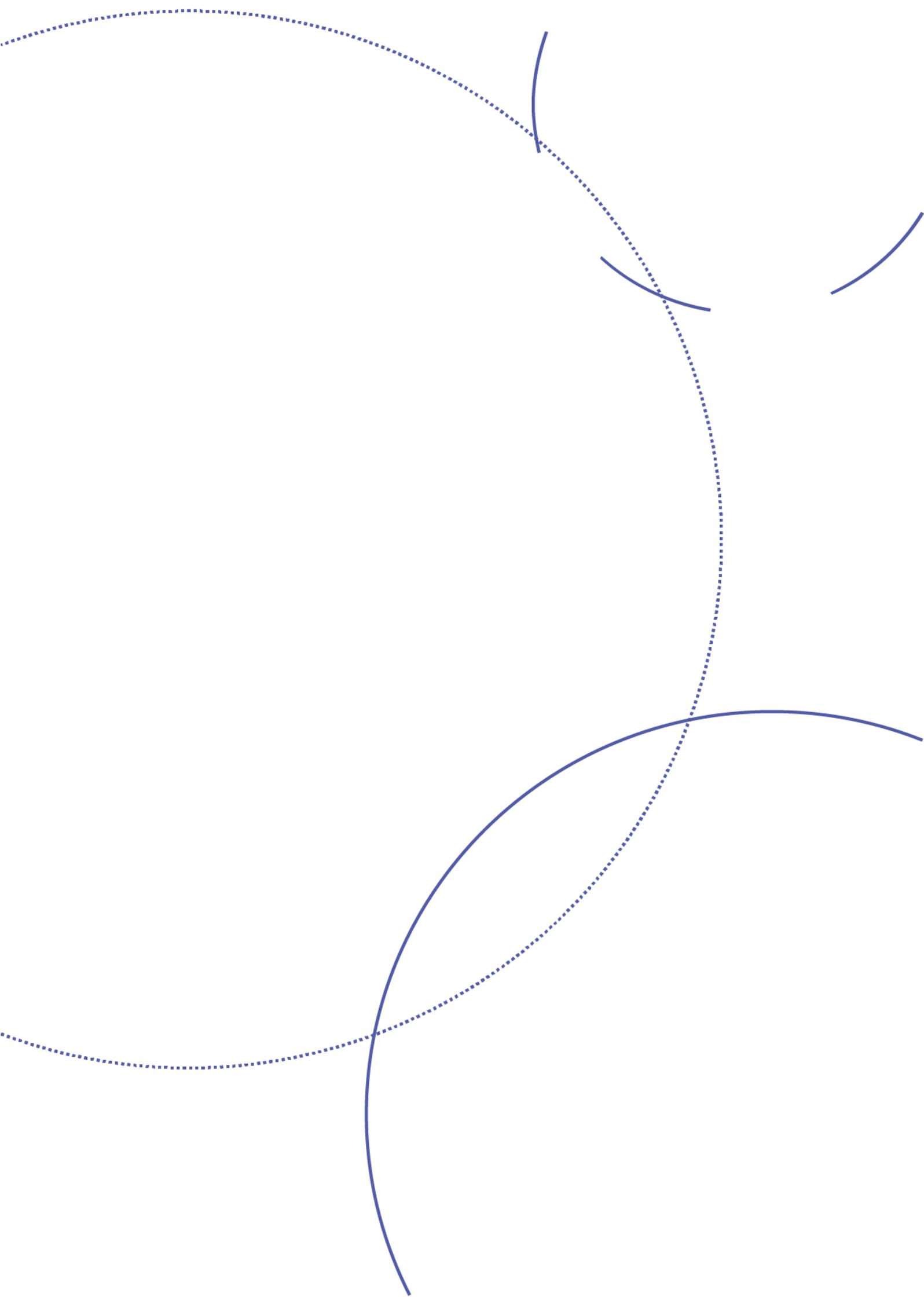


# HMICS Assurance Review of Police Scotland Contact Assessment Model

August 2022

---







# HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland

---

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) is established under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and has wide ranging powers to look into the ‘state, effectiveness and efficiency’ of both the Police Service of Scotland (Police Scotland) and the Scottish Police Authority (SPA).<sup>1</sup>

We have a statutory duty to inquire into the arrangements made by the Chief Constable and the SPA to meet their obligations in terms of best value and continuous improvement. If necessary, we can be directed by Scottish Ministers to look into anything relating to the SPA or Police Scotland as they consider appropriate. We also have an established role in providing professional advice and guidance on policing in Scotland.

- Our powers allow us to do anything we consider necessary or expedient for the purposes of, or in connection with, the carrying out of our functions
- The SPA and the Chief Constable must provide us with such assistance and co-operation as we may require to enable us to carry out our functions
- When we publish a report, the SPA and the Chief Constable must also consider what we have found and take such measures, if any, as they think fit
- Where our report identifies that the SPA or Police Scotland is not efficient or effective (or best value not secured), or will, unless remedial measures are taken, cease to be efficient or effective, Scottish Ministers may direct the SPA to take such measures as may be required. The SPA must comply with any direction given
- Where we make recommendations, we will follow them up and report publicly on progress
- We will identify good practice that can be applied across Scotland

---

<sup>1</sup> Chapter 11, Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.



- We work with other inspectorates and agencies across the public sector and co-ordinate our activities to reduce the burden of inspection and avoid unnecessary duplication
- We aim to add value and strengthen public confidence in Scottish policing and will do this through independent scrutiny and objective, evidence-led reporting about what we find.

Our approach is to support Police Scotland and the SPA to deliver services that are high quality, continually improving, effective and responsive to local needs.<sup>2</sup>

**This review will be undertaken by HMICS under section 74(2)(a) of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and a report will be laid before the Scottish Parliament under section 79(3) of the Act.**

---

<sup>2</sup> HMICS, [Corporate Plan 2021-24](#) (February 2022).



# Contents

---

	<b>Page</b>
 <b>Our review</b>	5
 <b>Key findings</b>	7
 <b>Recommendations</b>	11
 <b>Areas for development</b>	13
 <b>Background and context</b>	14
 <b>Service delivery</b>	18
 <b>THRIVE assessments</b>	30
 <b>Impact on demand</b>	37
 <b>Partnership working</b>	48
 <b>Workforce</b>	59
 <b>Scottish Police Authority governance</b>	70
 <b>Appendix 1 – glossary</b>	74



## Our review

---

Call handling is a critically important aspect of policing. It is the primary means by which members of the public and partner organisations can engage with Police Scotland.

It is important to acknowledge the considerable progress Police Scotland has made on contact, command and control. In July 2015, my predecessor was directed by the Cabinet Secretary for Justice to conduct enquiries, following the tragic incident involving the deaths of [John Yuill and Lamara Bell](#). Since that initial review, we have monitored carefully the progress Police Scotland has made on call handling.

We have produced five reports since our original 2015 report, making a total of 38 recommendations to Police Scotland and the SPA. No other operational area of policing has received such sustained levels of scrutiny from HMICS, or from any other scrutiny body. I am impressed by the effort and sustained improvements made by Police Scotland in this area and it is testament to a stable senior team who have driven forward the change, while improving performance.

This assurance review focuses on the operational impact of the Contact Assessment Model (CAM). I am aware of ongoing work the force is progressing in relation to modernising contact and engagement. In our recently published [HMICS Scrutiny Plan 2022-2025](#), I highlighted that it is our intention to scrutinise this work at an appropriate juncture. However, it is important to take this opportunity to look at how effectively CAM is delivering against the strategic benefits identified by Police Scotland in the initial business case.

