or no leadership training was previously available for acting sergeants or for sergeants prior to attending those modules at the college, nor indeed afterwards. In response, the force has developed a one day training course at Force Headquarters. This course updates sergeants on diversity, the Procurator Fiscals Service, Domestic Abuse and Professional Standards. In conjunction with the Force Executive it was decided that all sergeants and acting sergeants would attend this course. Similar training has also been introduced for inspectors.

3.15 The Career Development Unit within the Personnel and Training Department is responsible for co-ordinating all internal and external training. All police officers complete a Personal Development Plan in line with the current Police Advisory Board for Scotland process. Any agreed training is recorded by the Career Development unit and attempts are made to schedule in the training at the first opportunity. There is some evidence to suggest that police officers within the force receive a great deal of training, and some concern that not all of this will be relevant to each individual. The converse is true for support staff, who indicated during the inspection that they did not always find it easy to receive all the training that they felt their role required. The force is aware of these concerns and is currently considering the matter. **HMIC will examine this area during the next review inspection.**

Career Development

3.16 The overarching Human Resource Strategy 2005–2008 acknowledges the need to develop all staff within the force. The overall aims of this strategy are supported by separate and very clear policies for Police Promotion, a Further Education Scheme and Transfer and Rotation. The Resource and Business Continuity meeting is required, as part of its remit, to discuss and progress development matters. This includes succession planning and selection for specialist posts.

3.17 The Career Development Unit plays a pivotal role in co-ordinating this effort throughout the force, and in providing the Resource and Business Continuity meeting with the information necessary to inform its decisions.

3.18 The promotion policy for police officers who have achieved passes in the Police Scotland Exams has a clear process, involving the following steps:

- Completion of Promotion Application;
- Assessment of level of support by line manager;
- Consideration by Divisional Commander/Head of Department;
- Decision by relevant Divisional Commander/Head of Department whether to support;
- Review by Heads of Service Panel;
- Consideration of application and interview of candidate by Executive panel;
- Entry into promotion pool

3.19 The force considers this process to be fair and transparent. The Secretary of the local Police Federation Joint Branch Board is invited as an observer to each Heads of Service Panel, as is the head of the Career Development Unit. The Police Promotion Policy clearly sets out a responsibility at all stages of the process to ensure that unsuccessful candidates receive full and complete feedback on the reasons why they did not progress further in the process. There is also an obligation to identify areas where the candidate needs to develop his or her skills profile. The Career Development Unit co-ordinates the response to these development needs, while the Resource and Business Continuity meeting is responsible for considering and meeting these developmental needs. HMIC is satisfied that the force has appropriate processes in place to ensure that officers have a fair and equitable opportunity to achieve promotion.

Vetting of Staff

3.20 The force carries out appropriate vetting of people joining the organisation and of those undertaking roles within the force for which specific types of specialist vetting is required. However, it does not have a specific policy to cover vetting. Nor does it have a member of staff who is specifically designated a Vetting Officer with overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate vetting is carried out and taking any action necessary on the results. At present the Detective Superintendent seems to fulfil this role, although this is not specifically stated by the force. An Administrative Assistant within Special Branch is responsible for ensuring that vetting clearances are recorded and that any renewals are arranged. The force has recently drawn up a list of roles that require specialist vetting, but there appear to be some omissions. For example, the Chief Superintendent is not included even though he is a member of the Force Executive.

3.21 Since the adoption of the Common Security Policy and the Government Protective Marking Scheme by the Police Service in Scotland, the increased importance of enforcing ethical and professional standards and the current security climate, it is more important than ever that each force has a clearly defined policy to ensure that effective vetting processes are in place and are carried out and monitored appropriately. It is also important that a named individual or role within the force has clear responsibility for these processes. HMIC recognises that the current work by ACPOS in relation to vetting has yet fully to deliver its guidelines and that a representative from the force is taking a full and active part in their development. However, this is an area of risk that the force must address in the interim period. As such, **HMIC will re-examine this area at the next Review Inspection.**

Support Staff

3.22 Although the force has the smallest number of support staff (325) of any force in Scotland, it does have the largest number of support staff per 100,000 population, at 219.1. The Scottish average in this regard is 155.1. Support staff numbers have been rising over the past five years as shown at Figure 5 below.

Figure 5 Increase in Force Support Staff Numbers

Year	Number of Support Staff	Number of Full-Time Equivalent
2001-02	269	*
2002-03	286	249.42
2003-04	317	271.76
2004-05	320	273.58
2005-06	325	275.88

* Data no longer available

3.23 There has been a complementary rise in support staff as a percentage of the total number of police and support staff. This has gone from 35.8% in 2001-02 to 39% in 2005-06. The percentage for the current year is well above the Scottish average (32.6%) and is the second highest in Scotland.

3.24 A Voluntary Early Retirement scheme has also been open to applicants on a number of occasions. This has been well received and the force uses it as an opportunity to realign and modify posts without the need for lengthy contractual negotiations. This initiative was put to good effect within the Force Communications Centre, where a number of full time equivalent posts were replaced with a larger number of part time posts more able to respond to the Centre's demand-led shift pattern.

Appraisals

3.25 The force remains committed to the Police Advisory Board for Scotland (PABS) appraisal system. This scheme is mandatory for police officers. An understanding of the need to link performance with the force's Strategic Action Plan was apparent and was reflected in comments and gradings within officers' appraisals. Role requirements for each officer are also directly linked to the Strategic Action Plan.

3.26 The force recognises the importance of having a comprehensive appraisal system to which everyone subscribes. It is, also aware, however, that not all appraisals are being submitted within the timescales specified. Efforts have recently been made to encourage all officers to take ownership of their part of the process. The process has been streamlined and in each division and department a designated person with responsibility for administering it has been identified. The timescales for submission have been reinforced and republished. Divisional commanders and Heads of service are integral to the improvements required in this area. Figures collated by the force showed that at August 2006, 71.5% of police appraisals and 42.4% of support staff reviews were overdue. Unfortunately, inconsistencies in measurement periods and reporting methods meant that neither the force nor HMIC could determine whether the situation had improved since. [HMIC will return to this matter at the review, seeking a demonstrable reduction and consistent monitoring process.](#)

3.27 Support staff performance and development is monitored by the Employee Development Scheme (EDS) which was developed from the system used in Dumfries and Galloway Council. Standard practice was for every member of staff, except cleaning staff, to have an annual review. A very small number of staff do not wish to take part in this scheme. The force has agreed to this, so long as instead they take part in an annual meeting, the outcomes of which are formally documented. This year an abbreviated form of this system was introduced for cleaning staff, and initial indications are that it has been well received.

Welfare and Sickness Absence

3.28 Over the last five years the force's rates of working time lost due to sickness for both police and support staff have consistently fallen below the Scottish average. In 2005-06 the working days lost by police officers (3.4% of available days) was not only below the Scottish average (4.5%) but was also the lowest in the country. The figures for the same year for support staff are not quite as good (4.0%), but are still well below the Scottish average (5.2%).

3.29 The force operates an Absence Management Policy which clearly lays out the responsibilities of staff, line managers, senior management and the Occupational Health and Welfare Unit. Trigger points for intervention have been set as four absences or 15 days cumulative absence in a 12-month period. Weekly absence reports are collated and distributed to the Personnel Officer, Payroll and the Occupational Health and Welfare Unit. Absence management training in line with the force policy is given on all in-house management training courses.

3.30 The Occupational Health and Welfare Co-ordinator will automatically arrange for a member of Unit staff to contact anyone off work for more than 28 days. Earlier contact is also possible should line managers or others have a particular concern. Self-referral is also positively encouraged. A range of support options are available, including access to the Welfare Officer, Occupational Health Nurse, Force Medical Adviser or Clinical Psychologist.

3.31 The force finds its in-house Occupational Health and Welfare Unit to be very effective in meeting requirements and good value for money. The Unit currently consists of:

- 1 Full-Time Occupational Health and Welfare Co-ordinator/Welfare Officer (37 hours a week);
- 1 Part-Time Nurse Practitioner (25 hours a week);
- 1 Part-Time Clerical Assistant (15 hours a week);
- 1 Part-Time Force Medical Adviser (3 hours a week).

3.32 The force has recognised the need to get staff back to work as quickly as is appropriate to individual circumstances. A specific Return to Work Guidance document has been issued. The Occupational Health and Welfare Unit is responsible for co-ordinating arrangements for a structured return to work in conjunction with line management of the person involved. Reasonable adjustments will be provided where required, and if the previous role or post is not suitable then every effort will be made to offer a suitable alternative. The force has looked closely at the need to be able to offer staff private medical treatment, where there is an appropriate benefit to the individual and the organisation. Recognising that budgetary constraints can have an adverse impact on this type of initiative, extensive research has been carried out to identify suitable medical insurance schemes that could provide the range of support necessary at an affordable cost.

3.33 During the inspection process it was noted that the Occupational Health and Welfare Unit is particularly active in promoting health and healthy lifestyles within the force. Some recent initiatives/services have included:

- Promotion of the Healthy Lifestyle computer package, which allows individuals to assess their diet, exercise and health needs;
- Offer of Sportsvine, a self directed exercise programme;
- Health screening for specialist groups (e.g. Authorised Firearms Officers, Public Order Officers, Mobile Support Group Officers.);
- A prostate clinic providing full screening, referrals, education and advice;
- A force physiotherapy scheme that is available to all members of staff.

3.34 The force acknowledges that some aspects of policing are particularly hazardous to the health and wellbeing of individuals. These hazards can often be difficult to detect or treat when they involve psychological impact. For this reason the force employs a clinical psychologist for two days per month. Staff can be referred for a consultation by managers, the Occupational Health and Welfare Unit or themselves.

3.35 Building on this, the force has also introduced a Psychological Support Policy as well as a mandatory psychological support for certain identified specialist staff groups. These groups include:

- Family Liaison Officers;
- Mobile Support Group;
- Family Protection Officers;
- Test Purchase Officers.

3.36 HMIC considers the employment of the clinical psychologist, the introduction of the Psychological Support Policy and the mandatory psychological support for identified at-risk groups within the force to be good practice.

3.37 In conjunction with the Psychological Support Policy the force has also introduced a structured approach to stress through its Stress at Work policy. Stress weekends at the Northern Convalescent Home are now available for targeted groups of staff, and include structured sessions on how to identify and address stress. High evaluation scores reflect the popularity with staff of these weekends, while the costs are seen to be very affordable in terms of the perceived benefits. The Northern Convalescent Home is now making similar weekends available for other forces. Work is also underway to conduct a stress audit within the force. This is being done in conjunction with advice and guidance from the Health and Safety Executive.

Working Time Regulations

3.38 During the inspection process it became apparent that the force had no system for monitoring working hours, as required under the Working Time Regulations 1998. A paper-based system that the force, in common with several other Scottish forces, had initially put in place has fallen into disuse. Recognising this failing, the force is working to implement the Resource Management module within the SCOPE personnel computer system. It is confident that this can be introduced by the end of the first half of 2007, although a decision on the national personnel computer system may have an impact on this. A workforce agreement is in place to cover the shift system worked by the majority of operational officers.

3.39 Divisional visits revealed that the force did not always comply with the legislation to ensure the re-rostering of officers attending court following a night shift. This was because of resilience issues as a result of the small shift sizes involved and the impact on other officers who also had to be re-rostered to cover the abstraction. Instead the force ensures that officers who have to travel any distance do have their shift re-rostered and, where possible, can finish their period of duty early. This does not cause difficulties for the local Police Federation, who understand the operational necessity and accept that it only happens on a small number of occasions each year. Notwithstanding, HMIC believes that forces must comply with legislation where it applies to them, and that they are at significant risk if they fail to do so.

Recommendation 3

HMIC recommends that the force make the necessary changes to bring it fully into line with the Working Time legislation.

Special Constables

3.40 Dumfries and Galloway sees Special Constables as a valuable community resource that complements its style of policing. The force currently has 109 Special Constables, with another five undergoing induction training and more than 20 at varying stages of the recruitment process. This is the highest number of Special Constables the force has had in the past five years and equates to 71.5 Special Constables per 100,000 population – the second highest rate in Scotland and well above the Scottish average of 26.4 per 100,000 population. This is despite a number of Special Constables having to leave either for failing to achieve the regulation minimum hours, or on recruitment to the force as regular police officers. The force has operated the Special Constable Reward Scheme since its introduction in 2005-06.

3.41 Special Constables in Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary take full part in policing operations and are a welcome and well used resource. They are given opportunities to be involved in many facets of operational and event policing. They are also given the experience of patrolling not only with regular officers but with other Special Constables and on their own, and many are authorised to and do drive police vehicles. However, none have been trained in emergency response, and so a vehicle crewed only by Special Constables cannot provide an emergency response.

3.42 The force provides a compulsory induction training course for Special Constables. It consists of two blocks of two-day training concentrating mainly on officer safety training, and an introduction to the force and duties to be carried out. Both divisions also hold monthly two-hour training evenings, and once a year the Scottish Police College runs a training weekend.

3.43 During the inspection it became evident that some Special Constables felt that the training did not give them the confidence to carry out their duties. The training weekend at the college was well received and the scenario-based training style enjoyed positive feedback. However, the monthly training evenings were felt to be too short and had a curriculum that tended to be repeated year on year. There was evidence to suggest that greater practical and scenario-based training would be more appropriate. It was also suggested that assigning tutor constables to new Special Constables would be of benefit.

3.44 Other concerns expressed by Special Constables included the occasional lack of forward planning around their deployment, and the inability to go out on duty in some areas where pool airwave terminals were in short supply. Certainly HMIC observed that while some areas carried out detailed, local resource planning for Special Constables, there did not appear to be any centralised system in place for managing and deploying Special Constables at divisional level.

3.45 It was also found that although Special Constables were issued with a full range of protective equipment, many stations were unable to provide adequate facilities for storing this. The force has a duty to supply these, under the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992.

Recommendation 4

HMIC recommends that the force review the training and deployment processes for Special Constables, to ensure that they meet the needs of both the force and Special Constables themselves. This review should also examine the provision of storage accommodation for Special Constables' personal protective equipment, in terms of the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992.

Staff Motivation and Satisfaction

3.46 The force carries out a staff survey every two years and has, in the past, been complimented for its proactive work in this area. The survey currently used is known as a 'Valuing the Person' survey. However, the actual questions used are not particularly clear and in conjunction with the five-point assessment criteria lead to difficulties in identifying which areas should be addressed. From the evidence provided during the inspection it is clear that in 2002 and 2004 no structured action was taken on the results of the surveys. For this year action plans are currently being developed to address the issues identified. **HMIC is aware that the force has identified weaknesses with the survey format and understands the need to make it more relevant to contemporary needs and events. Work is currently underway to develop a different approach for the next survey and this area will be examined at the next review.**

3.47 In 2003 and 2005 work-life balance surveys were conducted. These have been analysed and the results used to inform the Flexible Working Group and force policy.

3.48 HMIC was interested to note the importance Dumfries and Galloway places on understanding why staff voluntarily leave the force and how this may affect its wider ability to retain staff. Accordingly it has introduced an Exit Interview Policy whereby staff members must opt out of, rather than in to, exit interviews. Exit interviews are also extended to police and support staff retiring from the service, ensuring that all staff are given a similar opportunity before leaving the force. At every interview an Exit Questionnaire is completed and submitted to the HR Department, who will analyse it to identify any emerging issues or trends. Reasons for leaving are recorded and any identified trends are considered by the Resource and Business Continuity meeting.

3.49 The force runs an annual Awards Evening in November each year. This is an opportunity to present long service and good conduct medals, commendations and various other awards such as the Probationer of the Year and the Cadet of the Year. It is laudable that commendations for police officers, support staff and members of the public are all presented as part of this same event, which provides a fitting tribute to all involved.

3.50 The force has adopted a commonsense approach to the Special Priority Payment and Bonus Payment schemes, recognising the need to ensure that officers who have taken on additional responsibilities are adequately rewarded. The Special Priority Payment is targeted at operational officers who have completed their probation but who are not yet eligible for Competency-Related Pay. The national Bonus Payment criteria have been interpreted to include 'on-call' responsibilities within the more widely used 'onerous duties' or 'special responsibilities' categories. The following officers receive an annual bonus payment of £340:

Tactical Firearms Advisers	Hostage Negotiator Co-ordinators
Divisional Crime Management Services Supervisors	HQ Special Branch
Detective Inspector Ranks	Mobile Support Group Sergeants
Family Protection Unit Officers	Family Liaison Officer Co-ordinators
Drug Squad Expert Witness Officers	Fraud and Financial Investigation Unit
Proceeds of Crime Act Recovery Officers	

3.51 Officers of certain categories who would not normally be part of a formal on-call system but make themselves available for duty in extraordinary or occasional special circumstances, are entitled to a £59 Bonus payment on each occasion that they are called out. This payment is in addition to any overtime payments to which they might be entitled. The categories of officers entitled to these payments are:

Search Managers	Source Management Unit
Hostage Negotiators	Chemical, Biological, Radioactive, Nuclear Trained Officers
Accident Investigators	Wildlife Liaison Officers
Police Search Advisors	Port Unit Supervisors
Police Search Team Members	Fraud and Financial Investigation Unit
Firearms Officers	Crime Scene Managers
Public Order Team Members	Dog Handlers
Detective Inspectors	CHIS Handlers
Family Protection Unit	Family Liaison Officers

3.52 HMIC considers this approach to Bonus payments to be a sensible one, and considers it to be good practice in the absence of any other formal mechanism to recognise the on-call demands placed on officers.