The findings of this review are positive and endorse the concept and ambition of CAM. CAM has been a significant change to the manner in which Police Scotland responds to calls from the public and from partner organisations. It has moved from a model based on policy-driven responses, to an individual assessment of threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement for each caller. The fact that, in 2020, the CAM Project Team was awarded the prestigious Campbell Christie Public Sector Reform Award is testament to all those involved in the delivery and implementation of CAM.



Our report contains case studies that form part of the evidence gathered during our review. These demonstrate the levels of commitment and professionalism we found among the officers and staff of Contact, Command and Control (C3) Division. I welcome the efforts that were made in the self-evaluation step of the inspection and the candour and honesty in identifying what works and what can be improved.

The potential benefits CAM hoped to deliver were adversely affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The areas for improvement that have been identified in this report will assist in informing the work to further modernise contact and engagement with the public.

The report has highlighted the difficulties being experienced across public sector organisations since the pandemic took hold. There is clear evidence from the call reviews that partner organisations are not as available as Police Scotland to resolve matters that they are better placed to address. This places additional demand on policing, especially out of business hours. There is a strong argument to look more widely across all public sector organisations and seek to redirect that demand to where it is best tackled, providing pathways for this to happen without disrupting existing services.

It was pleasing to hear of the steps C3 Division has taken to create a learning culture, in particular, the notifiable incident process. This is designed to ensure experience is shared across the Division from incidents that have either been dealt with exceptionally well, or where there are areas for improvement.

This assurance review is one of the first in which we have introduced a self-evaluation process before the inspection team embarked upon their fieldwork. This new approach encourages continuous improvement and it has been of great benefit in ensuring our inspection activity adds value. I would like to thank all those in Police Scotland and the SPA who contributed to the self-evaluation and to the assurance review. This review was led by Lead Inspector Brian McNulty.

**Craig Naylor**

HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland

August 2022



## Key findings

---

### Service delivery

- The introduction of CAM is a significant step forward for Police Scotland in improving the service delivered to the public.
- The early communications and engagement for CAM was very effective, however, this was adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- CAM was instrumental in enabling the force to maintain an appropriate level of service throughout the pandemic.
- The initial contact treatment callers receive from C3 Division staff is consistently of a high standard.
- There is a lack of consistency in the management of Local Policing Appointments<sup>3</sup> (LPAs) across Scotland.

### THRIVE assessments

- The application of THRIVE<sup>4</sup> methodology is, in the main, helping determine the most appropriate response to incidents.
- In incidents with increasing levels of complexity, service advisors need additional training and support from specialists, to improve the investigative opportunities, vulnerabilities and engagement elements of THRIVE assessments.

---

<sup>3</sup> A Local Policing Appointment (LPA) is a scheduled appointment with a local policing officer.

<sup>4</sup> THRIVE is the risk assessment process that considers the Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigative opportunity, Vulnerability and Engagement required to resolve the issue.



## Impact on demand

- Police Scotland deals with approximately 3.4 million contacts each year, resulting in 1.5 million incidents being created. Less than 20 per cent of incidents result in a crime being recorded.
- There has been a 10 per cent decrease in incidents requiring police involvement between 2019 and 2022.
- There is a lack of available data relating to failure demand to allow the force and the SPA to monitor this effectively.
- CAM has not delivered the intended benefits in terms of reductions in demand for local policing officers.
- The Resolution Teams are not currently able or equipped to undertake the range of duties that would have a significant impact in reducing demand for local policing.

## Partnership working

- The ability of the force to divert incidents to more appropriate organisations has been hindered throughout the pandemic.
- There is now a need to remind C3 Division officers and staff of the importance of transferring incidents to more appropriate organisations to ensure those in need of help are provided with the most suitable response.
- Demand relating to mental health, distress and vulnerability is increasing. Police Scotland has been engaged in strategic discussions involving Scottish Government, COSLA<sup>5</sup> and other partner organisations regarding the need for a whole systems approach to ensure vulnerable members of society are provided with the best possible service.

---

<sup>5</sup> Convention of Scottish Local Authorities.



- There are some very effective local partnership arrangements in place to ensure people suffering from mental health, distress and/or vulnerability are provided with the most appropriate service.
- Police Scotland is collaborating with NHS 24, and the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) on a new Mental Health Pathway aimed at enhancing access to mental health treatment and joined-up services. This innovative step is showing very early encouraging signs of promise.
- There is no data available for the force to understand the impact its partnership working arrangements are having on call handling.

### Workforce

- C3 Division has good processes in place to understand how their staff feel about their jobs.
- There is a 'notifiable incident' process within C3 Division, which aims to create a learning culture.
- The majority of staff spoken to within C3 Division said they felt confident and supported in their role, although some staff told us they are scared of the consequences of making a wrong decision (for example, a complaint about the police, or a death following police contact).
- CAM champions and floorwalkers were very effective in supporting staff following the implementation of CAM. These roles no longer exist and we consider it would be beneficial to reintroduce them to support staff through the change.
- C3 Division staff spoken to expressed frustration regarding the limitations of existing technology and there is a need to ensure staff have efficient access to core police systems.



### Scottish Police Authority governance

- The SPA convened a CAM Oversight Group to provide an advisory forum through which progress updates on CAM's development and implementation could be provided to the SPA on a regular basis. This provided governance on the project as it rolled out.
- Reports to the SPA did not (and currently do not) include management information relating to the impact of, for example, the Resolution Teams, Local Policing Appointments, partner agency referrals, or callers routed to the Mental Health Pathway, all of which are key components of CAM.
- For future learning, the SPA Oversight Group would have benefitted from a representative from Local Policing, to provide a better understanding of user experience on the front line.



# Recommendations

---

## Recommendation 1

Police Scotland should demonstrate that the management of Local Policing Appointments ensures the public receives a consistent level of service across Scotland.

## Recommendation 2

Police Scotland should broaden the training and support provided to service advisors, by including inputs from specialists, to enable them to better consider investigative opportunities, vulnerabilities and engagement within their THRIVE assessments.

## Recommendation 3

Police Scotland and the SPA should capture the failure demand rate through the C3 and force performance framework and outcomes, to ensure the quality of service delivered to the public through CAM is monitored.

## Recommendation 4

Police Scotland should review the working practices and training within the Resolution Teams, particularly in relation to direct crime recording, to provide a more victim-orientated approach and to reduce the number of crime reports being returned to Local Policing Divisions or to other areas for completion.

## Recommendation 5

Police Scotland should take steps to ensure staff within Area Control Rooms, Service Centres and Resolution Teams are diverting incidents to partner agencies, whenever that agency is better placed to deal with the incident.

## Recommendation 6

Police Scotland and the SPA should progress the engagement with Scottish Government and other strategic partners to ensure service users are being supported by the most appropriate agency.



### **Recommendation 7**

Police Scotland must improve the resilience and capability of its core police ICT systems to ensure C3 Division staff have efficient access to the information required to perform their roles.

### **Recommendation 8**

The SPA and Police Scotland should put in place measures to monitor progress against the areas for development outlined in this assurance review.



## Areas for development

We have identified a number of areas for development across key processes. They are designed to improve the operational impact of CAM in Police Scotland and are directed primarily at the force as a whole. We expect these will be included in the improvement plan for CAM.