Flexible Working

3.53 During the inspection the team observed the force's commitment to providing a working environment that addresses work/life balances issues. The Flexible Working Group is currently reviewing the force's flexible working policy. Currently 3.7% of the police officers in the force work part-time. This rate is higher than the Scottish average (3.3%) and is the second highest in Scotland. That fact that this percentage consists entirely of female officers was explored during the inspection. The force has found that there may be a blockage at first or second line management level which filters out or discourages applications from male officers. Apart from publicising available opportunities for flexible working, the force emphasised the rights of both male and female officers to work part-time during recent in-house management and leadership training for sergeants, inspectors and management-level support staff. The percentage of support staff (30.5%) working part-time is well above the Scottish average (17%) and has been a rising trend since 2001-02 (22.7%).

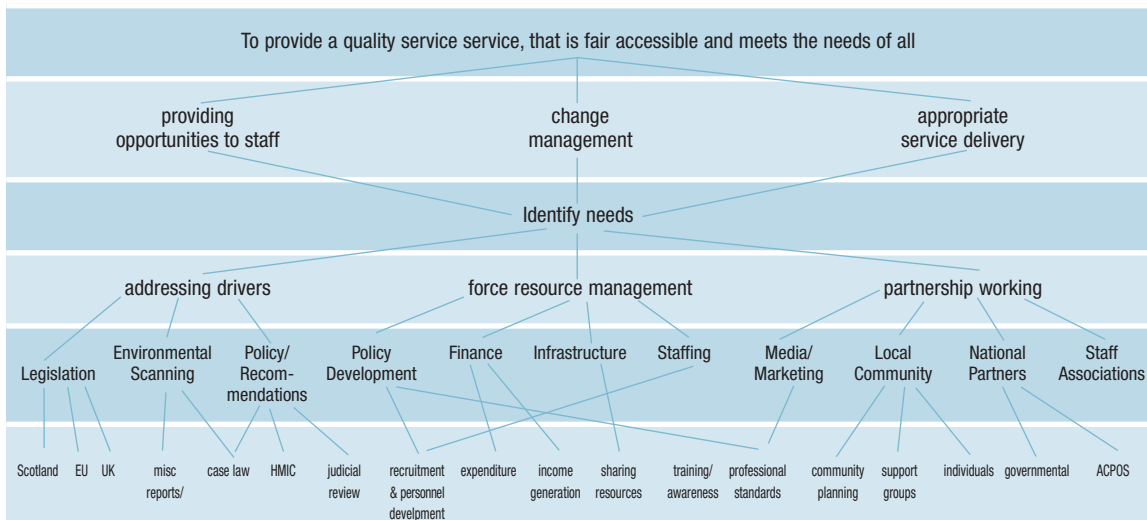
3.54 The force has a draft Homeworking Policy that its Flexible Working Group is considering. This is complemented by the force's Remote Access Policy, which provides the information technology to make homeworking possible. Although there are no homeworkers in the force currently, the concept has been used in the past and is an option that the force will consider in appropriate circumstances.

3.55 At a national level the force examines flexible working issues and shows good evidence of scanning for good practice and implementing this where appropriate. While the force will always consider national guidelines in this area, it will question these where it has concerns that they are not keeping up to date with legislation or changes in circumstances.

Diversity

3.56 Recognising the importance of this area in today's policing environment, the force has formulated an overall Diversity Strategy. This follows the route of the ACPOS Diversity Strategy and has drawn on the national vision. Key actions have been identified and seven strategic action plans formulated, to address the six recognised strands of diversity and a further one for Personnel. The overall aim of the force is seen as being *“to provide a quality service that is fair, accessible and meets the needs of all”*. In common with other areas in the force, the Balanced Scorecard Approach is driving development of this strategy. The resulting strategy map is shown at Figure 6 below.

Figure 6 Force Diversity Strategy Map



3.57 This Diversity Strategy provides a robust framework that allows the force to approach all diversity issues in a structured and proportionate way. This is evident from advances made in some areas. For example, in developing its approach to impact assessments the force is already well advanced in ensuring that appropriate staff are trained in this important area. The training has been developed by the force's Diversity Officer and draws on good practice from across the country from police forces and other organisations. It is delivered in a structured one day course. Support is provided by the Diversity Officer, while the force's Diversity Trainers are also being trained to increase support resilience. A comprehensive Impact Assessment Guidance document and toolkit has also been developed, and the impact assessment process within the force is active and responsive.

3.58 The force has applied the same focused approach to the other two major strands of work within Diversity which all Scottish forces face, namely the need to develop Disability and Gender Equality Schemes. Its Disability Equality Scheme was published on schedule on 1 December 2006. Work is currently underway on the Gender Equality Scheme, with a member of staff being drafted into the Diversity Unit to assist in this work. A comprehensive project plan has been drawn up for this work and work is currently on schedule to produce the Scheme on 1 April 2007.

3.59 The inspection found the force to be extremely well regarded by diversity groups and partners within the force area. The force's Diversity Officer has a high profile, is well regarded by all these groups, and is very active in relevant ACPOS for a at the national level.

Health and Safety

3.60 Health and safety matters within the force are co-ordinated by the Force Safety Adviser. This member of staff is responsible for a comprehensive framework of Health and Safety policies, guidance and procedures that covers operational and organisational needs. The Chief Superintendent at Force Headquarters has been designated the Health and Safety Champion for the force. HMIC was impressed by the depth and detail present in the Dumfries and Galloway's approach to Health and Safety. The force is active on Health and Safety matters at a national level, and the Force Safety Adviser is a very enthusiastic and energetic member of the Association of Police Health and Safety Advisors.

3.61 Regular reports on Health and Safety issues are made to the Force Executive through the Policy Group. The force also reports to Dumfries and Galloway Council's Health and Safety Committee. This is seen as a useful opportunity to review performance and exchange good practice.

3.62 HMIC was particularly interested in the force's approach to dynamic risk assessment for operational situations. A booklet outlining the process for this has been produced and is supplied to every officer as part of his or her induction training input on the subject.

3.63 Indeed the force's whole approach to Health and Safety Training is noteworthy. A 'Health and Safety Training Strategy and Training Plan 2006/2008 and Beyond' document has been developed and issued, bringing together all training in this area and setting out the justification for it. HMIC considers this to be good practice.

Officer Safety

3.64 The force's officer safety training complies with the national manual. The inspection was also able to confirm that police officers in Dumfries and Galloway are issued with an appropriate range of personal protective equipment in line with national guidelines. That said, responsibility for maintaining personal protective equipment appears to rest entirely with individual officers. This ignores the duties placed on the force by the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992, and is a risk to the force that should be addressed as soon as possible. It is anticipated that this will be included in the force response to the next recommendation.

3.65 It was noted that the force has no specific policy in relation to officer safety. The Issue and Wearing of Uniform Policy does state that *"All staff are reminded that where protective equipment is provided for the personal protection of staff, it is mandatory that this is worn in all operational situations. There will be no exception."* However, the policy contains no definition as to what an operational situation is. Moreover, despite the clarity of the above statement there appears to be no attempt to ensure compliance with the policy, especially in respect of Crime Management Service officers. Although Dumfries and Galloway may assess any actual risk to be low, recent experience in England illustrates the risk faced by officers working in plain clothes. The force is aware of problems with the current body armour and its inappropriateness for plain clothes situations, and is looking at national developments. The force does not at this time issue plain clothes officers with specialist harnesses to make it easier to carry personal protective equipment, even though this is common practice in other forces.

3.66 HMIC found operational uniformed officers to be enthusiastic about the body armour currently issued to them. This armour carries protective equipment on holders affixed to the cover of the armour. Nevertheless, some officers commented on the difficulties of accessing personal protective equipment when wearing waterproof jackets over their armour. Taking this up with the force, HMIC was told that all officers are issued with a utility belt for carrying protective equipment, which could be worn in conjunction with the waterproof jackets. Officers appeared to be unaware of this.

3.67 To address the issues highlighted here, it would be useful if the force were to draw together all the separate strands of officer safety into one policy.

Recommendation 5

HMIC recommends that the force introduce a comprehensive officer safety policy.

Cadets

3.68 The force has a Police Cadet Scheme that it runs under the auspices of the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme. It has close links with, and draws on assistance from, the scheme run by Dumfries and Galloway Council. The force currently employs seven cadets who undertake a wide range of duties and placements within the force and the region. During the inspection the cadet scheme received a considerable amount of favourable comment from staff in force and external stakeholders. The Training Unit is responsible for administering the cadet scheme and for looking after the welfare of the cadets.

4. Partnership and Resources

Partnership Working

4.1 Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary and its partners show a strong commitment to partnership working, and recognise that they are in the unusual position of council, health and police areas being coterminous.

4.2 Consulting with a wide range of stakeholders, HMIC found a wealth of evidence confirming the force's commitment to working with its partners. Extensive links were apparent at all levels of the organisation and stakeholders could readily identify their regular police contact, whether this was the Chief Constable, a senior officer or a community constable.

4.3 An example of the force's commitment to partnership working is illustrated by its approach to youth justice matters. This ranges from council funding of an officer based at Annan Academy, through training community officers to deliver restorative justice warnings and seconding an officer to the multi-agency youth justice team, to police involvement in diversionary schemes and activities. All of these elements are part of a multi-agency approach to an issue that impacts upon both the community and a number of service delivery agencies. Without the involvement of the police, children's reporter, procurator fiscal, council and other bodies, such a cohesive approach to the various stages of youth justice would not be possible. Further evidence of the benefits of this partnership approach is provided at paragraph 5.127.

4.4 HMIC was impressed by the force's work in conjunction with Annan Academy. During the inspection HMIC spoke with pupils, parents and members of the community, all of whom praised the impact of an officer based at the school. That impact was felt not only within the school, in terms of improved pupil behaviour, but also in the wider community where less disorder at lunch times and at home time was experienced. While Dumfries and Galloway is not alone in using school-based officers, further evidence of its commitment to partnership working was seen in its joint interview approach where both school and police were involved in selecting the officer for the post.

Community Planning

4.5 The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 places a duty on local authorities to "*initiate, facilitate and maintain*" the community planning process to deliver a shared vision. The pervasive ethos of partnership working in Dumfries and Galloway is a clear asset to community planning and it is worthy of note that the first Dumfries and Galloway Community Plan was published in 2000, prior to the legislation.

4.6 At the time of inspection, Community Planning in Dumfries and Galloway was entering a period of transition. Previously it has been administered through a Community Planning Joint Board consisting of the Convener to the Council, the Chair and Chief Executive of the Health Board, the Chief Executive of Dumfries and Galloway Council, the Chief Constable and the Chief Executive of the Enterprise Company. This Board sets the strategic direction for Community Planning and agrees the Community Plan. Recently the Board was extended to include representatives from the voluntary sector and all political parties within the council, as a means of maximising the group's influence. A Community Planning Performance Framework was also agreed, containing 17 indicators designed to assess progress against the plan. A clear correlation between the police strategic action plan and the community plan can be seen in the inclusion of indicators relating to the incidence of antisocial behaviour, drug-related deaths and road casualties.

4.7 Delivering the Community Plan was managed by three groups:

- The Safe and Healthy Communities Forum;
- The Inclusive Communities Forum; and
- The Enterprise and Learning Communities Forum.

Each forum managed the working groups related to its area of activity. In the case of the Safe and Healthy Communities Forum there were eight working groups, for Inclusive Communities there were four, while Enterprise and Learning managed three. Two broader working groups, relating to training and performance management, do not align to a single forum.

4.8 Other structures involved in the Community Planning process are the Community Planning Partnership, consisting of representatives from 50 statutory and non-statutory agencies, and the Joint Management Team which is made up of senior council staff and representatives from the statutory agencies. The Partnership provides a means of structured Community Engagement, with a wide representation informing and influencing the Joint Board. The Joint Management Team enables statutory service providers to ensure a cohesive approach to implementing the Community Plan.

4.9 At more local level, Area Community Plans are drawn up for the four areas of council, namely Wigtownshire, Stewartry, Annandale & Eskdale and Nithsdale. These plans are designed to follow on from the Council plan, but to be more locally relevant.

4.10 The present period of transition appears to be concerned with removing some of the layers of the Community Planning process. Specifically there is an intention to remove two of the thematic groups and leave only the Enterprise and Learning Communities Forum, also known as the Local Economic Forum. The replacement arrangements had not been fully established or agreed at the time of inspection, although a job description for a senior council appointment to the role of Community Planning Manager had been completed. This will be jointly funded by the council, police, health and Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway. **Given the importance of this area of work, HMIC will return to it at the time of the first review inspection, to consider police involvement in Community Planning under whatever new structures are agreed.**

Community Safety

4.10 Similar transition issues were encountered in respect of Community Safety Panels (CSPs). Dumfries and Galloway had been developing CSPs through the four Area Management groups and their links to other local partnerships. The force describes the situation in terms of the Community Planning process, and in particular the Safe and Healthy Communities Thematic Forum, taking over the strategic direction of the CSP.

4.11 Police staff were clear about the role of the headquarters-based Community Services Department in co-ordinating force and divisional activities for both Community Planning and Community Safety partnership working. HMIC found clear evidence that crime reduction and community safety were essential elements of the force community officer role. It was also evident from stakeholders and partners that a considerable amount of positive work was being carried out to the benefit of the community. Even so, HMIC believes that a clearer structure for the Community Safety Partnership in the area would enhance the ability to drive and support such endeavour.

4.12 [In recognition of the close links with the council and the current restructuring of Community Planning and Community Safety, HMIC will return to these areas at the review inspection.](#)

Antisocial Behaviour

4.13 The Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Working Group is a multi-agency group that co-ordinates activity to address anti-social behaviour. Chaired by the force Chief Superintendent it has representation from a wide range of bodies and communities including relevant Dumfries and Galloway Council Departments (Legal Services, Social Work, Education, Community Development, Housing), Dumfries and Galloway Fire and Rescue, voluntary groups, Registered Social Landlords and the Reporter to the Children's Panel. The group produced the Dumfries and Galloway multi-agency Antisocial Behaviour Strategy 'Promoting Positive Citizenship' and associated action plan. This published document contains the signatures of both the Chief Constable and the Chief Executive of the Council. HMIC also observed that progress against the Strategy's Outcome Agreements was reported regularly.

4.14 The council has established Community Warden Schemes in both the Dick's Hill area of Stranraer and North West Dumfries. In addition, an Antisocial Behaviour Manager and two team leaders have been appointed. Other team members were being recruited at the time of the inspection. Joint Domestic Noise Nuisance teams, comprising both police and council staff, have also been put in place. The council has appointed an additional solicitor too, to support the legal work associated with applying elements of the Antisocial Behaviour Etc (Scotland) Act 2004.

4.15 The force makes appropriate use of a range of provisions from this Act, including Dispersal Orders, Closure of Premises, seizure of vehicles and Antisocial Behaviour Orders. The Antisocial Behaviour Strategy Working Group has produced common guidance documents in respect of these measures.

4.16 During the inspection several stakeholders referred to one particular example of the partnership approach to problems affecting the community. This was the escalating action taken to address public drinking in the 'Whitesands' area of Dumfries. Despite a byelaw prohibiting public drinking and police action in reporting subsequent offenders, the problem persisted.

4.17 Escalating Actions to Address Public Drinking

1. Police liaison with the Procurator Fiscal regarding the local impact of the byelaw breaches.
2. Contact with local licensed premises to seek their co-operation in reducing public drinking.
3. Alcohol and Drug Action Team and APEX services provided to those identified as regular offenders.
4. Consideration of the use of antisocial behaviour legislation. For a small number of offenders who had not responded to previous attempts, the decision was taken not to apply the wider-ranging Disposal Order but to seek individually targeted ASBOs.
5. ASBOs sought and granted (with two of the four offenders breaching the conditions of their ASBOs within the first week).

This example was found to be typical of local partnership working using available resources to solve local problems.

Community Wardens

4.18 Dumfries and Galloway Council currently employs a number of community wardens operating in South Central Stranraer (Belmont and Dickshill) and Northwest Dumfries (Lochside, Lincluden and Sandside). These wardens are managed from within the Combined Services Department of the Council. Their employment is part of a pilot exercise, originally intended to run for two years but now extended by a further two years as a result of central funding. Operationally there are several avenues for communication between the wardens and the police. Routine meetings take place regularly between police and wardens at which relevant issues, such as individuals coming to the attention of the community/police, health and safety issues and joint working community safety ventures, can be discussed.

4.19 A steering group, made up of representatives from various Council Departments, Housing Partnerships, Fire and Rescue Service, the police, other relevant organisations, and local schools and community representatives, meets on a quarterly basis. The group monitors the progress of the project, and provides direction and support for the wardens in matters of concern which are brought to its attention.

4.20 In Dumfries there is a fortnightly Tasking and Co-ordinating Meeting involving police, wardens and representatives from Registered Social Landlords. These are chaired and co-ordinated by the Police Anti Social Behaviour Officer. In Stranraer, weekly Incident Briefings allow community police officers and wardens to discuss relevant matters, particularly those pertinent to anti-social behaviour. A weekly youth issues list relating to the Stranraer area is sent via e-mail to the wardens, giving times, dates, locations, types of behaviour and descriptions of those involved. This allows wardens to patrol pro-actively to prevent or assist in addressing the issues described. The list is also passed to local detached youth workers.

4.21 Community wardens have been given radios which are part of the Dumfries and Stranraer Shop Radio Link and Pub Watch schemes. This allows them to communicate directly with both the CCTV operator in the police station and the on-duty community constable. They can also monitor incidents over the radio and provide assistance if appropriate, or conversely they can use the radios to report incidents or request assistance themselves. The wardens are also equipped with mobile phones so that police staff can contact them. The senior warden co-ordinates their day to day deployment and tasking including, where relevant, pro-active patrolling in response to matters raised by the police.

4.22 The warden schemes have been found to work well and have attracted broad public support. At the time of inspection, the council was considering extending the schemes to other areas.