Section	Reference	Areas for Development
Service delivery	27	Police Scotland should implement a refreshed communications and engagement plan for Local Policing officers and staff, and for local partners, to ensure the CAM model is understood and that experience is being shared as required.
Service delivery	49	Police Scotland should ensure that where Local Policing Appointments are used in more complex public protection areas of work such as domestic abuse, they should occur as soon as possible following the report of an incident. It is also essential that any such appointments are met, to avoid, where possible, the victim disengaging.
THRIVE	56	Police Scotland should include THRIVE training on the First Line Manager and Operational Command training courses.
THRIVE	71	Police Scotland should ensure that when an incident is being transferred to another department, a thorough THRIVE assessment should be provided, along with the rationale for the incident being re-graded.
Demand	101	Police Scotland should capture the number of incidents dealt with in their entirety by the Resolution Teams, through the C3 performance framework and outcomes, to ensure their impact on reducing demand in Local Policing is monitored.
Partnership working	153	Police Scotland should establish indicators that will measure the effectiveness of its partnership working arrangements in relation to delivering CAM benefits.
Workforce	172	C3 Division should seek to improve staff survey submission rates, to reap the maximum benefits.
Workforce	182	Police Scotland should continue to enhance a culture of learning and continuous improvement among its officers and staff.
Workforce	185	Police Scotland service advisors and C3 Division staff should receive enhanced mental health training, including awareness of the Distress Brief Intervention.



## Background and context

---

1. Members of the public contact the police for assistance for a wide variety of reasons, from requiring urgent assistance in a life-threatening situation, to reporting a crime, or requesting advice on a less critical matter. Requests for police advice or assistance are also made by other organisations. Such requests are most often made via calls to the 999 emergency and 101 non-emergency services. These calls are managed by Police Scotland's C3 Division.
2. The introduction of CAM was intended to be a new means by which the force would manage requests for police assistance from the public and from other agencies. Its introduction followed a [recommendation](#) made by HMICS in 2015 that Police Scotland should adopt a more formalised risk and vulnerability assessment model such as THRIVE, a model used by several police forces in England and Wales. In June 2019, Police Scotland began to implement Phase 1 of CAM. Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, full roll out was expedited and completed in April 2020 – five months early.
3. The initial business case described CAM as an 'enhanced assessment and decision-making model, using criteria such as risk and vulnerability that enables identification and direction of the most appropriate policing response at first point of contact'.
4. We published A [Review of the early implementation of the Contact Assessment Model](#) in October 2019. At the time of this review, CAM was only in place in Dumfries and Galloway, and Lanarkshire Divisions. We had committed to a full review in our scrutiny year 2020-21, however this was delayed due to the impact of the pandemic.



5. Police Scotland is currently looking at how CAM evolves, as part of its Modernised Contact and Engagement (MCE) Programme. The Contact, Engagement and Resolution Project (CERP) is a key element of the MCE Programme and will look to build on what has been accomplished by CAM and to provide a wider range of options for members of the public and partner organisations to contact and engage with the force. As this work progresses, we will provide independent assurance on it, but in this review, we focus on CAM's operational impact as it stands now. The findings from this assurance review will assist in the progression of CERP.

## Methodology

6. In recognition of the significant challenges facing the force at the time of the review (e.g., a higher number of absences due to COVID-19), and to minimise the review's impact on the force, our review team was very selective in choosing officers and staff for interview. Representatives of the SPA, staff associations and trade unions were also interviewed and in line with public health guidance, all interviews were conducted remotely using Microsoft Teams.
7. In line with the Terms of Reference for this review, small, 'virtual' focus groups were formed, and interviews carried out with officers and staff based in the north, west and east command areas of the force. One Division from each command area was identified to gain an appreciation of the impact of CAM in contrasting parts of the force, as follows:
  - East** – Forth Valley Division (C Division)
  - West** – Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Division (K Division)
  - North** – Highlands and Islands Division (N Division)
8. The team reviewed an extensive range of relevant documentation, including policies, procedures, performance and management information, strategies, plans and course materials.



## Call audit

9. The review team conducted an audit of calls made to Police Scotland via the 101 and 999 systems. Prior to carrying out this audit, members of the review team participated in the THRIVE training that is delivered to police officers and new members of staff in C3 Division.
10. STORM is the force command and control system. Each STORM incident created under CAM should include THRIVE assessments at each stage of its progression from the Service Centre to Area Control Room (ACR) or Resolution Team (RT).
11. To provide an indication of the manner in which the model was being applied across the force area, calls were audited from C, K and N Divisions.
12. In preparing for the audit, the review team was supported by statisticians from the Justice Analytical Services team within Scottish Government. A random selection of 300 calls was made from the total number of incident calls to C, K and N Divisions in the 7 days of the week commencing 22nd November 2021. This date range was selected to replicate a week with no extraordinary events, thus representing a week as close to 'business as usual as possible.
13. A further 60 calls were audited as part of a separate review, with a particular focus on domestic abuse. The domestic abuse findings will be reported in a separate report, due to be published in the coming months.
14. The associated margin of error for the sample size of 360 calls is +/-5 per cent. This is calculated at the 95 per cent confidence level. This means that, if the sample found 8 in 10 calls were of a particular standard, we could be 95 per cent confident that between 74 per cent and 86 per cent of all calls met that standard.



15. The review team listened to the calls made, examined information that was subsequently recorded on STORM and considered:

- The quality of service provided to the caller
- Whether a THRIVE assessment had been undertaken and, if so, whether it reflected the incident
- The quality of THRIVE assessment carried out and whether this was appropriately recorded on the incident
- Whether the priority grading was appropriate for the incident, taking account of the THRIVE assessment
- Whether the correct supporting checks had been carried out to assist with the THRIVE assessment
- Any issues arising relating to the availability of police to respond to the call
- Referrals to partnership agencies and issues associated with partnership working
- Whether service advisors were making appropriate decisions based on their assessment of the circumstances of the call.



## Service delivery

---

16. As the primary point of contact for the public and for partner organisations, C3 Division has a crucial role in maintaining public trust and confidence in policing. In recognition of this, one of the strategic benefits identified by Police Scotland in the initial business case for CAM was an improvement in the service delivered to the public. We consider this to be the single most important measure of the success of CAM.
17. By introducing CAM, the force wanted to enable officers and staff to make informed decisions at the first point of contact, and at all subsequent contacts, by using the THRIVE assessment framework to consider the circumstances of each call for service. The intention was that the individual needs of every caller, and the circumstances of each incident, would be assessed to ensure that the most appropriate response was provided.
18. Prior to the introduction of CAM, calls from the public would be prioritised and would generally be responded to by local policing officers, who would attend to deal with the incident in person. The introduction of CAM aimed to provide more flexibility by offering a range of response options, at the first point of contact, as follows:
  - **Resolution by service advisor** at first point of contact, so that most calls do not result in the creation of an incident, but are resolved by the service advisor providing advice;
  - **Standard response** - schedule a telephone appointment, LPA or Direct Crime Recording appointment (standard responses go to the RT coordinator who will assess the appropriateness of this). This approach better manages the expectation of callers, provides more flexibility for the caller and ultimately delivers a more professional service;
  - **Prompt or immediate response** - pass to ACR who will assess the incident further and either agree or determine a more appropriate response. This new prompt incident type ensures attendance as soon as possible, as resources become available; or



- **Other resolution** – incident passed to RT Investigators, generally for incidents requiring further enquiry, e.g. fuel drive-offs, advice calls, etc. Where the matter could be better dealt with by a partner agency (and following THRIVE assessment), the caller is signposted to another agency or service.
19. Police Scotland has made very positive progress on its call handling in recent years. During this review, we heard from many people who consider the introduction of CAM as another significant step forward for the force in improving the service delivered to the public.
20. During our call audit, we found that the initial contact treatment callers receive from C3 Division staff was of a high standard, and consistently so. Callers to Police Scotland were greeted with a professional, polite, courteous and helpful response from service advisors. Although most calls audited were not emergencies, they were nevertheless dealt with in a manner which demonstrated empathy, compassion and a genuine willingness to assist.