Financial Planning and Monitoring

4.23 The force has well established procedures in place for monitoring its revenue and capital budgets. In 2005–06 the force's final outturn on revenue showed only a small variance against a budget of £76,000, at 0.5% of total planned expenditure. A minor variance was also reported against the 2005–06 capital budget, of under 1%. At the time of HMIC's review the latest budget monitoring reports available on the 2006–07 budgets (to 31 October 2006) forecasted a closing balanced capital budget, as well as a revenue budget underspend of approximately £132,000 as a result of staff vacancies during the year. The force has devolved revenue expenditure to over 30 individual budget-holders across divisions, operational services, and corporate and financial services. Each budget-holder reports monthly to the Head of Financial Services within the force. The Head of Financial Services in turn prepares summary budget monitoring reports, containing explanations for projected or actual deviation from budget, which are submitted to every meeting of the Police and Fire Rescue Committee. All areas of expenditure have been devolved to budget-holders, apart from payroll and an element of the overtime budget which is held centrally as a contingency balance. Payroll expenditure is monitored at a corporate level, with the Resource and Business Continuity Group responsible for considering on a case by case basis whether arising vacancies should be re-filled.

4.24 The force is facing continuing financial pressures from changes in legislation and growing demands on its services. In setting the 2006–07 revenue budget, general reserves of £143,000 were used to augment the budget. This represented a high proportion of the force's unallocated reserves and left only £80,000 as a contingency for unforeseen costs. It is anticipated that the forecasted 2006–07 budget underspend will be partly applied to the next year's budget and partly used to replenish general reserves.

4.25 It is noted that due to uncertainties in future levels of grant aided expenditure (GAE), only a one-year revenue budget has been formally approved for 2006–07. The Head of Finance does, however, maintain a medium term working budget. It is important for informing future service planning that financial planning covers the medium to long term. HMIC has been advised that a three-year revenue budget will be set for the period starting 2007–08, and that this will be presented to Committee in early 2007.

4.26 The force's priorities are governed by the 'Community Promise' which contains its overarching strategic objectives. The actions required to achieve these objectives have been included within the force's strategic action plan. The resources required to achieve these objectives and developments have not been identified and costed, beyond allocating budgets to units delivering in the areas of the 'Community Promise'. Financial planning is not integrated with the strategic planning process, and as such does not inform the setting of future objectives and priorities. Thus there is a risk that resources are not targeted at the force's priorities and objectives and that planned service improvements are not delivered.

4.27 As mentioned at paragraph 2.5, the force strategic plan and its linkage to financial planning will be examined at the review inspection.

4.28 In February 2006, the Police, Fire and Rescue Committee approved a three-year capital expenditure programme covering 2006-07 to 2008-09. The capital expenditure plan is limited to the grant income from the Scottish Executive. While the force has the power to augment this funding by borrowing under the Prudential Code for Capital Finance, it believes that current pressures on the revenue budget do not allow for affordable and sustainable borrowing. However in order to allow longer term financial planning for larger capital schemes, it is important that the force reviews the potential for future borrowing under the Prudential Code, as referred to at Recommendation 11 dealing with the force's property strategy.

Internal Audit Arrangements

4.29 The force uses the main financial systems operated by Dumfries and Galloway Council to process and record its financial transactions. Internal audit services are provided by the Internal Audit Department of the council.

4.30 In setting the department's annual audit plan, the Chief Internal Auditor takes cognisance of the requirement to test the control environment of the main financial systems. This testing would include samples of transactions from across the council's departments as well as those from the force. That said, where a risk assessment highlighted a need then audit work would be directed specifically at force transactions.

4.31 In addition, the Internal Audit department carries out audits specific to the work of the force. In 2005-06, audits were carried out on the following:

- Police Payroll;
- Annan Police Station Capital Scheme;
- Police Bank Account.

Best Value

4.32 The force has a statutory duty to secure Best Value and continuous improvement across all its services. A Best Value group is in place, comprising representatives from each division and department within the force. The group meets periodically throughout the year, though its aim to meet on a monthly basis has not always been possible because of other work pressures. Where other forces have executive representation on equivalent groups, Dumfries and Galloway's Best Value group is chaired by its Head of Financial Services. It is possible that this arrangement limits the degree of corporate leadership and ownership of the force's Best Value agenda.

4.33 At the present time, elected members' involvement in the force's Best Value arrangements is limited. Members take no part in approving which Best Value reviews are to take place, nor do they form part of the review teams. In addition, it is not evident that they take part in the Best Value decision-making process. Instead the outcomes of Best Value reviews appear to be submitted to the Police, Fire and Rescue Committee more for noting than for formal approval.

Recommendation 6

The force should encourage the active involvement of elected members in the Best Value agenda, and should ensure that its senior officers play an integral part in planning and monitoring Best Value.

4.34 The force's approach to Best Value to date has mainly focused on reviewing specific service areas and achieving efficiency savings. The areas reviewed by the force in 2005-06 covered:

- The force communication centre;
- Usage of printers;
- Road safety and cycle training.

4.35 The force has no formal programme of service reviews to ensure that all its main activities will be covered within a reasonable time period. Nor does it have a framework to allow an informed selection and prioritisation of those service areas most in need of a review. In the main, reviews to date have been chosen on an ad hoc basis, with limited ones being carried out on the force's wider corporate activities. Moreover, progress towards completing those underway is not regularly reported to senior management or members.

Recommendation 7

A framework should be introduced, with reference to the ACPOS Best Practice Guide being developed by the Business Benefits Unit, for identifying and prioritising the service areas to be reviewed. Progress against this programme should be regularly monitored and reported to the Policy Group and elected members. In addition, a system of performance measurement and monitoring should be established to allow both senior officers and members of the Police Fire and Rescue Committee to confirm that actions agreed following review are fully implemented and are effective in meeting identified objectives and targets.

Efficiency Targets

4.36 The force reports efficiency savings on a monthly basis to the ACPOS Best Value Group. The planned efficiency targets for the force for the three years to 2007-08 are as follows: £390,000 (2005-06), £1,142,000 (2006-07) and £1,609,000 (2007-08). While it has not agreed a formal savings plan to achieve its efficiency targets, the force exceeded the targets set for 2005-06 and recorded total efficiencies of £1.147 million. Though the level of efficiencies achieved to date in 2006-07 has yet to be reported to Committee, HMIC has been advised that the force predicts that it will meet the target.

Recommendation 8

Given the current financial pressures faced by the force and the rising targets for efficiency savings, it is important that a formal savings plan is approved to ensure that future efficiency targets are achieved.

Communications and Information Services (CIS)

4.37 The Head of CIS for Dumfries and Galloway is currently on secondment to the ACPOS ICT Directorate. This is in preparation for the Scottish Police Services Authority taking responsibility for providing IT support to police forces in Scotland. It is to the force's credit that in addition to seconding a key staff member, it has adopted an approach to developing and replacing systems that is consistent with a sound route forward for national IT support. **HMIC commends as good practice the force's commitment to national developments rather than to progressing local short term solutions.**

4.38 At the time of the inspection, the force was preparing to pilot the Scottish Police Information Strategy (SPIS) Custody software. Staff training had been completed in time for the original start date of 18 December 2006. However, the need to negotiate with SPIS regarding the support level available for this operationally necessary software package has meant that this start date has been put back slightly.

4.39 The force uses a programme called 'IMAGE' to record calls from the public, manage incidents and resources, and record crime. This is a local system that in its current form will soon no longer be fit for purpose. In support of the anticipated nationally agreed command and control programme, the force will not commit further resources to updating its present system. A feature of systems already used by many forces is the ability to 'flag' an address, whereby officers en route to the call can be advised of any intelligence suggesting that the situation could be dangerous. This function is not currently available within IMAGE. Information regarding previous incidents at addresses is available from the force communications centre, which is available through the 'customer relationship management' software. HMIC accepts that it is inappropriate to update the functionality of the IMAGE system while the force awaits a replacement system. However, it believes that interim intelligence flagging and sharing measures should be put in place to ensure that the safety of officers attending calls is not compromised in the meantime.

Recommendation 9

HMIC recommends that to enhance officer safety, the force review its ability to pass safety-related intelligence to officers prior to their arrival at incidents.

4.40 Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary is also awaiting a decision on what personnel and resource management software is to be the accepted national standard. At present, the force uses 'SCOPE', one of the two systems being considered. The other, 'HRS', is being developed by SPIS. This period of uncertainty has already gone on too long and HMIC expects the matter to be resolved prior to this report being published. In a service where over 80% of budgets are spent on staff costs, effective resource management is essential.

4.41 Having identified the value of an IT user forum within its CIS structure, the force is in the process of convening such a group. Its purpose will be to ensure that system users have a route to influence national IT development and prioritisation. **HMIC will return to this development at the first review inspection.**

Information Assurance, Data Protection and Freedom of Information

4.42 The force Information Directorate is line managed within the force Corporate Services department. As can be seen in the Results chapter, the force performs strongly in terms of adhering to national target times for disclosing information and inputting data to the Police National Computer (PNC) and Scottish Criminal Record Office (SCRO). Although the force handles Data Protection and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests separately from disclosure requests in terms of Part V of the Police Act 1997, the information Directorate maintains a shared disclosure log to co-ordinate requests across the range of legislation.

4.43 The force has a thorough approach to PNC audit, one which could be applied to good effect more widely across other IT applications. HMIC would normally expect to find a plan for all force IT systems, prioritised by risk and detailing the timing and nature of audit for each system. That was not the case in Dumfries and Galloway.

Recommendation 2b

The force should develop a structured approach to auditing force IT systems, which considers system support and maintenance arrangements, physical and logical access controls, input/processing/output controls, existence/operation/review of audit trail, back-up and recovery arrangements, business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements.

4.44 In respect of Freedom of Information, the force has adopted the ACPOS Model Publication Scheme (MPS) and publishes force policy documents and performance information on its website. Performance data on its response to individual requests for further information under FOI are provided to ACPOS for national reporting on a quarterly basis. These statistics do not appear in the force's annual public performance reports.

4.45 The force Information Security Officer has found that the software used to monitor staff usage of the internet and e-mail is of a lower standard than that used by many other forces and commercial organisations. Costs for the necessary upgrading have been obtained and HMIC looks forward to seeing the improved capability in place at the review inspection.

Airwave

4.46 Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary was the first Scottish police force to go live with the Airwave radio system. As such it has had a longer period than others over which to evaluate its benefits. The service provider, O2, conducted a customer satisfaction survey in February 2005. Its results indicated strong user support, with particular emphasis on the available coverage, sound quality and security of the system. Other benefits identified by the force include the use of the emergency activation facility when an officer was stabbed. Another is the ambient listening function as a valuable corroborative tool when dealing with persons thought likely to make false accusations against officers.

4.47 The Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) Airwave Operational Benefits Project carried out a Post Migration Review in December 2005. Its report was made available to the force on 23 November 2006, during this inspection. The methodology used by PITO involved a baseline survey prior to Airwave migration, a second survey shortly after migration, and this later study. The report confirmed the benefits of Airwave, including those described above, and showed how these tend to increase over time as staff become more adept at using the system. It also identified a single area where satisfaction had dropped, relating to the need for officers to wait to transmit on certain talkgroups that were busy. Due to the timing of the receipt of the report, the force had not had an opportunity to consider this matter and so [HMIC will return to this at the first review.](#)

Property Management

4.48 The force has an estate portfolio consisting of the Force Headquarters and Communications Complex, and seventeen police offices. The police offices range in size, from large divisional headquarters to very small offices that are used by community officers. The Property Management Section is part of Financial Services and consists of the Property Manager who is based at Force Headquarters, and a Property Officer based at Stranraer. The quality of the estate is generally good, although some offices are too small and lack the facilities required to deliver modern policing. The force is aware of this situation and plans have been drawn up to address some of these issues when funding is available. A force review of its estates began in 2003 and a report was submitted to the Policy Group in November of 2005.

4.49 The force looks for creative ways to make good use of its resources. One example is the office at Thornhill, which is shared with the local council. This has allowed both bodies to share reception staff, while providing their local communities with a one-stop shop for a range of police and council services. The force has also entered into an agreement with the council for sharing facilities at the new police office planned for Castle Douglas. The Property Manager uses the council's Architects Department to manage and administer tenders and award contracts. This has proved useful in saving time and money on repetitive tasks which divert the Property Management Team from other duties.

4.50 The force is currently negotiating with port operators and the Scottish Executive over plans to expand the port of Cairnryan and move all ferry operations away from Stranraer. As mentioned in paragraph 5.119 this will have a considerable impact on policing the ports. The force sees this as an opportunity to replace the low standard police facilities at both ports with a custom built facility that is suitable for modern ports policing.

4.51 During the inspection HMIC found that the force has carried out a considerable amount of work to ensure that its estate complies with the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). However, the team was concerned that no budget had been planned or allocated for this work, nor did there seem to be a clear audit trail indicating how and why the work had been carried out and prioritised. In addition, the force appeared to have made no structured use of the extensive audit carried out by consultants on behalf of the council and which had included police properties.

4.52 The force has engaged in some proactive work with the Property Manager, looking at the energy efficiency of its buildings and recording energy costs based on square metres and on the number of staff using the building. This work is to be commended. However, HMIC would like to see a more strategic approach overall to Property Management. This should include the development of an overarching property strategy that would clearly bring together all the strands of a heavy portfolio, provide clear funding proposals, prioritise the work to be carried out in the wider context of the force's operational needs and ensure that there is executive support to achieve its aims.

Recommendation 10

HMIC recommends that the force develop an overarching property strategy that brings together the disparate elements of work being undertaken and planned, prioritises them, clearly states the financial planning and funding arrangements and considers exercising prudent borrowing powers.

Fleet and Driver Management

4.53 The force currently has a vehicle fleet of 126 vehicles, all of which the force owns. To regulate the use of police vehicles, the force has issued Force Standing Order No. 22. This was last updated in 2006 and covers procedures and policies regulating the use of vehicles and providing guidance on the forms required. The force carries out almost all regular servicing and maintenance work. It also carries out warranty work on newer vehicles and charges this back to the manufacturer. The force has two mobile maintenance units that visit outlying stations to perform minor repairs, safety checks and some servicing. These vehicles are equipped with towing frames to allow vehicles to be taken back to the main workshop. Using these units saves a great deal of time and money that would otherwise be expended if all vehicles had to be returned to Dumfries.

4.54 HMIC found processes and systems in place to monitor police vehicle collisions, identify trends and take remedial action. Regular reports on collisions are made to Heads of Services and costs are recovered from their budgets. Officers who are involved in blameworthy accidents are assessed by the driver training section and, if necessary, undergo further training.

Procurement

4.55 During the inspection HMIC was pleased to note that the final recommendation from the 2002 primary inspection of the force had finally been discharged. This means that the force now has in place Service Level Agreements with the council for providing financial, legal and personnel services. The force was also found to comply with the council's financial and ethical standards in relation to procurement. It is also active in the national procurement forum and sources all large bulk purchases through existing national framework agreements.

Projects and Programme Management

4.56 Project Management within force is governed by Policy Group, which acts as the Programme Board. For individual projects a Project Board is formed according to the principles of Prince 2 and its methodology is adopted to manage and monitor the project. The Deputy Chief Constable chairs the Project Board, and Project Managers and Project Teams are allocated on a project by project basis. This allocation of staff is dependent upon their knowledge, skills and experience in the subject matter, coupled with their ability to administer effectively and see the project through to a successful conclusion.

4.57 In recent years the following major projects have been run and, with the exception of the last which is still ongoing, successfully completed:

4.58 Force Communications Centre – Introduced on 1 September 2004, the Force Communications Centre (FCC) was seen as an integral and essential part of the force's service delivery. It was also seen as the focus for allowing continuous improvement in performance and quality of service.

4.59 Airwave – The force was the first in Scotland to implement the Airwave radio system operationally, on 4 October 2004. The project team worked to exacting national criteria and guidance. Within the force, Airwave hand-held coverage has been extended to 93% of the road network within the region. In terms of vehicle coverage, this figure rises to 98%.

4.60 Annan Police Station – The need for a new police station at Annan was first highlighted in 1996, although the allocation of Section 94 Consent was insufficient to make any progress at that time. In 2000, the former Co-operative supermarket in Annan was purchased to provide the site for the new station. Work on the new site began in November 2002 and in August 2004 the station became fully operational. It was formally opened by the Duke of Gloucester on 14 September 2004. The project was managed by the force's own project team.

4.61 National Custody System – The Force Implementation Plan and Force Readiness Checklist describe the business plan for implementing Version 1 of the SPIS National Custody System in Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary. The force will act as the pilot site for the system. This live project is managed by an Inspector, working in conjunction with a Force Project Implementation team.

4.62 HMIC is content that the force's approach to project management is practical, sensible and entirely proportionate to the circumstances. It has demonstrated the ability to run projects that range in size from smaller in-force exercises to very large initiatives that are part of a bigger national programme.

Environmental Issues

4.63 During the inspection the force showed good awareness of the need to reduce its impact on the environment. The force has an Energy Policy and a large number of initiatives are in place to ensure energy efficiency, recycling and the lessening of environmental impact. These include:

- Tyres, engine coolant, oil and air filters recycled at no cost to the organisation;
- Extensive use of video conferencing to reduce vehicle use. This includes both in-force and national meetings;
- Aluminium cans from the canteen, out of date computer equipment and uniforms are recycled;
- Promoting the use of bicycles by police personnel, and in particular, Community Officers;
- Remotely monitored and controlled heating systems in some major buildings.

4.64 The force Property Manager has also 'spent to save' energy through a proactive programme of fitting thermostatic radiator valves in smaller offices, draught proofing and replacing older heating systems with more energy efficient ones. HMIC is content that the force is making good efforts in this area.

Court Escort

4.65 In common with other Scottish forces, prisoner escort and court custody management in Dumfries and Galloway have been contracted out to a private security firm managed by the Scottish Prison Service. The force estimates that introducing this contract has led to the release of 6.5 officer equivalents from court and prisoner escort duties. The force has not quantified the additional savings in terms of prisoner escort. Nevertheless it reports that not having to provide escorts between custody offices and courts on a daily basis has a considerable positive impact.