### **Case study 1**

*A call was received via the 101 non-emergency service into the Service Centre. The caller advised the service advisor that she was waiting on an officer getting in touch with her. Recognising that she had spoken to the caller the previous day, the service advisor used police systems to check which officer had been dealing with the incident. The service advisor was suspicious that the caller was not alone due to background noise during the call and felt that her manner was hesitant in comparison with the previous day.*

*The service advisor raised an incident expressing her concerns about the caller, but did not divulge her suspicions to the caller as she suspected the conversation may be overheard by the domestic abuse offender from the previous day. The service advisor noted there were markers on the systems that included bail conditions due to a domestic incident. This information was added to the incident, using the THRIVE methodology.*



*The ACR dispatched officers to attend. On arrival, the officers found the caller was drowsy, having consumed a quantity of drugs. An ambulance was summoned. There was no breach of bail and the caller was left in the care of family.*

*The professional manner in which the service advisor reacted potentially saved the caller from further harm.*

## **Communications and engagement**

21. Prior to the implementation of CAM, the project team conducted an extensive programme of engagement events. Internal briefing sessions were held with:
  - Members of the Force Executive
  - Divisional senior managers
  - Local policing Inspectors, Sergeants and Constables
  - C3 officers and staff
  - Staff associations and trade unions
  
22. Sustained communications and engagement also took place with external partners and stakeholders. CAM briefing sessions and workshops were conducted externally at national and local level, including the following organisations:
  - Scottish Government
  - NHS 24
  - NHS Scotland
  - SAS
  - Scottish Fire & Rescue
  - SPA
  
23. A tactical stakeholder group was established consisting of 'critical friends' from third sector organisations. Desktop exercises were used to help partners understand the new model. Divisional Commanders assisted in local engagement with local authorities, local scrutiny chairs and local partners.
  
24. Feedback and learning from these sessions helped inform the design and implementation of CAM.



25. As the roll out of CAM progressed, C3 Division hosted a monthly practitioners group meeting. This meeting was normally chaired by an Inspector and involved representatives from all C3 operational functions. This allowed relevant issues to be raised and for experience to be shared as required.
  
26. During our review we heard that the early communications and engagement had been extremely valuable. We also heard that as the roll out of CAM progressed, the pandemic adversely impacted on communications and engagement activities.
  
27. We found that many people spoken to, particularly in Local Policing, had a limited knowledge and understanding of CAM. There is now a need to reinvigorate and refresh the communications and engagement plan, to ensure CAM is understood and that experience is being shared as required.

**Area for development**

Police Scotland should implement a refreshed communications and engagement plan for Local Policing officers and staff, and for local partners, to ensure the CAM model is understood and that experience is being shared as required.



## Impact of COVID-19

28. Our review was conducted not long after the easing of restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The initial intention, expressed in the full business case, was that the national roll out would be implemented in a phased approach, as follows:

Table 1 – Planned CAM delivery

<b>Phase 1 / Proof of Concept</b>	Q & V Divisions – update on planning assumptions and associated forecasts
<b>Phase 2a</b>	G Division, to be implemented late October 2019
<b>Phase 2b</b>	K, L, & U Divisions to be implemented January 2020
<b>Phase 2c</b>	East Divisions E & J to be implemented March 2020
<b>Phase 2d</b>	East Divisions C & P anticipated to deploy May 2020
<b>Phase 2e</b>	North Divisions A, D and N anticipated to deploy July 2020 with completion in August 2020

Source: Police Scotland

29. However, as indicated in the figure 1 below, Phases 2d and 2e were brought forward at the direction of the Chief Constable, with an Interim North Resolution Team established in Dundee, while the permanent North Resolution Team in Inverness was developed. This decision was taken to ensure an appropriate and consistent risk assessment, and level of service delivery, was in place across Scotland throughout the period of the pandemic.

Figure 1 – Actual CAM delivery



Source: Police Scotland



30. During our review, we consistently heard that the expedited roll-out of CAM had been key in allowing the force to maintain an appropriate level of service during the pandemic. The CAM model was adapted depending upon what restrictions were in place at any given time in different parts of the country. The THRIVE assessment was updated to become a THRIVE–C (THRIVE-COVID) assessment, whereby COVID-19 related considerations were also applied to the risk assessment for each call. This was known as the ‘Covid Response Model’, with specific questions relating to COVID-19. LPAs were suspended and replaced with appointments designed to support remote resolution, consisting of telephone and/or video appointments with officers. As the country moved out of lockdown, LPAs were reintroduced in July 2020.
31. HMICS considers that the force should be commended for taking proactive steps in using CAM to maintain an appropriate level of service to communities across Scotland during such an unprecedented and challenging period.
32. Indeed, CAM was entered into the Scottish Public Service Awards 2020. These celebrate excellence within Scotland’s public services, and CAM was awarded the prestigious Campbell Christie Public Sector Reform Award. This is the first time that a policing project has won any category at these awards and such external recognition is a major accomplishment for all involved in the delivery and implementation of CAM.

### **Understanding the impact of CAM**

33. The quality of service delivered to the public, through the implementation of CAM, can be considered both in terms of the service delivered at the first point of contact and through the manner and extent to which the issue has been dealt with.
34. To help the force understand levels of public confidence and user experience, a regular programme of Your Police and User Experience public consultation surveys are undertaken. Insights from both of these surveys are considered each month at the force Strategic Leadership Board (SLB). Data and insights are shared at regional and local levels for improvement planning and scrutiny.

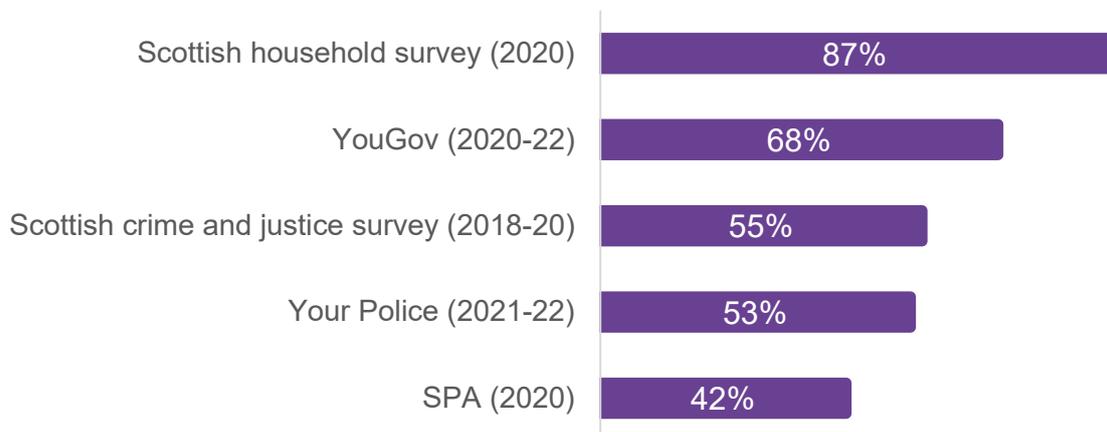


35. The following results, (from the [Chief Constable's Assessment of Policing Performance 2021/22](#)), demonstrate that across a range of measures, public confidence in the police is consistently high. The majority of people report they have confidence in Police Scotland.