4.66 The force has appointed an Inspector to monitor the contract and to fulfil the function of the force's single point of contact in this area. It has also issued Prisoner Escorting Procedure – Operational Guidelines both to force personnel and to the company providing the service. A multi-agency Courts User group, covering the three Sheriff Courts within the region, meets on a regular basis and will identify any issues arising. The force reports that its lines of communication with the service provider are very good and that the liaison Inspector is normally able to resolve informally any issues that do arise. In general, the force's view is that the contract has been implemented with few of the problems experienced elsewhere. HMIC is content that sufficient processes are in place to monitor the contract and to address issues that arise.

5 Processes

Call Handling

5.1 In September 2004 the force introduced its Force Communications Centre (FCC). The FCC manages all telephone and radio communications for the force. All published telephone numbers for the force are automatically re-directed to the FCC, at no additional cost to the caller. Initial results from the FCC are very encouraging: some 57% of calls are resolved at initial contact and public satisfaction with the way their calls are handled on initial contact has risen by 27 percentage points. The percentage of calls abandoned has fallen from 23% before the FCC was introduced, to 7.25% in 2005.

5.2 The staffing of the FCC has changed from a standard number of staff per shift to a model which matches resources to demand. Demand profiling is carried out on an ongoing basis using information from a variety of systems. The force has taken advantage of opportunities provided by the Voluntary Early Retirement scheme (see paragraph 3.24) to employ staff on part time and flexible contracts to cover periods of heaviest demand.

5.3 Suitably trained staff provide common standards of performance in terms of answering calls quickly, efficiently and consistently. Efficient access to force information systems has enhanced the ability of FCC staff to resolve calls at this first point of contact, negating the need for callers to be routinely transferred to another party.

5.4 The FCC forms part of Operational Services and is staffed by:

- 1 x Police Inspector (FCC Manager);
- 1 x Business Analyst/Office Manager;
- 6 x Police Sergeants (Duty Officers);
- 18 Public Service Advisors (17 Full-Time equivalent posts);
- 18 Dispatchers (17 Full-Time equivalent posts);
- 6 x Police Constables (Police Advisors).

5.5 The force has centralised all responsibility for Airwave, 999 calls and non-emergency telephony within the FCC. A sergeant serves as Duty Officer, 24 hours a day. Within the facility the force has established three distinct roles. These are described in more detail in the following paragraphs.

5.6 Public Service Advisors (PSAs) answer non-emergency calls and try to resolve caller queries at this first point of contact. They try to do this using the Frequently Asked Question database, IMAGE logs, intranet/Internet, resource information or any other information source they may have available. When a member of the public wants to speak to a named officer/member of staff a warm transfer (meaning that the operator listens to the call being transferred long enough to ensure that it is answered) is made, to either the staff member's office telephone or an officer's Airwave terminal. If the call cannot be transferred a message is taken and forwarded by e-mail. Calls that are identified as an emergency can be handled by the Public Service Advisor or transferred to a dispatcher. The details of other calls requiring a police response are recorded by the Public Service Advisor and passed to dispatch or to a Police Advisor.

5.7 Dispatchers answer 999 calls and those from other response services, dispatch resources to calls and provide support to those resources. When Public Service Advisors are not on duty or when call volumes are particularly high, dispatchers also answer non-emergency calls.

5.8 Police Advisors (PAs) are police officers who provide information and advice to members of the public. They also deal with reports of minor crime, non-reportable road traffic accidents and intelligence reports, where there is no need to dispatch resources.

5.9 The force operates an Incident Contact Management Strategy (ICM) that sets out four incident categories (immediate, routine, deferred and non-attendance). The FCC uses these categories to ensure a consistent and appropriate approach when dealing with calls. Nevertheless, the force retains an element of flexibility that allows resources to be dispatched to low level calls where the caller's needs outweigh a strict application of the ICM.

5.10 On receiving a call that necessitates police attendance, the Dispatcher will normally pass the call to the Duty Sergeant covering the area. The call is then allocated to that Sergeant on the IMAGE system. It will then be the Duty Sergeant's responsibility to make sure that the incident is attended. The Sergeant or the resource allocated the incident should then update the FCC with who is attending the incident. On a visit to the FCC, HMIC noted that a number of incidents can remain allocated to a Sergeant for a considerable period of time. HMIC is concerned that, in a busy period, a Duty Sergeant who is on patrol or involved in an incident may inadvertently forget to allocate a resource to an incident. This could potentially have very serious consequences; confusion over who is attending an incident has in the past in Scotland resulted in fatal injuries. Some other forces do have procedures in place to allocate resources effectively, as well as agreed processes for monitoring incidents to ensure that an attending resource has been allocated. The force should review this area and define its processes in this regard.

Recommendation 2c

HMIC recommends that the force review its procedures for allocating incidents to resources and the process whereby attendance is monitored.

5.11 The FCC maintains a close relationship with both Divisions. It actively participates in the Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group process, in line with the principles of the National Intelligence Model.

5.12 The force has recognised that the resilience and efficiency of equipment and systems is a vital part of maintaining a high quality service to staff and local communities. Representation on working groups at a local and national level helps to provide the force with information on good practice and changing procedures. The force is represented on the National Call Handling Standards Working Group and is actively participating in the Audit Scotland inspection of call handling in the Scottish Police Service.

5.13 The force introduced Airwave at the same time as it did the FCC. Initially the telephony facility on the Airwave system was used only to transfer calls to officers on patrol in emergency situations. At the request of operational staff the force now allows any appropriate call to be transferred to officers. This facility means that officers often do not have to return to the office to take phone calls. Nor has this increased use had any adverse effects on the Airwave network.

5.14 Through its quality of service surveys the force is aware of some public dissatisfaction concerning the level of feedback they receive. This is in relation to incidents that the force has attended. To address this the force has run a pilot scheme, where officers can use status keys on their Airwave terminals to send an update to the IMAGE system. The officer can also mark the incident log with a call back. The FCC would then telephone the complainer and update them on the progress of the enquiry, gather any new information and update the incident log. The force is disappointed with the poor uptake of this facility amongst officers and is planning a re-launch with an appropriate marketing strategy. **HMIC is interested in projects such as this, which have the potential to improve the service to the public, and will examine progress at the next review inspection.**

Operational Policing

5.15 Operational policing in the force is driven by the aims set out in the Strategic Action Plan and the 'Community Promise'. To deliver this, the force uses the principles of the National Intelligence Model linked to a very strong and practical problem-solving ethos. The foundation for operational policing is the two territorial divisions; the Dumfries Division covering the east of the force area and the Galloway Division covering the west. These divisions supply the policing for all the communities within the force area. The policing provided is a mixture of response policing and community policing. The Force Executive does not dictate how policing should be delivered. Instead it allows local commanders to decide this on the basis of local needs, identified through consultation and analysis, and directed by the Tasking and Co-ordinating process.

5.16 Twenty-four hour response policing resources throughout the force use the 2,2,2 shift system or a close variation of it. An appropriate Workforce Agreement is in place to cover the deviation from the regulations. This shift pattern is popular with both the officers working it and with management. It is felt that it provides the best match of resources with demand, while 'opportunity days' are used for training or to police special initiatives. This response policing is supported by a network of Community Police Officers whose responsibilities fall within either geographical or thematic boundaries. Those with thematic responsibilities are responsible for anti-social behaviour, noise reduction or crime reduction. Service delivery is managed by local Area Commanders. These officers are normally Inspectors except for the town of Dumfries where, due to its size, the Area Commander is a Chief Inspector. Dumfries Division has four area commands: Dumfries, Annan, Lockerbie and Upper Nithsdale. Galloway Division has three Area Commands: Stranraer, Newton Stewart and the Stewartry. The Area Commanders maintain close links with their communities, elected representatives, locally-based groups and partner agencies.

5.17 Quality of Service is an important theme in operational policing within the force and every effort is made to address public concerns. The force has set itself challenging targets. In response to a public desire for more visible policing, the force uses whatever policing style is appropriate to the area being served. As a result, officers may perform mobile, cycle or foot patrols. The force strives to maximise the visibility of its officers, regularly supplementing this by deploying Special Constables to patrol with regular officers, in pairs or on their own. In 2005-06 the force set a target for Community officers to spend at least 66% of their time engaged in the community. Monthly snapshot activity analysis showed that this target was achieved, with 67.8% of Community Officers' time spent in this way. A further target was for other uniformed officers to be engaged in the community for 10% of their time. This was greatly exceeded, with these officers spending 61.8% of their time engaged in the community.

Other targets in relation to quality of service include those concerning the speed at which the force attends calls. For 2005–06 again, the force set targets for police to attend 90% of identified emergency calls within ten minutes in urban areas and 20 minutes in rural areas. The percentages achieved were 78.3% and 82.8% respectively. In the previous year the respective figures were 79.9% and 84.3%.

5.18 As mentioned above the force has a strong problem-solving ethos, which was demonstrated on a number of occasions during the inspection. As might be expected the Area Commanders are responsible for co-ordinating a problem-solving response to policing issues arising in their areas. These responses will often involve partner agencies and can often be inventive. Examples include the council working to change street furniture, bushes and lighting. Nor was it unusual for the police to involve youth outreach workers in trying to understand the issues underlying youthful anti-social behaviour, and then to engage with partner agencies in attempts to modify behaviour. HMIC was pleased to see that this problem-solving ethos was prevalent at constable level, with officers able to give examples of how they had addressed underlying problems rather than just the visible manifestations of them.

Crime Recording

5.19 National performance information on crime levels and detection rates shows that in the majority of categories Dumfries and Galloway performs very strongly. The force enjoys low and falling levels of serious crime, 60% detection rate for crime groups 1–5 and works proactively to tackle problems such as drug crime.

5.20 As it does in all its Primary Inspections, HMIC conducted a thorough crime recording audit, examining in excess of 1,500 incidents reported to the force drawn from six twenty-four-hour periods. These were tracked through the force IMAGE software to ensure that where appropriate, incidents had been categorised as crimes and, where further information suggesting that an incident had not in fact been a crime, that the system had been updated accordingly. All forces are expected to apply the Scottish Crime Recording Standard (SCRS) and to recognise the work outlined in the HMIC thematic report, 'Meeting the Standard'.

5.21 The audit found 28 incidents where no crime report had been raised but where according to the SCRS, one should have been. This error rate, while not excessive, is at the upper end of the range found in Scottish forces. It was also of concern to HMIC that a very small number of serious crimes had not been recorded appropriately. Several factors were identified during the inspection that are believed to have an impact on this.

5.22 First, although an IMAGE entry may only be 'closed' by an authorised individual, this person could be the FCC supervisor, an operational sergeant, or another 'authorised' person. Hence, even on a single shift, there is no consistency of supervision. Secondly, while probationary officers are trained in the SCRS and all staff have received a copy of the 2006 SCRS, the force recognises that there is scope to improve actual understanding of the Standard. These factors have contributed to Recommendations 2a, 2c and 2d regarding consistency of monitoring, incident management and crime recording.

5.23 The force Performance Management Unit regularly audits the IMAGE system. While HMIC welcomes this practice, there appears to be an inappropriate reliance on this to the detriment of regular supervisory activity at the initial stages of the crime recording process.

5.24 A third factor which HMIC believes relevant both to the force and to public perception is that the Force Crime Registrar, who is responsible for the force's adherence to the SCRS, is also a Detective Chief Inspector with line management responsibility for several areas of crime performance. Recommendations made in 'Meeting the Standard' and other Primary Inspections have clearly indicated that the responsibilities of the Crime Registrar should be separate from the detection and management of crime.

Recommendation 2d

HMIC recommends that to ensure compliance with accepted national standards and to retain public confidence in the force's performance figures in respect of crime, an appropriate Force Crime Registrar and Deputy be identified. It is anticipated that this would be combined with a programme to increase understanding of the SCRS throughout the force. HMIC accepts that due to the low levels of crime in the area, these roles are unlikely to be full-time commitments for the staff members identified.

Crime Management

5.25 In common with almost all Scottish police forces, Dumfries and Galloway has seen a reduction in the rate of groups 1-4 crime over the last year. This has declined from 60 crimes per 10,000 population in 2004-05 to 51.7 for 2005-06. Only Fife Constabulary recorded a greater drop over the same period.

5.26 The two divisions have a different approach to managing volume crime. Dumfries division, which deals with higher volumes of crime, has a Crime Management Unit with a Deputy Crime Manager, Field Intelligence Officer and Analyst. In contrast, every six months or so Galloway division puts together a 'backtrack' team comprising three officers from sections within the division. These officers are tasked with re-examining undetected crimes in high volume categories, in light of any trends or patterns that may have since emerged. An evaluation report of the backtracking operation revealed officers' initial understanding of the SCRS to be less than ideal, and that a 'significant' number of errors had been identified on the IMAGE crime records.

5.27 While both approaches are successful in their respective areas, there is residual doubt about the consistency of the force's initial handling of crime reports, as already noted at paragraph 2.14 regarding performance management, and above in relation to Crime Recording. It may be that the measures taken by the force in respect of these recommendations may also impact upon this area.

5.28 HMIC acknowledges that these comments are made in the context of a force whose performance, in terms of the proportion of crimes solved, is consistently strong in comparison with that of other forces.

Major Crime Enquiries

5.29 The Detective Superintendent, Head of Crime Management Services, has overall responsibility for managing major crime investigations. In such circumstances he will appoint the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO) and, where appropriate, will put mentoring in place for less experienced SIOs.

5.30 The force acknowledges that it has a shortage of practical SIO experience. Under the direction of the Detective Superintendent, it has put in place a skills matrix to manage the development of existing SIOs of Detective Inspector (DI) rank. This matrix addresses not only formal training, but also practical experience. **HMIC commends this approach as good practice.**

5.31 To maximise resilience at SIO level, the force includes all Detective Inspectors (DIs) on the 'on call' rota. Though this may cause extra general work for the specialist DI, it also ensures that experience is developed across all DIs. The force is also arranging to send its SIOs on short attachments to Strathclyde police, in order to increase their exposure to Category A and B enquiries. Although this is planned, the first attachment is yet to go ahead. **HMIC will be interested to see the progress made at the time of the review inspection.**

5.32 The force is fully engaged in the ACPOS Major Crime Capability and Capacity Review, having seconded a Detective Inspector to work with the team. The outcome of this work is expected to benefit all forces, particularly those like Dumfries and Galloway where the depth and breadth of SIO experience is a particular issue.

5.33 Despite the above comments, HMIC found examples of the force leading significant crime enquiries, not only within its own boundaries but also in joint work with other forces to address travelling criminals. It competently and enthusiastically targets NIM level 2 criminality.

5.34 The force does not have a dedicated Major Crime Team as is found in some forces. Rather, it draws resources from across the force as and when required and as outlined in its Major Crime Investigation – Review and Logistics/Resource Policy. Dedicated major incident rooms, consistent with the Major Incident Room Standardised Administrative Procedures (MIRSAP), are available at both Dumfries and Stranraer.

Intelligence-Led Policing

5.35 The National Intelligence Model (NIM) is at the foundation of service delivery in Scottish and UK policing. It is used to identify appropriate priorities and to identify and task the appropriate resources to deal with these. In 2005 the ACPOS NIM Implementation Team inspected Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary's compliance with the NIM Minimum Standards. HMIC found plans and resources in place to respond to the NIM Team's recommendations and was able to examine the force's progress to date.

5.36 Although there are still areas to be fully addressed and though some nationally consistent terminology is still not being used at all levels, HMIC was encouraged to observe the ethos and practice of NIM at strategic and operational levels with the force. At the strategic level, it has already been noted that the force planning process is being revised to adopt the NIM process more fully. While, at front-line level, HMIC attended a routine shift briefing at which a target was identified and officers briefed on the intelligence requirement necessary to develop the target profile. It was clear too that other ongoing force operations had also been selected and prepared in accordance with NIM principles.

5.37 As part of its moves to comply with NIM standards, the force is planning to establish a dedicated covert human intelligence sources (CHIS) unit. It is expected to be in place prior to this report being published. The unit, along with work being carried out to realign sex offender monitoring in light of the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) that will come into effect in 2007, will have an effect on the structure of the Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB).

5.38 The structure and efficient management of the FIB and the appropriate management of analytical resources are crucial elements in delivering intelligence-based policing. Given the amount of change going on in the force at the time of inspection, [HMIC will return to this area at the first review inspection.](#)

5.39 HMIC was pleased to note the systematic co-operation between Scottish and English forces through the Border Forces Tasking and Co-ordinating Group, which meets quarterly to consider cross-border crime.

Forensic Science Support

5.40 Dumfries and Galloway is one of several Scottish police forces that does not have a forensic science laboratory based within the force. Instead it has service level agreements with other laboratories from whom it obtains whatever services it requires.

5.41 At the time of inspection preparations were underway for transferring the provision of forensic support to the Scottish Police Services Authority from April 2007. This is likely to have an impact on how forensic support is organised within the force. HMIC noted that the department has limited IT support for tracking its work, and that the cost of implementing such a system would be disproportionate to the scale of the department. It is anticipated that a move to a nationally provided service would address this. HMIC will take a keen interest in the development of this national matter.

Policing Diverse Communities

5.42 The force has developed a comprehensive Diversity Strategy. This is based on the ACPOS model, which seeks to direct how policing should address the needs of minority groups. The Strategy has been developed by applying the Balanced Scorecard Approach to different strands of diversity. Police officers are active participants in the various groups that have been developed to represent the various minorities within the force area.

5.43 To help operational officers adopt an appropriate and sensitive approach to minorities, a Diversity Awareness Guide is made available to all officers. First published in 2004, the Guide is developed in conjunction with the various minority groups, who decide what they want officers to know about their group. Updated and published annually, it also contains contact details of community leaders.