### Your police survey

36. A total of 20,024 responses were received for 2021/22 (30 April 2021 to 31 March 2022) was 20,024, including 398 British Sign Language responses. During this period, public confidence was recorded as 41 per cent in Quarter 1; 38 per cent in Quarter 2; 43 per cent in Quarter 3; and 40 per cent in Quarter 4. In April 2022, a confidence index score was calculated to compare with benchmarking surveys including the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey. The index score considers all of the responses given by the participants, (excluding "Don't know" and "Not answered"). The average confidence figures were 54 per cent in Quarter 1; 51 per cent in Quarter 2; 54 per cent in Quarter 3; and 53 per cent in Quarter 4. The overall 2021/22 confidence index score was 53 per cent. The following graph provides a comparison of how the score compares to other public confidence measures used in Scotland.

Figure 2 - Measures of public "confidence" in Scotland



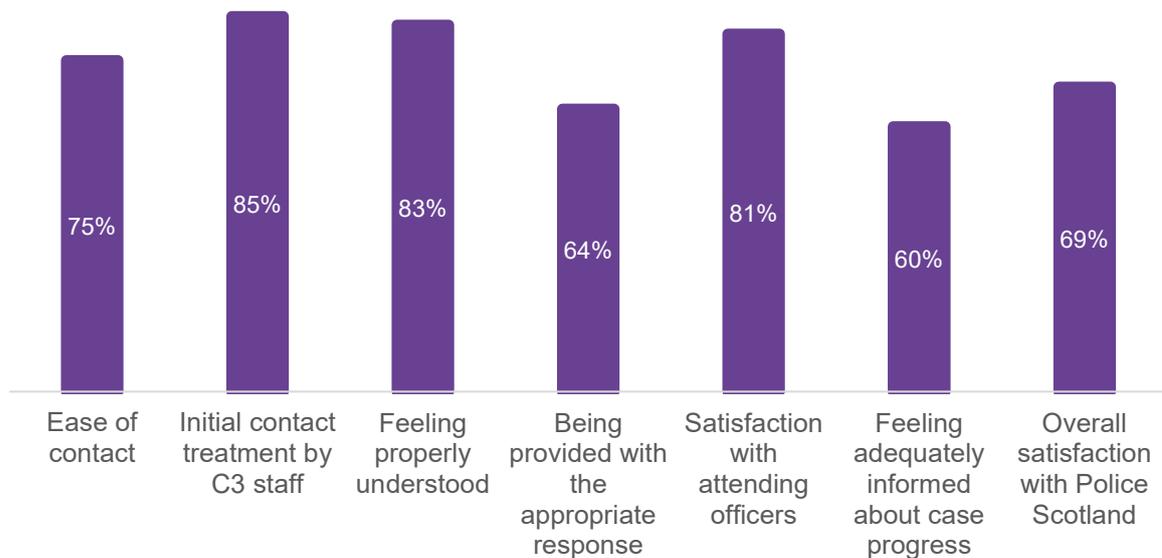


37. It is important to acknowledge contact and engagement with the police form part of wider measures that can impact on public confidence in policing. HMICS acknowledges that these measures are not specific to C3 and CAM, but as the primary first point of contact for the force - we assume this has a significant impact on the results.

### User experience survey

38. The force User Experience Survey is administered externally by an independent body and is delivered via text message to those who have contacted Police Scotland in the previous month. From January 2021 to March 2022, a total of 20,134 respondents were surveyed about their experience of the policing service provided, from initial contact through to overall satisfaction. The findings show continued high levels of satisfaction, as follows:

Figure 3 - User experience (January 2021 - March 2022)



39. From a call handling perspective, it is reassuring to note the 75 per cent rating for ease of contact, which is an improvement by 9 percentage points on the previous year. The 85 per cent satisfaction rating for initial contact treatment by C3 staff is also very reassuring, and is entirely consistent with the findings of the review team during our call audit.



## Call handling performance

40. Within C3 Division, data is gathered to assist in understanding the quality of service being delivered from a call handling perspective, and is reported on for:
  - Call answer times
  - Abandoned calls
  - Number of dropped (discontinued) calls, 101 and 999
  
41. The data in the following graphs, (taken from the [Police Scotland Quarter 4 Performance Report 2021/22](#)) shows that the average speed of answer for emergency 999 calls has remained consistent, despite higher call volumes. However, the prioritisation of 999 calls by the force, along with capacity issues associated with the pandemic, has seen the average speed of answer for non-emergency 101 calls increase.
  
42. During our review we did hear from C3 Division staff that the introduction of CAM, and, in particular, the application of THRIVE methodology, has resulted in a slight increase in call handling times. This was always predicted in the THRIVE model and the workforce modelling requirements that informed the business case, and may be another factor that has contributed to the longer speed of answer times for non-emergency 101 calls.



Figure 4 - 999 average speed of answered

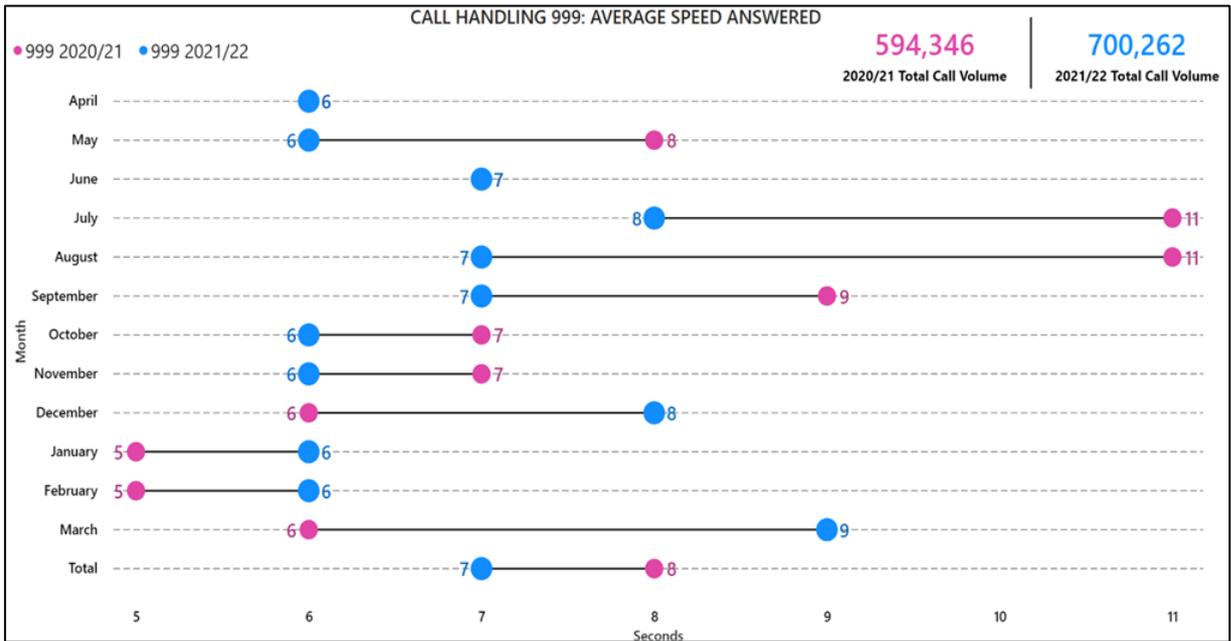
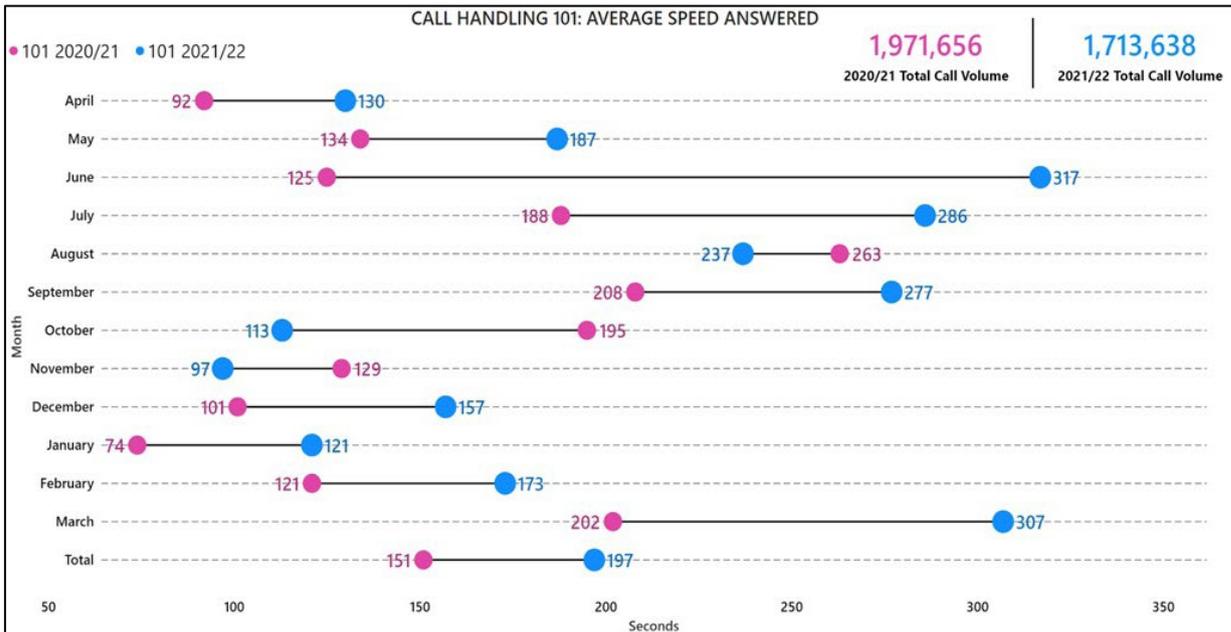


Figure 5 - 101 average speed of answered



Source: Police Scotland

43. HMICS welcomes the prioritisation of 999 calls by Police Scotland.



## Local policing appointments

44. A key component of CAM is the introduction of the LPA. This is the standard response to incidents within the CAM model where a diary appointment is scheduled for police officers to attend. Some of the legacy forces and divisions have had variant schemes in place for a long time.
45. When a member of the public contacts Police Scotland, the service advisor will carry out a THRIVE assessment to determine the most appropriate response. Where the incident does not meet the threshold for an immediate or prompt response, and a LPA is deemed appropriate, a mutually suitable appointment will be identified and a diary appointment created. HMICS considers the use of diary appointments can provide more flexibility for callers, but for more complex incidents where there are greater risks associated, it is essential that this response is based on a robust and thorough THRIVE assessment.
46. Each Division has a localised approach to the management of LPAs and we found there is a lack of consistency across Scotland. In some Divisions, appointments will be offered within a specific timeframe of 1.5 hours (e.g. callers are told officers will attend between, say 2 - 3.30pm). In other Divisions, callers will be advised of the day on which officers will attend, with no timeframe.
47. The LPA concept appears to work more effectively in urban areas where there are more resources concentrated within a smaller geographic area. LPA diary compliance is monitored locally, but we did not find any understanding at force level of the ability of the organisation to meet demand for LPAs.
48. In order to deal with the LPA demand, some Divisions have a dedicated diary car (some have more than one), but in other areas there is no such dedicated resource. We also heard that in Divisions with a dedicated resource, the diary car(s) will often be used for other duties when there are more serious matters to be attended to. This can lead to difficulties in resourcing appointments, which are often rescheduled, sometimes resulting in the member of the public not being seen by police for some days after their initial report.



49. Some crimes carry a greater risk of attrition (where victims drop out or disengage from the process of reporting). This is a particular risk in the more complex public protection areas of work (such as domestic abuse). We consider it is important that, where diary appointments are used, they occur as soon as possible following the report of an incident and that it is essential that these appointments are actually carried out when they are arranged, to reduce the likelihood of attrition.

**Area for development**

Police Scotland should ensure that where Local Policing Appointments are used in more complex public protection areas of work such as domestic abuse, they should occur as soon as possible following the report of an incident. It is also essential that any such appointments are met, to avoid, where possible, the victim disengaging.

50. We would expect LPAs to be managed in a manner that ensures people across Scotland are receiving a consistent level of service.

**Recommendation 1**

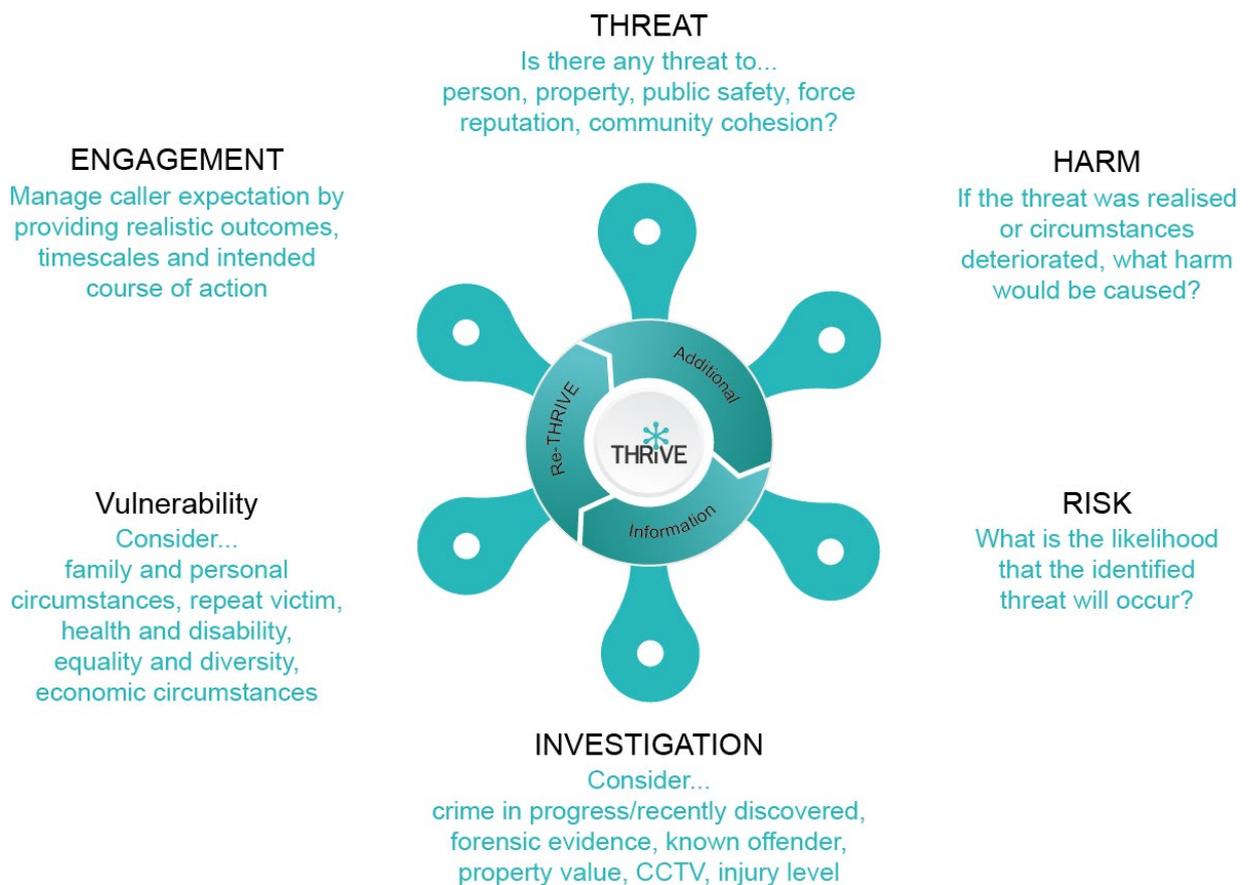
Police Scotland should demonstrate that the management of Local Policing Appointments ensures the public receives a consistent level of service across Scotland.