5.44 The force area does not have a significant population of asylum seekers, although a good number do pass through the ports at Stranraer and Cairnryan. The force's approach here is covered in detail in paragraph 5.119. However, there has been a large influx of Eastern European workers, particularly from Poland. In response, the force has been developing liaison arrangements with Polish and other communities. In November 2006 it hosted a Polish Day in Castle Douglas. The event was publicised in Polish and advertised in businesses employing these migrant workers. Other partner agencies in the area, such as the Fire Service, Health Service and Council, also took part.

5.45 The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community within the area is becoming more active. Social events have been organised and the youth group now has full-time workers and offices in Dumfries. The force actively engages with this traditionally hard to reach group and is represented on the local LGBT Advisory Group. It is also working towards gaining the newly developed LGBT Youth Charter Mark.

5.46 The inspection found ample evidence, from both the force and external stakeholders, of the considerable efforts being made to engage with all minority communities and to monitor and address changing trends. HMIC is pleased to note the force's efforts in this area.

Community Tension

5.47 The force maintains close links with minority groups. Liaison officers for the different groups are of supervisory rank and are tasked with identifying any emerging issues that might impact on communities or the force. Information gathered is discussed at management meetings both at force and divisional levels. Any matters arising will be addressed either by local divisional management or at force level as appropriate. Briefings from the National Community Tensions Team are cascaded throughout the force, as are local briefings from Special Branch.

5.48 Community impact assessments are compiled for significant events. The potential impact of national issues on local minority communities and racial tensions is considered on an individual basis, in order to assess the relevance of creating a community impact assessment.

Victim Support

5.49 The need to provide support and advice to victims of crime is recognised in the force Strategic Action Plan. HMIC found an innovative and effective method of referral to Victim Support being operated in both divisions. In the first instance victims are told about the services of Victim Support and informed that, unless they wish otherwise, their details will be made available to the agency who will then contact them. In addition the force has vetted a small number of Victim Support staff who, under the terms of an information sharing protocol, are allowed access to limited information directly from the force IMAGE incident recording system. This means that unlike many other forces, Dumfries and Galloway has no need to prepare data spreadsheets and transmit these to Victim Support. **HMIC commends this approach and found it to be valued by both the police and Victim Support.**

5.50 Exempt from this process are victims of domestic abuse. In these cases, female victims are told of the support available from Women's Aid and provided with contact details should they wish to make contact. Similarly, male victims are given contact details for Victim Support. Officers who attend initially at domestic abuse incidents submit details to the Family Protection Unit (FPU), who will contact the victim and provide further information about available support services and/or offer support if appropriate. Subsequent contact between domestic abuse victims and support groups is significantly lower than that which occurs as a result of the 'opt out' approach described above. HMIC accepts that there are additional factors to be considered where contacting domestic abuse victims is concerned, such as the fact that in many instances the perpetrator may live at the same address as the victim. Given these circumstances the preferred approach is one that encourages the victim, rather than the support agency, to initiate contact.

5.51 During the inspection it was apparent that some officers attending incidents of domestic abuse were not fully conversant with these two approaches. Assuming erroneously that the incident would be captured by the Victim Support process, some officers were failing to take a more proactive role in informing victims of available support services. Having been alerted to this matter, the force had already begun to address this matter before HMIC's inspection had finished.

5.52 In addition to the victim support facilities described above, the force makes comprehensive use of Restorative Justice Warnings when responding to incidents and crime. This involves the officer co-ordinating the warning contacting the victim to ensure his or her input to the process. In these and other examples, HMIC was reassured by the consideration Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary shows to its victims of crime.

Vulnerable Persons

5.53 The force has no specific policy or training in relation to dealing with vulnerable persons and instead relies on its officers to deal with all members of the community appropriately and sensitively. Specific guidance is in place in relation to vulnerable persons that are reported as missing persons, are arrested or become involved with the police in the course of a criminal enquiry. The force has close links with the local Appropriate Adult scheme and facilitates training to ensure that scheme members are aware and have some experience of police and criminal justice processes and procedures. The force recognises that its published guidance is dated, and is working with the national group to develop new guidance based on the recommendations of Scottish Executive research on the scheme.

5.54 Nationally many forces are ensuring that their officers are provided with appropriate guidance and training to allow them to deal effectively and sensitively with vulnerable members of the community. **The lack of a structured policy and a uniform approach to identifying appropriate training needs has been recognised by the force. It is intent on using the development and launch of the Disability Equality Scheme as the platform to take these issues forward, and HMIC will examine its progress at the next review inspection.**

Family Liaison

5.55 The force deploys family liaison officers (FLOs) on the basis of agreement between the FLO co-ordinator and the investigating officer in the case. While its use of FLOs for incidents such as fatal road crashes and serious crime was consistent with HMIC's expectations, the force demonstrated some innovative deployments in missing persons cases. Though not routinely used in missing person cases, extenuating factors led the force to deploy FLOs in two cases: one where the missing person was later found to have been murdered, and one later found to have committed suicide. In both instances, the early involvement of an FLO was of benefit to both the subsequent enquiry and the family.

5.56 The force has also shown considerable flexibility in selecting the FLO co-ordinator. Previously the post was held by an Inspector, who retained the role when promoted to a new post. The force has subsequently advertised for a co-ordinator on the basis of the specific skills required rather than by rank. As a result, the post is now held by a constable. This officer had previously acted as deputy FLO co-ordinator and as such was confident in negotiating with senior officers to determine appropriate deployments. **HMIC commends the force for selecting staff on the basis of skills appropriate to the specific role, rather than by rank.**

Family Protection Unit

5.57 The Family Protection Unit (FPU) is led by a Detective Inspector. Its remit covers sexual offences, child protection, domestic abuse and managing sex offenders. The work of this Unit links extensively with partner agencies including the Children's Reporter, Social Services Department, Procurator Fiscal and support agencies. The department is divided into three units, one dealing with sex offender monitoring, one with domestic abuse and an enquiry team dealing with the remaining offences.

5.58 In September of 2006, the Social Work Inspection Agency carried out inspections of Social Work generally and Criminal Justice Social Work specifically in the Dumfries and Galloway area. Both of these reports are available on its website www.swia.gov.uk. These reports considered, in detail, joint working around managing high risk offenders. While positive in terms of sex offender management, they noted that there was scope for further improving the management of high risk violent offenders. The police will be involved with the council in responding to the areas highlighted in these reports. HMIC noted that the force has engaged with the Scottish Prison Service to identify sex offenders who are nearing the end of their sentence and who will be subject to monitoring, in order to plan the work of its sex offender monitoring unit.

5.59 Several factors drew HMIC's attention to this area of force performance. The detection rate for Group 2, sexual offences, has declined since 2001-02 from 92% to 66% in 2004-05, before increasing in the last year to 74%. Some of this effect may be consistent with the findings of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) review of the investigation and prosecution of rape and serious sexual offences, published in June 2006, which found inconsistencies in reporting such offences for prosecution across forces. Thus one of the report's recommendations was that the Lord Advocate publish guidelines to remove these inconsistencies. Work with both ACPOS & COPFS is ongoing in this area. Subsequent improvements in consistency across Scotland are likely to have an impact on figures for all forces, and HMIC will maintain an interest in this area.

5.60 In August 2006 Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary launched a joint initiative with the Area Procurator Fiscal, Women's Aid, Rape Crisis and Victim Support, to identify ways to improve the reporting and prosecution of rape locally.

5.61 HMIC also considered the force's arrangements in respect of domestic abuse. The force has a detective sergeant and three detective constables dedicated to this work within the FPU. Evidence of very positive partnership working was found, including a high profile media campaign to raise the profile of this crime in the area, organised by the multi-agency Domestic Abuse Strategy Group.

5.62 The force has a 'Standards of Service' document in relation to the police response to domestic abuse. This was under review at the time of inspection. Thorough reporting mechanisms were found in respect of reporting incidents of domestic abuse where children were affected, to both Social Work and the Children's Reporter.

5.63 The force has adopted a risk assessment approach which it describes as being *based roughly* on the SPECSS model. This model identifies Separation, Pregnancy, Escalation, Cultural Issues, Stalking and Sexual Assault as being relevant factors. The force then identifies whether a case is classed as *red*, *amber* or *green*, to identify potential risk to the officers initially attending. While there was some evidence of additional tasks being carried out for higher risk cases, HMIC found no recorded process that distinguished how these different cases would be treated.

5.64 HMIC believes that it would be beneficial to draw together ongoing work with partners (see paragraphs 5.50 and 5.60) and revisions to the Standards of Service document with a more systematic approach from specialist staff responding to risk-assessed cases. **The force has acknowledged this and has widened the remit of its review accordingly. Consequently, HMIC will return to this area at the review inspection.**

5.65 HMIC noted that for an extended period staff numbers in the unit had been depleted as a result of unavoidable absences, and that one member of staff had been put in place to cover the work of three officers. This had been rectified prior to HMIC completing its inspection.

Missing Persons

5.66 Missing Person enquiries within the force are subject to a Force Standing Order (FSO), which details expectations and requirements in dealing with this type of enquiry. This FSO has recently undergone a major review to ensure that it complies with the ACPO Guidance on the Management Recording and Investigation of Missing Persons. Good practice for incorporating in the revised order has also been sought from other forces in general and from Grampian Police in particular due to its work in this area. In conjunction with this FSO, a Missing Person FlipChart has been developed. This is a detailed reference document setting out how to deal with Missing Persons, including sections on risk assessment, the responsibilities of officers involved at different levels, actions to be taken, types and sources of information required and examples of how the enquiry should be recorded.

5.67 The inspection team found robust procedures and processes in place to ensure that Missing Person Enquiries were properly co-ordinated and recorded using information technology resources available within the force. The force has also identified a computer package which would enhance these processes, and has referred this to ACPOS for consideration as a national solution.

5.68 The force has procedures in place to standardise approaches to the most common types of vulnerable Missing Persons queries, and formal protocols are developed as appropriate. A good example of this type of work would be the protocol between the force and the Dumfries and Galloway Primary NHS Trust in relation to patients going missing from health establishments. This protocol clearly outlines the responsibilities on both sides. It also explains how risk should be assessed and includes a Risk Assessment Checklist to be completed by medical staff and passed on to the police.

5.69 The force has developed particular expertise in organising, training and developing the role of Search Managers. It currently has 11 trained Search Managers, including a Sergeant who is the Search Manager Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator is the first point of contact should a Search Manager be required. He will make an initial assessment of the circumstances and make sure an appropriate Search Manager is made available. All search managers have attended a recognised search management course and there is a mentoring scheme within the force for those who have recently completed their training.

5.70 Search Managers are not called out for all reported Missing Persons. However, over time the practice has developed of using them as advisors in the same way as an advisor for public order or firearms might be consulted. This results in a more informed decision about whether a search is desirable or practicable and ensures an informed input at an early stage.

5.71 The inspection found a good level of co-operation between the Search Managers and the Police Search Advisors (POLSA). Both disciplines are very clear as to their responsibilities and each will defer to the other in their particular field of expertise. The relevant FSO is clear about when each type of search discipline is required.

5.72 The relationship that has developed between the force and the two local Mountain Rescue Teams is particularly noteworthy. The members of both teams have agreed that they will assist the force in any Missing Person search in any environment. With this development the force has available to it experienced searchers who are used to working as a team. Deployments in recent times have included urban as well as rural locations.

Firearms Licensing

5.73 Responsibility for administering firearms licensing within the force falls to the Firearms Licensing Section within Corporate Services. The section itself is made up entirely of support staff and has its own manager. However, the Chief Inspector Corporate Services is responsible for monitoring their work and for taking decisions on licence refusals and revocations. Despite the high workload to be expected in a rural force, in excess of 98% of both firearms and shotgun certificates are renewed before the expiry date. This is due to rigorous processes in place to ensure that target dates are met. In the absence of the proposed national IT solution, the force has acquired a computerised system 'Shogun' to assist in this administration. HMIC is content that the force is performing well in this area.

Liquor and Other Licensing

5.74 As part of the 'Community Promise' the force has pledged to tackle alcohol-related crime. Its approach to this is very much operationally based, with all licensing issues being the responsibility of the Operational Commander (Chief Inspector) at each division. The force area is covered by four licensing boards, two in each division. The Area Commanders (Inspectors) assist the Operational Commanders in their licensing role. Routine licensing issues are covered at the daily management meetings held at both divisions, while any licensing issues which may have an operational impact are referred to the local Tasking and Co-ordinating Group. All administration is carried out by the divisional Administration Units.

5.75 The force has made significant efforts to develop successful professional relationships with the licensed trade. This has resulted in a number of successful Pubwatch and Make our Bars Safe Schemes, which have in turn led to persons being banned from all pubs in an area. Positive public support for these activities was apparent in HMIC's consultations with force stakeholders. The force is also aware of the need to manage and influence licensing issues when late hours licences, both catering and alcohol, can lead to a culture of disorder. It has recently enjoyed some success in objecting to and influencing the grant of some applications in areas with identified problems. The force also consults closely and regularly with the Procurator Fiscal and the Reporter, to ensure that they are aware of initiatives being held and of current community concerns. HMIC found the force's approach to licensing to be proportionate to local circumstances.

Drugs Policing

5.76 In 2002–03 Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary staged the highly successful Operation Emperor, making a significant impact on the drug trade in the Stranraer area. This success was repeated in Operation Roundup, targeting drug dealers in the Dumfries area, the final stage being targeted raids in December 2005. The key target appeared at court in May 2006 and was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

5.77 This inspection report has discussed the need for prioritised, intelligence-based policing. Operation Roundup is a good example of this and of the thorough, and in many cases patient, approach needed to deliver significant impacts. It began in 2003 by targeting lower level dealers and, over the course of the following months, worked through levels of the drug trade building an important picture of the issues involved.

5.78 By the culmination of the operation, over 100 dealers had been arrested, in excess of £500,000 worth of drugs seized and assets of over £330,000 recovered from the dealers. Its success has been widely commented upon, both in the local and national media.

5.79 The force recognises that it cannot address drug issues either by itself or solely through enforcement. Tackling substance misuse is an element of the Safe and Healthy Communities strand of the Dumfries Community Plan. As such, it is recognised at strategic level across partner bodies as an area at which resources should be targeted. The force's influence and commitment at strategic level is evident with the Alcohol and Drug Action Team (ADAT) being chaired by the Chief Constable.

5.80 The force's non-enforcement activities, including the harm and demand reduction strands of the ACPOS Drugs Strategy, are co-ordinated at operational level by the Substance Misuse Co-ordinator who is based in the force Drug Squad office. In addition to linking with local partners, this officer also liaises with the National Drug Co-ordinator based at the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency (SCDEA). In 2006, 82% of the area primary schools, along with community police officers, attended the SCDEA 'Choices For Life' event at the Glasgow SECC.

5.81 APEX operates an arrest referral scheme at the force custody stations, enabling access to drug treatment for those wishing to take up this service. A needle-exchange scheme is active in the force area, and the force is considering a move to provide this in its custody areas.

5.82 In addition to the resources committed to education, enforcement and harm reduction, HMIC was encouraged by the force's partnership approach to drug-related deaths. The ADAT has formed a Drug Death Review Group to tackle the number of drug-related deaths. This is felt to be a valuable indicator and has been incorporated into both the Community Plan indicators and the force's 'Community Promise'. The Review Group convenes a case conference after a death to consider all available evidence from partners in order to identify any potential actions that could be taken to reduce further instances. This information is then fed back to the ADAT. This procedure was introduced in early 2006, hence there has been no long term evaluation of its effectiveness. [HMIC will be keen to return to this subject at the review inspection.](#)

Fraud and Financial Investigation

5.83 In June 2006, the creation of the Fraud and Financial Investigation Unit brought together the specialist areas of fraud, financial investigation and e-crime. This Unit is led by a Detective Sergeant, within the Crime Management Service department. Although fraud and computer crime are not currently such a threat as to be separately identified within the force Strategic Plan, the financial investigation work of the department is referred to specifically in its role in seizing the assets of drug dealers. Resources in the department are weighted in favour of financial investigations, consistent with this strategic imperative.

5.84 The force area has enjoyed considerable successes in applying the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. In the year to April 2006, in excess of £750,000 was restrained, relating primarily to drugs but also to other crime and money laundering. In addition, £170,000 in cash was seized. While by its nature much of this work is not seen by the public, as part of its operations the force has also physically removed valuable property, such as performance vehicles, from drug dealers. Stakeholders commented positively on the impact of these activities, during the inspection.

5.85 The scale and remit of this Unit was found to be appropriate to the force's purposes and there was clear evidence of partnership links necessary to developing and maintaining performance in this area of policing. The Unit also provides briefings and support to officers across the force, to maximise the potential of its expertise.

Police Use of Firearms

5.86 In common with all other forces in Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway works to the ACPO Manual of Guidance on the Police Use of Firearms and the ACPOS Statement of Intent on the Police Use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons in Scotland. It is also preparing for the National Police Firearms Training Curriculum. The Force Standing Order for this sphere of activity combines these guidelines with necessary local adjustments and information. The force has completed a Strategic Firearms Threat Assessment which has been submitted to ACPOS. During the inspection HMIC scrutinised this document and identified several areas where it did not fully consider or address relevant areas of risk or threat. The identified areas include the following: reference to, but no quantification of, the amount and type of intelligence; no breakdown of incidents where firearms may have been an appropriate response; no mention of the Chapelcross Nuclear facility and the presence of its Civil Nuclear Constabulary in 'identified sites of interest'; and no reference to levels of force support required for an incident at these or other premises. HMIC believes that the force should revise its Assessment and look to ACPOS to provide examples of what it considers to be good practice. **The force is aware of this consideration and is already reviewing the Assessment. HMIC will look at developments in this area at the next review inspection.**

5.87 The force currently has eight Tactical Firearms Advisors (1.5% of force strength) who are also Firearms instructors. In addition there are 38 Authorised Firearms Officers (combined 8.9% of force strength). The force Executive has authorised increasing this establishment by 12 additional officers, bringing the total number trained to 58 or 11.3% of the force strength. While adequate arrangements are in place for ensuring the availability of trained Gold and Silver Firearms Commanders, the force is monitoring the situation and planning ahead to ensure that adequate provision is maintained.