## THRIVE assessments

51. THRIVE is the model used by Police Scotland to assess all contact and identify the most appropriate response. It is intended to ensure that the assessment of risk and decision-making is done in a consistent manner and that the rationale is recorded as appropriate.

Figure 6 – THRIVE



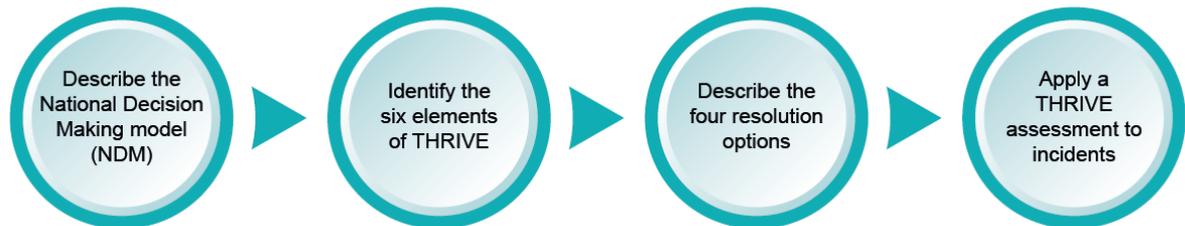
Source: Police Scotland

52. C3 Division has a standard format for recording THRIVE assessments on the incident log, made up of the following sections:
- Prefix (SC, ACR or RT) –to identify where the THRIVE assessment has been carried out, the assessment should be prefixed with SC for Service Centre, ACR for Area Control Room and/or RT for Resolution Team;
  - Priority / Grading (Immediate, Prompt, Standard);
  - THRIVE explanation / reasoning;
  - Completion of checks.



53. As part of our fieldwork, we had the opportunity to participate in the bespoke C3 ‘THRIVE and Resolution Options Training’ day, to see first-hand the training delivered to new staff joining C3 Division who are destined to work in either the virtual Police Scotland Service Centres, ACR’s or RT’s. On successful completion of the training, staff will be able to;

Figure 7 – THRIVE and resolution options training – learning outcomes



Source: Police Scotland

54. During the training new staff are given an overview of the THRIVE process, explaining why it is used, along with a breakdown of each of the six elements of THRIVE. On successful completion, officers and staff move into their respective roles (SC, RT or ACR).
55. In our [2019 review](#), we highlighted that both sergeants and inspectors felt they would benefit from more formal training in THRIVE, so that if they felt they needed to challenge the resolution option selected by C3, they could do so appropriately and using the same assessment framework. While it is generally understood in local policing that local managers can challenge THRIVE assessments and subsequent call gradings, there is no formal training provided to them on the principles of THRIVE.
56. In our [Thematic Inspection of Police Scotland Training and Development – Phase 1](#), we recommended –

*Police Scotland should ensure that all police officers and support staff are provided with appropriate leadership training prior to undertaking a supervisory role (Recommendation 4).*



57. We are pleased to note that the First Line Manager and Operational Command training courses are now mandatory for anyone in an operational supervisory role. These courses include inputs on the [Code of Ethics](#) and the [National Decision Making Model](#). HMICS considers that THRIVE should also be included as part of this training, to empower line managers in Local Policing to challenge THRIVE assessments where appropriate.

**Area for development**

Police Scotland should include THRIVE training on the First Line Manager and Operational Command training courses.

58. HMICS considers that a good assessment should contain sufficient detail against each strand of THRIVE, to enable an effective assessment of the circumstances and to ensure a tailored response.
59. The THRIVE training provides examples of the quantity and quality of information to be recorded as part of the THRIVE assessment, such as the following:

*SC THRIVE: PROMPT response. Police to attend and engage with farmer. Possible T/H/R/V to drivers and horse if animal ventures onto road. Further investigation required. Standard checks – N/A.*

*SC THRIVE: IMMEDIATE – ongoing domestic – threat, harm and risk to occupants and potentially children within. Attendance required and further investigation required. Standard checks complete. IVPD<sup>6</sup> positive. No objects on locus. No previous calls.*

---

<sup>6</sup> IVPD - the Interim Vulnerable Persons Database is a system used by Police Scotland.



60. We found that in the incidents audited, there was a very common theme for THRIVE assessments to focus on the threat, harm and risk, omitting consideration or mention of investigation, vulnerability and engagement. Many of THRIVE assessments were remarkably brief, or had at least one element of the THRIVE assessment missing, for example:

*SC – Low T/H/R suitable for direct crime report by RT*

61. We consider it vitally important for every incident to have all aspects of THRIVE considered and recorded. Deviation from this standard presents a risk that an important element of the assessment could be missed.

62. The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) within C3 Division is responsible for overseeing all quality assurance activity in the division. Targeted quality assurance is carried out where there has been a suitably-identified topic. During the self-evaluation stage of this review, we were provided with evidence relating to previous targeted quality assurance on the application of THRIVE. The findings from this work were consistent with our own call audit, in that the most significant area for improvement identified was in the recording of the THRIVE assessments.

63. During our call audit, we found that most calls audited had a THRIVE assessment recorded on the incident, although as highlighted above, most were brief in nature. In most cases, the service advisors asked pertinent questions to inform their THRIVE assessment, with appropriate supporting checks of other systems being carried out to assist with the assessment. This, in the main, assisted in determining the most appropriate grading for the incident.

64. We did, however, find that the effectiveness of THRIVE assessments tended to drop in some incidents where there were increased levels of complexity. For instance, the level of questioning to determine any investigative opportunities, vulnerabilities or engagement was less effective in the audit of the 60 domestic abuse calls that we listened to.



65. During their training, C3 Division officers and staff are provided with a wide range of scenarios on which they are expected to develop a THRIVE assessment and ultimately determine the most appropriate disposal option. We found during our fieldwork that officers and staff were comfortable with the extent of THRIVE training they received and were able to apply a THRIVE assessment to each incident. We did, however, find that in incidents with increased levels of complexity some service advisors expressed a lack of understanding on what advice they should provide to callers.
66. The need for increased training and support for service advisors was also particularly evident in the completion of THRIVE assessments for more complex incidents. For example, in the 60 domestic abuse calls we audited we found that additional support for service advisors would assist in improving THRIVE assessments regarding investigative opportunities, vulnerabilities and engagement opportunities. As highlighted earlier in this report, these elements of the THRIVE model were not well covered in general. We consider that, with the level of risk associated with more complex incidents (including domestic abuse incidents), these elements of the model become increasingly important.
67. We also found that increased training and support was needed for service advisors related to potential forensic opportunities which may exist following certain crimes. For example housebreakings, vehicle related crimes and incidents involving additional levels of complexity. Some service advisors were also unsure on what action to take and/or advice to give to callers for offences where social media was involved.
68. More training and guidance for service advisors in these areas, delivered by people with relevant specialist knowledge and experience, would add more value to THRIVE assessments and provide a better service to the public.

### **Recommendation 2**

Police Scotland should broaden the training and support provided to service advisors, by including inputs from specialists, to enable them to better consider investigative opportunities, vulnerabilities and engagement within their THRIVE assessments.