5.88 The force does not maintain any Armed Response Vehicle capability on routine patrol, having assessed that no such facility is required. In 2004-05 the force dealt with one firearms incident, while in 2005-06 it dealt with three. The force does, however, retain the capability to put Armed Response Vehicles on patrol should circumstances dictate this. In normal circumstance should a firearms response be required, on-duty Authorised Firearms Officers or off-duty officers called out must go to the locations where ready equipment boxes and vehicles are located. Exercises have shown that this can be achieved within acceptable timescales. The force accepts that if a sustained firearms operation was required then it would request mutual aid from other forces. To this effect, arrangements with Strathclyde Police are already in place.

5.89 The force's own instructors provide a full range of firearms training. The force has officers trained in various disciplines including rifle, close protection, shotgun, carbine, and less lethal options such as the 'Taser' electrical discharge device and 'baton' rounds. The force attempts to maintain a geographical spread of Authorised firearms Officers throughout the force. It also monitors the situation to ensure against too many specialist skills being confined to so few individuals that these officers are unable respond to all calls on their expertise. Although, in a force the size of Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary some multi-skilling is unavoidable. Regular joint training is also carried out with the Civil Nuclear Constabulary, who maintains a unit at Chapelcross Nuclear Power Station.

5.90 In the past HMIC has recommended that forces have Armed Response Vehicles on patrol. However, Dumfries and Galloway is one of the few forces to have seen a recent decline in an already low incidence of armed crime. Work is also going on, both in force to further develop the Strategic Threat Assessment, and through ACPOS to review capability and protective services across Scotland. In these circumstances HMIC is content that such a recommendation for Dumfries and Galloway is not appropriate at this time. The Chief Constable should continue to monitor and assess the threat level and respond appropriately.

Public Order

5.91 While the force has only a very small number of public order deployments, it has 63 officers trained to national public order standards. They are supported by four tactical Advisers. The force is confident that it can meet its national commitment to providing one police support unit for mutual aid, having demonstrated this ability during the 2005 G8 Summit. The Public Order Co-ordinator within the force is currently an inspector, although the role is not post- or rank-specific. The Co-ordinator represents the force at national ACPOS level groups and oversees operational issues, training, equipment and Health and Safety relative to Public Order. Although the force does not yet have a separate public order policy it is currently developing one. The force does comply with ACPOS guidelines and the 'Keeping the Peace' Manual. The inspection found the force to have a practical and professional approach to Public Order that was proportionate to the size of the force.

5.92 While some officers are multi-skilled within different disciplines, their numbers are low. The force continues to monitor this situation. HMIC was pleased to note the force's commitment to the welfare of its Public Order Officers, carrying out appropriate health screening checks prior to recruitment and before each of the bi-annual training sessions.

Underwater/Marine Support

5.93 The force does not have its own resources for either underwater search or marine support. Instead it has a Force Standing Order that lays down the procedures necessary to obtain this type of support.

5.94 Underwater Search support is provided by Strathclyde Police. The force requires a Superintendent to authorise any such call out. The FSO contains a useful list of the factors to be considered in assessing the appropriateness of using divers and the information that Strathclyde Police will need. Strathclyde Police will recharge the cost of any operation to the force.

5.95 The same FSO also covers arrangements for maritime support, and highlights the role of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in co-ordinating such a response.

Air Support

5.96 The most common need for air support within the force is in relation to search and rescue operations. In these circumstances the force will approach the Aeronautical Rescue Co-ordination Centre (ARCC) to provide the necessary support. These arrangements work well and the force will always consult a Search Manager prior to implementing these arrangements.

5.97 For other operations involving air support, the force relies on mutual aid from Strathclyde Police. Force procedures require a member of the Force Executive to authorise any such request. The force is also represented on the Scottish Police Service Air Support Project.

Mountain Rescue

5.98 While not operating its own Mountain Rescue Team (MRT), the force has longstanding relationships with two voluntary teams, both of whom are members of the Mountain Rescue Committee of Scotland. Several police officers are members of the teams and police liaison officers sit on the management committees of both teams. The Moffat Mountain Rescue Team covers the east of the force, while the Galloway Mountain Rescue Team covers the west.

5.99 As mentioned in paragraph 5.69 the force maintains a team of Search Managers, all of whom train with the MRTs on a regular basis. The Search Manager Co-ordinator is responsible for organising this training. As well as local exercises, two annual joint training exercises are held each year involving the force's Search Managers and both MRTs.

5.100 Although the force has no documented criterion for calling out an MRT, each incident is assessed on an individual basis in conjunction with advice from the Search Manager Co-ordinator. Once a team has been called out, the force will deploy a Search Manager and a police incident officer to the location of the incident. The police Search Manager will work in conjunction with an MRT Search Manager to share experience and ensure that all possible search parameters are considered. Early in the incident an assessment will be made as to whether a Family Liaison Officer is required. This decision will be re-assessed as required. **This particular model of having a police Search Manager, incident officer and, if appropriate, a Family Liaison Officer at an incident attracted very positive comment from MRT members during the inspection, and HMIC considers this to be good practice.**

Police Dogs

5.101 Although the force does not operate a formal Dog Section it does have one General Purpose Police Dog available for duty, based in Dumfries Division. Its handler performs community policing duties in addition to his role as dog handler, and carries out joint training with the Civil Nuclear Constabulary Dog Section based at Chaplecross Power Station. A General Purpose Police Dog should also be stationed within Galloway Division, but the previous incumbent has yet to be replaced. A drugs search dog is maintained by the Drug Squad at Dumfries, while the Ports Unit at Stranraer maintains a number of specialist search dogs for drugs and explosives. The possibility of training a dog to identify both drugs and cash is also being explored. Although operations at the ports have priority, the force will use these dogs for other operations as and when required. The force is confident that its current establishment of dogs is proportionate to the demand and policing environment of the force area, but this situation is kept under review.

5.102 A Force Standing Order clearly lays down the criteria for deploying dogs and the process to be followed. It also provides helpful advice about the types of incidents and searches for which dogs are suitable.

Road Policing

5.103 In its 'Community Promise' 2006-07, the force states that for road policing it will:

- Reduce serious injury and fatal road crashes;
- Reduce road casualties;
- Support everyone affected by serious injury and fatal crashes;
- Combat criminal activity on our roads;
- Provide a highly visible presence on our roads.

5.104 It is recognised that partnership working is essential to achieving the government's Road Casualty Reduction Targets by 2010. In conjunction with Dumfries and Galloway Council and other partners, the force has developed a comprehensive Road Safety Plan for 2005-2008 to co-ordinate efforts in achieving these. However, at the present time the force does not appear to be on course to deliver its contribution to the national targets. Despite the positive partnership working, HMIC was concerned to note that until very recently the force had carried out no regular and structured analysis of road traffic collisions. It is recognised that the figures for fatal and serious collisions are statistically quite small. Nevertheless some regular process must be in place for analysing all road traffic collision figures and sharing this information within the force and with the partners in the Road Safety Strategy.

5.105 In an effort to ensure that road policing is seen as an integral part of policing throughout the force area, road policing resources have mainly been devolved to divisional level in the form of the Mobile Support Group (MSG). With primary responsibility for road policing, the MSG seeks to improve awareness of the force's aims in relation to road policing amongst other divisional staff. The MSG provides 24-hour road policing coverage across the force as well as support for normal operational policing. The MSG is seen as an integral part of the Tasking and Co-ordinating framework within the divisions, and the inspection team observed that divisional officers are encouraged to and do participate in road policing initiatives. The MSG has officers trained in all of the main areas of road policing enforcement. HMIC is pleased that the force recognises the importance of pursuit management in line with the national guidelines, and commends the associated joint training it carries out with Cumbria Police.

5.106 Dumfries and Galloway Safety Camera Partnership operates no fixed site cameras but has two mobile, high visibility camera enforcement units. The partnership currently deploys its mobile units to monitor 16 identified sites and has two route strategies. Information from the monitoring sites and road traffic collisions data are analysed to inform decisions as to where to deploy the enforcement units, in line with Scottish Executive criteria. The force is also now making more use of this information. The partnership has a communications policy which ensures that the road safety message is disseminated in the media, by poster, the internet and other advertising. It also conducts and acts upon the results of public opinion surveys, in line with the national guidelines.

5.107 HMIC notes that the force has the highest level in Scotland of road traffic offences per thousand population. For 2005-06 this stands at 169.5 offences per thousand population, compared with a Scottish average of 73.5. The major percentage of these are speeding offences, of which the force records some 125.3 per thousand population compared with a Scottish average of 32.9. Further investigation revealed that the majority of these speeding offences had been detected by the Safety camera Partnership's mobile enforcement cameras when they were deployed on the M74 motorway. In 2005 the Camera Partnership detected 21,867 speeding offences. Of these some 19,305 (88%) had occurred on the M74 motorway, yet just under 40% (432.75 hours) of the Camera Partnership's enforcement hours only had been spent covering that road. This equates to an average of 44.6 detections per hour. However, the M74 motorway does not have the highest casualty levels for serious and fatal road traffic collisions in the force area. The highest rates occur on the A75, which is covered for only 30% of total deployed hours. HMIC believes there is a need to ensure that the work of the Safety Camera Partnership more closely aligns with the force's wider efforts to reduce casualties on the roads.

Recommendation 11

HMIC recommends that the force enhance processes to allow road traffic collision information to be analysed regularly; the results should be disseminated within the force and amongst partners, and should inform how the Mobile Support Group and Safety Camera Partnership resources are deployed.

5.108 The force's Road Safety Unit takes the lead in the region for providing road safety inputs and classes. It co-ordinates its work in line with national guidelines and the local Road Safety Strategy. As well as organising its own events, the Unit will often attend those organised by partner agencies.

5.109 HMIC found that all speeding detections from the Camera Partnership relating to police vehicles are referred to the Complaints and Professional Standards Department. The Department is responsible for ascertaining the circumstances of the offence and recommending to the Chief Superintendent whether it could be justified operationally under the relevant road traffic legislation. This process is applied to the force's own fleet and to any vehicle from another force that has been operating in the force area. Over an 18-month period, only four force vehicles were detected speeding, two of these instances being found to be operationally appropriate. In the remaining two cases, the driver was dealt with in the normal manner for such an offence. The findings were similarly split on the occasions when speeding vehicles from other forces were captured. **HMIC considers this transparent and robust process in respect of police vehicles being detected for speeding offences to be good practice.**

Collision Investigation

5.110 Although the force does not yet have a policy on investigating collisions, it follows the Roads Death Investigation Manual and the ACPOS Road Policing Strategy 2005-08. It is also active in the national forum that is currently looking to improve the standard approach to investigating collisions.

5.111 The force does not have a dedicated collision investigation unit. Instead it uses officers, mainly from the Mobile Support Group, who in addition to their normal duties are trained in this role. The force currently has nine officers trained to the national standard, three of whom are also trained to the higher City and Guilds standard. All sergeants within the Mobile Support Group are trained Senior Investigating Officers (SIOs). The force was able to show that it has procedures in place to provide an appropriate response to fatal or potentially fatal road collisions. Indeed, the inspection observed that the force assesses each fatal collision carefully, deploys Crime Management Service officers where necessary and uses additional technical means whenever possible. The recording skills of collision investigators have also been called on to assist in non road related incidents.

5.112 As mentioned in paragraph 3.35, the force is very aware of the trauma and stress that officers involved in this kind of work can suffer and has appropriate measures in place to assist them.

Specialist Search Operations

5.113 It was recently recognised that the Force Standing Order detailing the force search policy only concerned searches for individuals. This has now been updated to take account of all different types of searches, including specialist search operations. A consultation process is underway, after which the document will be submitted for approval to the Policy Group.

5.114 The force currently has one sergeant and two constable police search advisors (POLSA). All three carry out POLSA duties in addition to their normal role. The sergeant is responsible for co-ordinating the use of POLSA within the force and for training and licensing issues. The POLSA constables each head a specialist search team based in the territorial divisions. HMIC found the current establishment of POLSA and search team members to be sufficient for requirements.

Emergency Planning

5.115 The force Emergency Planning Unit forms part of its Operational Services Department. The Unit is very active within the force, in local partnership arrangements and in the national forum. The force is well placed to respond to the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) and has appropriate structures and arrangements in place to address the requirements. The Force Executive is also active in this area and takes a full part in the local Strategic Co-ordinating Group. Recognising the impact of the new act, the Force Executive has increased the Emergency Planning Unit's numbers in order to ensure service continuity.

5.116 The force's particularly strong relationships with the council and other Category 1 responders was highlighted by stakeholders during the inspection. Work for the CCA is well structured and has been divided into relevant workstreams. A Tactical Co-ordinating Group monitors and report on progress.

5.117 Following the Lockerbie Air Disaster, a Major Emergency Scheme was formulated to serve as a generic contingency plan. This Scheme is still in place and is constantly updated in light of changing risks, threats, circumstances and legislation. It is described as presenting multi-agency management arrangements based on Strategic, Tactical and Operational response levels, and is compatible with the Scottish Executive publication 'Preparing Scotland – Scottish Guidance on preparing for emergencies'. Specific plans are in place for particular sites, if and when required. The force and its partners have a demanding and varied exercise programme that is based on risk assessments of threats and possible emergencies. HMIC is content that the force is working very well and has strong links with its partners in this important area.

Ports Policing

5.118 Ports policing is financed separately from the rest of Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary, all costs being met by central government. In the current financial year this amounts to £2.67 million, funding over seventy police and support staff for the ports unit.

5.119 The ports have long been of strategic significance in terms of people, including terrorists, moving between Northern Ireland and mainland UK. Despite being part of the Common Travel Area that includes mainland UK, the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, it now finds itself taking a key role in identifying illegal immigrants. The two ports are also increasingly busy freight ports, with some estimates now rating them on aggregate as the second busiest port in the UK. The force is actively engaging with partners and Scottish Executive ahead of plans to co-locate both ports at Cairnryan in 2008. The need to upgrade the police facilities at the ports is clear, and this imminent development is being seen as an opportunity to address the matter.

5.120 The ports unit has well established links with ferry-operating companies and agencies including Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), United Kingdom Immigration Service (UKIS) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). These relationships have developed over a sustained period of joint working. More recently, Dumfries and Galloway's role as one of the pilot sites for the Single Intervention Work-stream Trial has further enhanced these relationships, through the secondment of a sergeant and two constables from Stranraer to UKIS. The Single Intervention Work-stream Trial is part of the national Border Management Programme. It recognises that irrespective of the traditional roles of these partners agencies, it is often the case that at the port itself one will play a greater role than that of its partners due to the nature of ports business. Historically, due to terrorist movements between Northern Ireland and the mainland, the police have taken the lead at Stranraer and Cairnryan. Joint working also extends to police officers who have been trained to use the equipment of other agencies, such as the ports baggage scanning facilities and the UKIS 'Quickscan' fingerprint system.

5.121 Despite focusing on potential terrorism concerns, police activity can often lead to the detection of immigration offences. Being a Common Travel Area, people can travel from the Republic of Ireland to Northern Ireland and then onto Scotland without encountering passport checks. UKIS is aware of the rising number of immigration offences being detected and has assessed that the most efficient use of its resources is to assist the police. It is on this basis that the police officers are seconded to UKIS, based at Stranraer but managed through Glasgow. This arrangement began in July 2006 and appears at this stage to work well for both agencies. **HMIC will return to this area at the review inspection, by which time the arrangements will be more fully tested.**

5.122 Intelligence is a crucial part of policing in any context and particularly so when competing demands of crime, terrorism and immigration come together in a single unit. Acknowledging this, the ports unit follows the National Intelligence Model and has a Control Strategy in place that is linked to the Irish and West Coast Ports Group Control Strategy. The unit is supported by two analysts and a joint intelligence cell including HMRC, UKIS & DWP. This dedicated and structured approach translates into strong performance from this unit in all areas of its operation.

5.123 HMIC was impressed with the structure, partnership working and productivity of the Dumfries and Galloway Ports Unit. Further improvements are planned, including extending the coverage provided by existing support staff and preparing for the combined port.

Criminal Justice Process

5.124 The Chief Constable of Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary is currently the Chair of the ACPOS Criminal Justice Business area and ACPOS representative on the National Criminal Justice Board. HMIC was pleased to note the energy and enthusiasm of force members in engaging in the local criminal justice process. The force is consistently meeting the targets for submitting police reports to both the Procurator Fiscal and the Reporter to the Children's panel. A considerable amount of consultation and partnership working goes on, with regular meetings taking place between the Area and District Procurator Fiscals and the Chief Constable and his senior management both at headquarters and from the operational side. There is an active local Criminal Justice Board, chaired by the Sheriff Principal, which has a programme of work to address national Criminal Justice priorities within Dumfries and Galloway.

5.125 In 2003 the force established a Satellite Reports Bureau Procurator Fiscal Liaison Office at the Area Procurator Fiscal's Office in Dumfries. This Bureau has developed over the years and is now staffed by a sergeant and two administrative assistants. At the present time it is the primary day to day point of contact between the force and both the Procurator Fiscal and the Reporter to the Children's Panel. The Bureau is responsible for ensuring the delivery of Standard Prosecution Reports, Statements and other correspondence to both services. It also monitors quality control and submission times, providing regular performance and quality reports to both the force and divisional/departmental managers. A great many of the routine enquiries from the Procurator Fiscal are dealt with by the Bureau without any need for a formal written request. And on occasions when a formal response is required, the Bureau will facilitate the response. The same is true of force members, who will contact the Bureau on minor routine matters rather than approach the Procurator Fiscal directly. However, both the force and the Procurator Fiscal have stressed that the presence of the Bureau does not preclude contact between their staff should this be required.

5.126 The Bureau sergeant also attends staff meetings at the Procurator Fiscal Office, and has a regular agenda item to provide an update and bring to light any issues or good practice arising. External stakeholders were very positive about the effectiveness and usefulness of the Bureau. The force too, holds the Bureau in high regard. While recognising that such an arrangement would not be suitable for all forces, **HMIC sees the establishment of such a liaison facility within the Procurator Fiscal's Office to be good practice.**

5.127 Within the Criminal Justice Process the force is also engaged in initiatives to address offending and divert people from prosecution. In conjunction with the Procurator Fiscal Service the force operates a Police Adult Warning Scheme. This Scheme was developed in response to the ACPOS Minor and Trivial Offences Protocol, and introduced in April 2006. In its first five months, 78 formal adult warnings were administered. This Scheme operates under clear, formal written guidelines that give officers and the force the discretion to decide when a warning would be appropriate and does not preclude any offender being reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

5.128 In the belief that focused intervention may help to reduce re-offending, the force actively ensures that offenders are offered all possible support. Together with the Procurator Fiscal it has launched a diversion from prosecution scheme for young people aged 15¹/₂ to 17 years. This has yet to be evaluated but it is hoped eventually to deal with over 300 referrals per year. The force also works with the Alcohol and Drugs Action Team, providing an arrest referral scheme that allows alcohol and drug users an opportunity to enter a treatment programme.

5.129 In 2002 the force introduced a Restorative Justice Process which remains up to date in relation to good and changing practice. The Process was completely re-launched in May 2005 to comply with changes to the ACPOS national guidelines. Since that time and up to 20 June 2006 there have been 363 referrals involving 344 individual youths. Of these, 38 have re-offended, giving a re-offending rate of 11%. This compares very favourably with the re-offending rate for traditional referrals to the Reporter: over the same period 130 youths out of 625, or 20.8%, went on to re-offend. Under the force's initial Restorative Justice Process the average length of time between caution and charge and administering the warning was 65 days. Under the new process this has fallen substantially, to 37 days. **Even so, the ACPOS guidelines state that this period should not exceed 14 days. The force is aware of this issue and is continuing to work to reduce the timescales. HMIC will examine progress during the next Review Inspection.**

5.130 In conjunction with its partners the force has created a comprehensive Youth Justice Strategy. This work is supported by the Chief Officers' Children's Services Group which involves Police, Procurator Fiscal, Reporter, Social Work, Education, and Health. The group co-ordinates the development of services for young people involved, or at risk of becoming involved, in offending behaviour. It includes developing services that work with young people to reduce the likelihood of them being involved in future offending.

5.131 The force appears to have no consistent approach to documenting, storing and auditing productions. Processes were found to vary from station to station, particularly those dealing with the quality of documentation and storage. The absence of a clear audit process in part arises from a lack of clarity concerning the purpose and extent of the performance audits carried out by headquarters, as referred to in Paragraph 2.14. This is an area of risk to the force and the processes surrounding productions should be reviewed at the earliest opportunity.

Recommendation 2e

HMIC recommends that the force review its processes for documenting, storing and auditing productions.

Warrants

5.132 The force's approach to warrants is clearly outlined in the Force Standing Order No. 34 Warrants, Summonses and Citations. The process is run by the Warrants Office located at Force Headquarters and the force's Incident Management and General Enquiry (IMAGE) system is used to record warrants and manage the enquiry. Prioritisation follows the national protocol, as does the recording of developments after issue. Weekly reports are provided to the Procurator Fiscal and information is presented to the local Criminal Justice Board as well as to the ACPOS Criminal Justice Business Area. Regular auditing is carried out by staff in the department and by staff from the Performance Management Unit. Prior to being despatched to division, warrants are checked at the Force Intelligence Bureau and any information which may assist in their execution is added. Divisions are then responsible for executing the warrants. The force receives approximately 150 warrants of all types per month, and normally has an average of 425 warrants for execution.

5.133 Recent developments have incurred additional work to administer Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, along with information about persons being placed on the Sex Offenders Register. Bringing these responsibilities together allows the information to be appropriately handled and ensures consistency of entry on national and local computer systems.

Care and Custody of Prisoners

5.134 The force has two designated custody holding stations for custodies being kept for court appearance, awaiting the arrival of an escort from another force/ agency or being held until deemed fit for release. A further eight stations are used for short-term custody or initial processing. While the majority of Scottish forces record prisoner details on a computer system, at the time of HMIC's visit Dumfries and Galloway was preparing to move from a paper-based system to a computer-based one (see also paragraph 4.38). As part of these preparations, all force custody policies and procedures were under review at the time of inspection.

5.135 The force has taken full advantage of the provisions of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003 for appointing support staff with appropriate powers to roles in custody management. All custody staff at both the Dumfries and Stranraer holding stations are support staff rather than police officers. These staff have a dual role and can also deal with members of the public at the stations' enquiry counters.

5.136 HMIC was concerned that supervisory responsibility for custody at any time was held by a duty sergeant who was also responsible at the same time for the operational area. This is undesirable for two reasons. Firstly the officer may be involved in other operational duties at a time when supervisory attention to custody matters is needed. Secondly, decisions relating to custody are expected to be taken with some degree of independence. It is understandable that at small, short-term and receiving stations, the arresting officer may also be the processing officer. But this should not be the case more widely. HMIC would expect some dedicated supervisory availability for overseeing force custody matters, but accepts the difficulty brought about by the geographic spread and rural nature of the force. However, the ability to do this remotely will be significantly enhanced when the force adopts the SPIS Custody IT system.

5.137 Dumfries and Galloway Police and Fire Committee operates an Independent Custody Lay Visitor Scheme that conducts regular, unannounced inspections of the force's custody facilities. In the Progress Report 2005–2006, Scotland's Independent Custody Visiting Scheme, the force received praise on the basis of its lay visitors' findings. In 193 visits covering 166 custodies, there was not one single complaint regarding the conditions or treatment of those in custody. This was consistent with findings for the previous three years. HMIC met with the scheme co-ordinator and was reassured by the positive comments regarding the force's support for the scheme and co-operation in facilitating access whenever custody visitors attended a station.

5.138 The force has been carrying out improvements to a number of its custody facilities. These have included installing panic buttons and bars in cell passageways and rooms in which custody functions are carried out, and upgrading the CCTV systems. HMIC noted that CCTV coverage of the point of entry to the custody suite was available in only one of the stations visited. Extending this coverage and enhancing the level of lighting at the doors would be of further benefit to the force. HMIC is satisfied that these matters, along with the testing regime for the panic buttons and revision of the fire evacuation process, will be included in the force review of custody matters.

Recommendation 12

HMIC recommends that the improved CCTV coverage in respect of custody areas be extended to include the point of entry to each custody suite and that an appropriate level of lighting be put in place in these sometimes challenging working environments. Such improvements would not only facilitate prisoner handling, but would also provide a more complete video coverage of the time an individual is in custody.

5.139 As noted in areas such as ports policing, the force deals with a range of people of a variety of nationalities and faiths. It is important that custody arrangements can meet diverse needs. HMIC was pleased to note that the force had given appropriate consideration to factors such as language, faith and diet within its custody suites. **HMIC commends the force for providing explanatory notes detailing the custody and detention processes in a variety of languages. This is seen as good practice.** A small but valuable enhancement is the provision of cordless telephones, making conference calls with interpreting services easier for officers and prisoners within the custody area.

5.140 With the impending change to computer-based custody recording, and the revision of force policies and procedures in light of this, **HMIC will return to examine the force's approach to custody at the review inspection, taking a particular interest in supervisory oversight of operational custody matters.**

Complaints and Professional Standards

5.141 The force maintains a Complaints and Professional Standards Unit. It reports directly to the Deputy Chief Constable on complaints and professional standards matters, while being line managed by the Superintendent, Corporate Services. The Unit has a clear remit which includes:

- To protect the integrity of the force;
- To protect force assets, particularly the vulnerable areas of intelligence, information and data;
- The administration and management of complaints relating to serious misconduct or criminality by any members of the force;
- The administration and management of allegations of minor misconduct by any members of the force;
- To investigate, where appropriate, allegations of corrupt practice by any members of the force;
- The administration of civil claims made by the force and against the force;
- The administration and recording of letters of appreciation;
- The administration and distribution of commendations and awards;
- The management of ethical matters namely acceptance of hospitality, gifts and sponsorship.

5.142 The Complaints and Professional Standards Unit is currently staffed by a Chief inspector and an Administrative Assistant. An additional temporary post for an Acting Inspector has recently been approved, the focus of which will be Professional Standards.

5.143 The Deputy Chief Constable appoints investigating officers for formal complaints involving allegations of serious misconduct or criminality. These will be drawn from divisional/departmental officers of inspecting rank and above. The Complaints and Professional Standards Unit manages and quality assures the process. Within the complaints and misconduct management function of the Unit, is a requirement to offer guidance, support, training and an independent overview to investigating officers. The Chief Inspector, Complaints and Professional Standards Unit, delivers inputs to all in-force supervisory or management courses. In particular, all newly promoted and Acting Inspectors are instructed in how to carry out investigations and on the standards expected. The force recognises the potential difficulties in appointing a senior investigative officer for a professional standards enquiry. The force is a signatory of the protocol in respect of Professional Standards Investigations Requiring Inter-Authority Assistance. It also has informal arrangements with other forces in respect of less serious professional standards enquiries.

5.144 Recognising the importance of an active and effective oversight, the force has encouraged the Complaints Sub Committee of the Police and Fire Committee to be more proactive. This Sub Committee meets every three months at Force Headquarters to review the current complaints and professional standards situation within the force. The Deputy Chief Constable hosts these meetings, with the assistance of the Chief Inspector, Complaints and Professional Standards Unit. Members are given a presentation detailing the latest complaints figures in the context of figures for the same period for the previous two years. A list is provided, detailing all live complaints, including a brief summary of the circumstances and any results since the last meeting. Members can then ask to examine any of the complaints files. During the inspection HM Lay Inspector had an opportunity to attend the November meeting of this Sub Committee. He was impressed by the force's openness in providing information, the knowledge and depth of engagement displayed by the members, and the free and frank debate about issues surrounding complaints, professional standards and conduct.

5.145 In 2005-06 the force received a rate of seven complaints per 100 officers, the lowest of any Scottish force. The most recent figures available for 1 April 2006 to 30 September 2006 suggest that it is maintaining this good standard of performance. The table below shows the force's performance for the equivalent six-month periods over the last three years.

Figure 7 Complaints Received by Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Formal Complaint Cases Received	20	19	8
Minor Misconduct Cases Received	33	16	19
Total Cases	53	35	27

Figures are for the period 1 April to 30 September

5.146 The Complaints and Professional Standards Unit had carried out detailed analysis of the complaints allegations over the last three years, with the aim of identifying any trends or patterns. HMIC was content that the force had used every opportunity to learn from this valuable source of information.

5.147 The force treats all complaints seriously and HMIC was pleased to note that the force also uses the Centurion computer system to record quality of service or non-statutory complaints. Although the majority of these types of complaint are dealt with at divisional/departmental level, the Chief Inspector, Complaints and Professional Standards Unit, is responsible for monitoring and reviewing them. The force uses the statistics gathered on these and other formal complaints for performance management purposes. **HMIC commends the force for its foresight and approach in tackling quality of service or non-statutory complaints in this way, and considers it to be good practice.**

Media

5.148 The force has a Media Unit which is part of the Corporate Services Department. Staffing consists of a media officer, information officer, web administrator and graphic artist. The Unit co-ordinates and leads on media relations, improving internal communication and providing information to the public. To assist in this role the Media Officer attends the daily senior management morning meeting at Force Headquarters. This allows proactive and informed responses to any emerging issues to be prepared. Guidance on the media and on providing information to the public is available in a number of strategy and policy documents, including the Media Policy, the Communications and Marketing Strategy, and Information Strategy. The relevant Force Standing Order outlines the role of the Media Officer, and gives clear information on when use of the media is appropriate and what information should be provided.

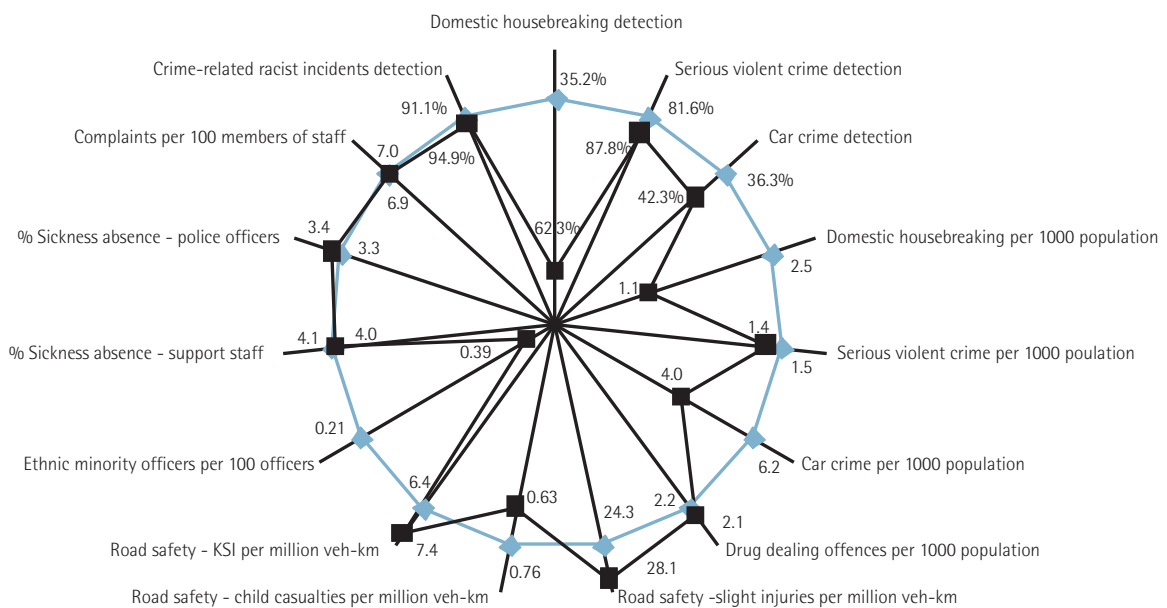
5.149 The Unit is responsible for the content and development of the force internet and intranet sites. The intranet is a valuable tool for all staff members, giving easy access to information, policies, guidelines and much of the information required to carry out duties in the current environment. The force's internet site is well structured and offers easy access to members of the public looking for information. HMIC was pleased to note that the website complies with a number of international accessibility standards aimed at improving access for the visually impaired, blind, persons with learning difficulties and those with hand/motor impairment.

6. Results

6.1 The following graphs provide a snapshot of force performance and demand in those areas represented by Audit Scotland and Scottish Executive performance indicators. The data are based on the most current full year statistics publicly available at the time of the pre-inspection appraisal stage. Thus for the first two multigraphs the crime and road traffic data are based upon calendar years, the most recent being 2005; all other data reflect standard financial years, 2005-06 being the latest.

6.2 In this first multigraph, the ring of blue points represents both Dumfries and Galloway's past performance and previous crime rates as the average of the previous four years. Where the force shows positive performance or lower than average crime rates, this is shown by a red square node falling inside the circle; the closer the red square is to the centre of the circle, the better the performance. Below average performance and higher crime rates are shown by the node falling outside the circle; the poorer the performance or rate, the further away from the circle the node will lie.

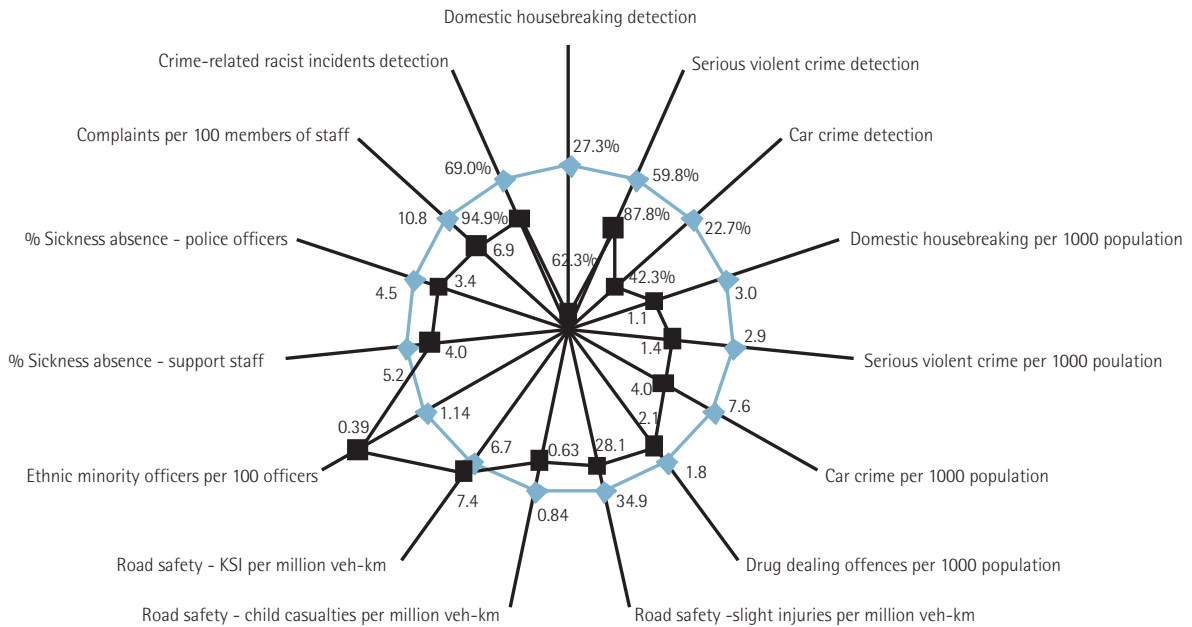
Figure 8: Current force performance/demand against previous average performance/demand



6.3 The graph above shows falling crime rates and rising detection rates over time in Dumfries and Galloway. Domestic housebreaking in particular shows a considerable drop in incidence and a rise in detection rate of nearly 30 percentage points. The other most noticeable positive trend here is an increase in the proportion of black and minority ethnic officers, though it should be borne in mind that the numbers involved are small. Less positive are increases in two of the road traffic collision casualties, while figures for the other corporate indicators show relatively little change over time.

6.4 The second multigraph presents the force's performance against the Scottish average; the former is represented by the red square nodes, the latter by the blue circle. Here again where Dumfries and Galloway's performance exceeds or crime rates sit below the Scottish average, the red node will appear within the blue circle, and vice versa. Again greater proximity to the centre of the circle reflects stronger performance.

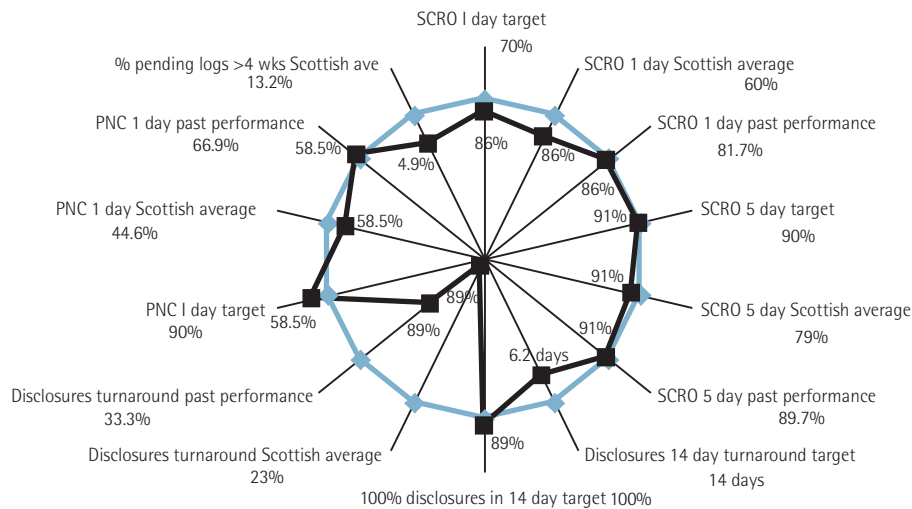
Figure 9: Current force performance against the Scottish average



6.5 Comparison with other Scottish forces confirms Dumfries and Galloway's lower than average crime rates and higher detection rates, both without exception. It has the lowest incident rate in Scotland for serious violent crime and the second lowest for domestic housebreaking and motor vehicle crime. Even in those instances where the force has seen falls in detection over time, its performance nevertheless remains better than average. Indeed it is outperforming the Scottish average on most of the indicators show here. The exceptions are for killed and serious injured road traffic collision casualties and minority ethnic officers.

6.6 The third multigraph, below, shows force performance against various SCRO/PNC measures. The red nodes denote current performance while the blue points represent the national target, the Scottish average or the force's past performance, as indicated. As before, where current performance exceeds its comparator the red node will appear inside the blue circle; greater proximity to the centre indicates a higher standard of performance and vice versa. The most recent available data at the time of the inspection for was for June 2006, with past performance calculated as the average of the three months previous to that.

Figure 10: Current force performance against SCRO/PNC measures



6.7 On most dimensions here Dumfries and Galloway is performing positively. Where there is little change or improvement over time, its performance nevertheless remains better than average and in most cases exceeds set targets. Even where the force is failing to meet the target – for 100% of Disclosure queries turned around in 14 days – it tends to be performing well compared with other forces, despite some internal slippage.

6.8 As with most if not all Scottish forces, Dumfries and Galloway remains off target for what is essentially the England and Wales PNC one day target.

6.9 The following provides further detail and comment on specific results.

6.10 Where data are available, HMIC prefers to examine trends over the longer term. Additionally, assessing figures in terms of rates per 1,000 population or other similar denominators puts these in a more meaningful context and makes it easier to draw comparisons against the Scottish average. The commentary is based on upon figures covering the time periods outlined above. However, where more recent data are available and indicate a divergence from previous trends, these too will be highlighted.

Crime

6.11 Comparing the number of groups 1-4¹ recorded crimes in 2005 with the average of the previous four years, in Dumfries and Galloway, shows little change over this time period (-0.4%). A fairly similar picture is apparent for Scotland as a whole (-3%).

6.12 Nevertheless underlying this relative stability are different trends in the constituent crime groups. Two of these are showing a downturn. The first is that of crimes of non-sexual violence, its 13.7% fall the result of reductions in all three subcategories namely serious assaults, robbery and other such crimes. Dumfries and Galloway has the lowest incidence rate in Scotland of these crimes. The other is that of crimes of dishonesty, down 11.2%. Within the latter, housebreaking and motor vehicle theft in particular have seen marked reductions. In contrast, fraud has increased by over two-fifths in the longer term, and by over one fifth in the latest year alone.

1 Group 5 crimes include offences which are often the result of proactive activity on the part of forces – for example, drug offences and those relating to possession of offensive weapons. For this reason they are excluded from this calculation.

6.13 The other two crime groups have seen incidence rise. Crimes of indecency have risen by nearly a fifth in the longer term, by two-fifths in the latest year alone. Within this category rape and attempted rape, indecent assaults, and lewd and indecent behaviour have all contributed to the rise. Even so, the force's rate per 1,000 population here remains the lowest in Scotland. Despite a slight fall in the latest year, crimes of fire-raising and vandalism are also up over the longer term, by 16.5%. This may be indicative of the crime recording standard's impact.

6.14 Of the two proactive crime and offence groups, both show a considerable rise in numbers. In fact Dumfries and Galloway tends to capture the highest rate of group 7 offences in Scotland, This has been driven by a 78.8% increase on the average of the previous four years in speeding offences, which coincides with the introduction of the Camera Enforcement Unit in 2003 and other related initiatives. Unfortunately though, the force's road traffic collision figures show an increase in deaths and casualties over this time. The 27% increase in group 5 crimes is mainly due to the long-term rise in offences against public justice (40%), though both drug offences (+17%) and other related miscellaneous crimes are up markedly too.

6.15 The remaining category, group 6 offences, shows a similar trend to that of group 4, i.e. a recent decline but longer term increase. This again is likely to reflect the impact of the Scottish crime recording standard.

6.16 The force also tends to sit amongst the top performers when it comes to detection rates. It currently has the highest rate for crimes of dishonesty (60.4%). Though not the highest, Dumfries and Galloway has a strong overall crime detection rate (groups 1-4) of 52.8%. And in most of the individual crime and offence groups it has seen detection rates increase. At the time of the inspection the exception to this pattern was group 2 crimes of indecency, where the rate was one of the lowest rates in Scotland at 67.9%. Since that time, though, the force has managed to increase its detection of rapes and attempted rapes and of indecent assaults, reversing the downward trend and achieving a group detection rate of 74.3%.

Criminal Justice

6.17 The times taken to submit reports to the Procurator Fiscal and Children's Reporter have statutory targets attached – 80% within 28 days and 14 days respectively. Figures for the last three years show that the force has been meeting these targets. Moreover, the percentage submitted within time has increased with each successive year. All submissions are subject to a timeliness evaluation, usefully allowing reasons for failing to meet timescales to be examined.

6.18 In terms of targets for SCRO/PNC timeliness, Dumfries and Galloway is consistently one of the best performing forces. As the third multigraph illustrates, the force continues to exceed these targets, the Scottish average and its own past performance.

6.19 A similar picture is apparent for Disclosure queries. The force has one of the fastest turnaround rates in Scotland and more recent data show that it is achieving 100% of enquiries turned around within the 14 day service level agreement timescale.

Race Issues: Internal

6.20 Formal records of staff ethnicity are dependent upon individuals agreeing to self-report this information. In a recent ethnic audit of all staff, Dumfries and Galloway identified one further minority ethnic police officer who had previously not been recorded as such. A further eight members of staff chose not to state their ethnicity, as is their right.

6.21 Nonetheless, the Scottish Police Service continues to employ increasing numbers of police officers of black and minority ethnic background. At the end of March 2006 there were 187 officers of this background. Two are based in Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary, both of whom are constables. This equates to 0.4% of all police officers currently employed by the force, against a force area population share of 0.7%. The force employs no members of support staff, but does have three special constables of minority ethnic background. This is equivalent to 2.8% of its total special constabulary and is above the average for Scottish forces as a whole. It also pushes up the share of all minority ethnic staff working in some capacity in Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary, to 0.5%.

6.22 In the last five years the force has had 20 applications – ten in the last year alone – from minority ethnic individuals hoping to join the force as a police officer. Over the same period it has attracted 25 minority ethnic candidates for its support posts, but only two for its Special Constabulary. Thus overall the force appears to be fairly strong in attracting applicants, though less successful in terms of recruitment. This is an area that the force is continuing to monitor.

6.23 Training to an appropriate standard of Diversity Awareness is required of all police staff, in accordance with the National Equal Opportunities Training Strategy (NEOTS). In Dumfries and Galloway, 96% of all staff have received this. The force has adopted a continuous approach to training in this area and has a number of future courses lined up.

Race Issues: External

6.24 Over the last five years the force has received only two allegations of racially discriminatory behaviour. Both were subsequently found to be unsubstantiated.

6.25 The number of reported racist incidents – both crime-related and otherwise – continues to rise more or less yearly, both nationally and at force level. At 0.62, Dumfries and Galloway's rate per 1,000 population remains one of the lowest in Scotland. Detection rates for crime-related incidents have been discussed briefly in relation to the multigraphs. Though there have been some minor assaults during the last five years at least, fortunately none has involved more serious offences such as murder or attempted murder.

Attendance Management

6.26 The force currently has no specific set targets relating to either sickness absence or ill health retirements. As shown in the multigraphs above, sickness absence rates amongst staff in Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary compare positively with the Scottish average. Though not at the lowest rate it has achieved in the last five years, its rate of 3.4% police officer working days lost to sickness is the lowest in Scotland. Mirroring the trend for higher rates of absences amongst support staff, the force's support staff sickness rate is slightly higher. Yet here too, it reflects a recent downward trend and remains well below the Scottish average.

6.27 Nationally, the last five years have seen annual reductions in the rates of ill health retirements amongst police officers. Trends in Dumfries and Galloway have fluctuated over the same time period. However this is more to do with the relatively small numbers involved, as opposed to there being considerable differences in trends over time.

6.28 The force has the lowest accident rate of all Scottish forces. It currently has one civil claim outstanding, dating from 2003–04 which, whilst not referring specifically to health and safety, does have some association. Finally Dumfries and Galloway has not been served with any improvement notices from the Health and Safety Executive.

Consultation

6.29 Dumfries and Galloway carries out a service delivery survey every three months. On each occasion a sample of 200 people who have been in contact with the force are surveyed, the results of which are fed back to force management. There are a number of advantages to such frequent surveying: it makes the process of recall easier for respondents, generates more robust data for analysis and enables the force to respond more quickly to emerging issues. Moreover, where a respondent expresses dissatisfaction, he or she can elect to speak with an officer. That officer will then visit the complainer in order to attempt to identify a way to resolve the matter.

6.30 Worthy of particular praise here, is the force's customer satisfaction rates for initial telephone contact. In 2002–30, customer satisfaction on this dimension of force activity stood at 47.7%. Following the introduction of its Force Communications Centre, the satisfaction rate in 2005–06 had risen to an impressive 93%. Moreover, within this 68.7% of customers claimed to be very satisfied (from 32.6% in 2002–03). This is a very strong performance in an area that has tended to cause problems for other forces.

6.31 Elsewhere, while the force has failed to achieve its 90% satisfaction rate for initial contact, this has nevertheless remained stable for the last three years at just over 85% and is higher than the average for Scotland as a whole. Conversely, the last three years have seen annual falls in satisfaction rates for overall contact and general performance: the former has fallen from 81.1% in 2002–03 to 74.7% in 2005–06, while the latter is down by just over five percentage points to stand at 72.9%.

6.32 The force also conducts a community survey of a random selection of 1,000 households. Views are invited on their perception of the force, what they feel the force priorities should be and how safe they feel in the force area. Like many surveys of this kind, the questions are fairly top-line and tend to concentrate on outcomes rather than delving more deeply into why various views are held and identifying ways of responding to these.

6.33 In the last two waves, the response rate has been around 35%, and the resulting sample in the 2006 one has a slight bias towards females and older residents. That said, overall those expressing satisfaction with policing in their area has risen from 38% in 2004 to 60%. Also positive, the proportion claiming to be dissatisfied with officer patrols has decreased by around ten percentage points to 33%. Though dog fouling, speeding and vandalism are perceived to be the most commonly occurring incidents, the most frequent response to the question of what local officers should concentrate on is drug abuse. And finally the proportions of those claiming to feel safe out alone at night has increased amongst males and females.

6.34 Though the last two surveys were conducted two years apart, the force is now considering moving this to a three-year frequency, in line with its strategy timescale. While this is unlike other forces who are moving to more rather than less frequent surveys, HMIC is content to see this change within the context of the force's quarterly customer survey programme.

6.35 As with the community consultation exercise, the force has been conducting its internal staff survey on a two-yearly basis. The methodology that has been adopted is around "valuing the person", and consists of over 20 statements *"designed to provide an indication of staff attitudes and morale in the workplace"*. Responses must fall within a 1-5 point scale from "definitely disagree" to "definitely agree". The scores are then interpreted as reflecting the degree to which staff members are actively disengaged or fully engaged with the force.

6.36 Response rates for both survey waves are low, with a little under a third of all staff completing the questionnaire. Perhaps one of the reasons for this is the number of shortcomings with the methodology, which throw the value of the results into doubt. It is unclear, for example, what practical relevance some of the statements have or how solutions might be identified on the basis of responses and scores to some of the statements. With regard to the statements themselves, these can be quite high level, non-specific and ambiguous. And with just 22 statements, the survey cannot expect to examine many aspects of the work environment. The force has already identified weaknesses in their current survey arrangements and is currently working on a new format for future surveys, see Paragraph 3.46.

6.37 The force has also carried out two Work Life Balance surveys. Again the response rate is low, at less than one-third of all staff. The results suggest greater staff awareness on this issue and force mechanisms to address these. A Flexible Working Group has been established to develop the force's approach and policy further.

6.38 Over the past five to six years, 11 grievances have been taken out against the force. Five of these were from police officers, six from support staff. Four were resolved at the earliest stage, four at the second and three at the third stage of the process. None led to an employment tribunal.

6.39 Areas of grievance have included bullying, poor management, dissatisfaction with the promotion process, development concerns, dissatisfaction with the appraisal process, and occupational health advice.

6.40 Exit interviews in Dumfries and Galloway are carried out on an opt-out basis. The take up rate, however, remains poor. All completed Exit Questionnaires are returned to Personnel where they are analysed by either the Head of Personnel and Training, the HR Manager or the Personnel Officer.

Service Delivery

6.41 The proportion of emergency (999) calls answered within ten seconds is an Audit Scotland statutory indicator. This indicator does not measure the reaction time to deployment of officers, but is the time from the call being received in the control room until it is answered. Evidently the number of staff deployed in the control room will affect performance.

6.42 Dumfries and Galloway shows consistently strong performance in this area, having achieved proportions around the mid-90% mark for the last few years. Nor, since the implementation of centralised call handling, has there been a demonstrable reduction in the use of 999.

6.43 The Force Communications Centre handles all non-emergency calls. Over the year it received on average of nearly 4,500 calls per week. The average time to answer a call was 12.18 seconds, and just under 95% of all calls were answered within 30 seconds. The abandoned call rate for 2005 was 7.25%.

6.44 Dumfries and Galloway's rate of complaints against its personnel has recently seen a marked decline. At just under seven complaint cases per 100 members of staff the force currently enjoys the lowest rate of the Scottish forces. The length of time taken to deal with formal and minor misconduct complaints appears to be decreasing, with just over seven in ten completed in under three months in 2005-06. The force has no set timescales for completing minor and non-statutory complaints. Nevertheless here too, the statistics suggest that timescales are improving.

6.45 It is worth noting also in this section, areas in which the force has received formal accreditation or praise for its work:

- Chartermark and IIP – in 2005 the force was awarded the Chartermark for the fifth successive year – a first for Scottish forces; the force was also successfully reassessed in early 2005 for IIP.
- CoSLA award – in partnership with Dumfries & Galloway Council, an anti-social behaviour initiative offering midnight football for youths during the evenings.
- Secure By Design award – another partnership initiative, this time with Loreburn Housing Association, for housing developments in the region.
- CIPFA – the force reached the finals of the CIPFA Public Reporting and Accountability Awards.

Firearms

6.46 The number of firearm and shotgun certificates in force have changed little over the last three years. The force has not set a specific target time for renewing certificates. Instead it seeks to renew all before the expiry date, providing that an acceptable application is received within a reasonable time to allow this. Based on a part-year sample, the average time for processing new certificates is 30 days for firearms and 28 days for shotguns. Again looking at just a part-year sample, a little over 99.6% of all certificates were renewed before expiry.

6.47 Similarly the force has no target times for completing grant applications. Generally it tries to issue these within eight weeks of an acceptable application being received. Average completion times here are 39 days for firearms and 32 days for shotguns.

Conclusion

6.48 Overall, HMIC acknowledges the positive performance and results for Dumfries and Galloway.

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