### **Case study 2**

*Service advisor answered a 999 call from a caller who appeared to be under the influence of alcohol. The caller was being abusive and shouting, saying she wanted her watch back.*

*This appeared not to be an emergency call, with no need for the police to attend at this time. The service advisor questioned the caller as best she could, using the THRIVE methodology and completed appropriate checks on the police systems. She explained that officers would attend the following day to speak to the caller, but towards the end of the call, the caller stopped speaking and sounded incoherent in the background. While there was no emergency element to the call, the service advisor suspected something was not right and decided to create an incident for officers to attend and check on the caller's wellbeing.*

*Officers attending at the house discovered the caller was unresponsive, so called an ambulance. The ambulance crew advised the officers that the caller would probably have died had she been found an hour later. The service advisor's understanding of THRIVE, and ability to recognise cues on the call that something was not right with the caller, had in all likelihood, saved the caller's life.*

69. Whenever an incident is being transferred, and/or there is new information, or a change of circumstances, or the incident is concluded, a THRIVE assessment should be recorded. The THRIVE assessment should be updated by anyone who assesses the incident, initially the SC and thereafter the ACR and/or RT.
  
70. In a small number of incidents audited, we found that the incident was initially assessed by the service advisor as requiring a prompt response and sent to the ACR, where it remained for a period of time before being forwarded to the RT. On the incident being transferred, a very brief THRIVE assessment was added, deeming the incident suitable to be dealt with by the RT. The RT would then update the incident with a more thorough THRIVE assessment that indicated police attendance was required. This resulted in the incident being transferred back to the ACR, for officers to be dispatched to deal with it.



71. The limited update and lack of rationale provided by the ACR on the earlier THRIVE assessment (when forwarding to the RT), and the fact the incident remained unactioned for a period of time, suggests the reason for the transfer was that it was during a period of peak demand and there were limited resources available to attend. HMICS considers that the lack of availability of resources should not influence the THRIVE assessment and that when an incident is being transferred to another department, a thorough THRIVE assessment should be provided, along with rationale for the incident being re-graded.

**Area for development**

Police Scotland should ensure that when an incident is being transferred to another department, a thorough THRIVE assessment should be provided, along with the rationale for the incident being re-graded.



## Impact on demand

---

72. There are approximately 3.4 million contacts to Police Scotland Service Centres each year, resulting in 1.5 million incidents being generated. Less than 20 per cent result in a crime being recorded.
73. CAM was introduced primarily as an enhanced assessment and decision-making model which directs the caller to Police Scotland Service Centres to the most appropriate and proportionate policing response at the point of first contact. As well as improved triage and prioritisation of incidents, CAM offers improved management of demand. This was outlined in the Full Business Case (FBC) presented to the [SPA](#) on 24 September 2019. The FBC stated that during the proof of concept in Q and V Divisions, it was anticipated, that:
- *Resolution Teams would deal with 17 per cent of incidents per day without the need for local police attendance;*
  - *The elimination of 15 per cent of failure demand.*
74. Failure demand is where a member of the public has been told to expect the police to attend and Police Scotland have failed to do so due to higher priority incidents occurring.
75. In our [Independent Assurance Review, Police Scotland Call Handling: Update Report](#) (May 2018) we recommended that:
- Police Scotland, through its Demand, Productivity and Performance Programme, should develop a cohesive approach to reducing failure demand across the service and ensure that Contact, Command and Control (C3) division performance is fully reflected in the national performance framework (Recommendation 4).*
76. In our [Demand Analysis and Management Assurance Review](#) (June 2021), we highlighted that failure demand on the whole was not being considered in a systematic way across the force.



77. We have viewed the Police Scotland CAM End Project Report, dated May 2021, which retains the above benefits delivered by CAM, but with a slight modification to the demand managed by the RT:
- The introduction of an RT based within C3 Division to manage up to 15 per cent (reduced from 17 per cent) of demand without the involvement of local policing.
  - The removal of around 15 per cent (after allowing for the discounting of 3 per cent for duplicate calls received) “failure to meet demand” from the system. All callers are informed at first point of contact both how, and more importantly, when the police will respond.
78. What became clear during our fieldwork was an expectation that the introduction of CAM would see a tangible reduction in incidents dealt with in Local Policing Divisions, through both the introduction of RTs and better signposting and referral to partner agencies. The role and impact of the establishment of the RTs is discussed later in this section.
79. To assess whether the introduction and roll-out of CAM has improved the overall management of demand, we have considered both the publicly available data published by Police Scotland and the SPA on call volumes, disposals and the experiences and feedback from officers and staff working within the SC, ACR, RT and Local Policing. By considering each of these areas, we were able to assess if there was any improvement and whether officers in Local Policing were actually experiencing the anticipated reduction in demand.
80. Police Scotland report quarterly to the SPA Policing Performance Committee as part of the performance framework and outcomes. Incident demand and 999/101 call handling are part of performance reporting to the SPA. From the publicly available [reports](#), published by the SPA and Police Scotland, Table 2 summarises incident demand and call handling performance since 2019, which coincides with the roll out of CAM. For the average speed of answer for 101 and 999 calls, we have included the ‘target’ times set by Police Scotland. Table 3 gives a list of response definitions.



81. While the assessment or analysis of call handling performance and response times have not formed part of this review, we note the ongoing work between the SPA and Police Scotland towards the development and provision of a benchmarking [framework](#), to include 999/101 call demand. This approach and willingness to benchmark against other forces in the United Kingdom is to be commended.

Table 2 - Incident demand 2019/20 - 2021/22

Incident Demand		2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total number of 999 calls		640,068	594,346	700,262
Total number of 101 calls		1,945,042	1,971,656	1,713,638
Total number of calls		2,585,110	2,566,002	2,413,900
Number of incidents created, (a proportion of these incidents will have been created through other means of contact (e.g. online, in person, etc.)		1,668,952	1,519,060	1,485,687
Number and % of calls (999 and 101) that do not result in an incident being created – these are generally calls dealt with at first point of contact by service advisors (e.g. advice calls)		916,158 (35.4%)	1,046,942 (40.8%)	928,213 (38.4%)
Average answer time for 101 calls Target 40 seconds		Not available	2 min 37 seconds	3 min 17 seconds
Average answer time for 999 calls Target 10 seconds		Not available	8 seconds	7 seconds
Number of incidents by response type	Immediate	Not applicable, pre-CAM	189,726	169,899
	Prompt	Not applicable, pre-CAM	685,171	637,006
	Local Policing Appointment	Not applicable, pre-CAM	39,554	65,091
	Direct crime recording	Not applicable, pre-CAM	55,015	75,738
	Resolution Team Involvement	Not applicable, pre-CAM	44,738 (2.9%)	44,551 (3%)
	Other Resolution	Not applicable, pre-CAM	422,067	452,659

Source: Police Scotland



Table 3 - Response definitions

<b>Response Type</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Immediate	Immediate attendance at the scene
Prompt	Attendance within 4 hours
Local Policing Appointment	Scheduled by phone or visit
Direct crime recording	Crime recorded by telephone
Resolution Team involvement	Incidents which have involved the Resolution Team (but not necessarily concluded by them without the involvement of Local Policing or another department)
Other resolution	Incidents which do not result in police attendance

Source: Police Scotland

82. In relation to CAM, Table 2 shows that the overall number of incidents created by Police Scotland Service Centres (requiring attendance by Local Policing or involvement by RTs to resolve) has shown a 10 per cent decrease between 2019 and 2022, with a 7.7 per cent decrease in Immediate and Prompt attendance calls.
83. Police Scotland provided us with examples of daily and weekly performance reports. These cover a wide range of information, including the number of contacts C3 has received in a 24 hour/weekly timeframe, average speed of answer, delays, discontinued calls, broken down by 101 and 999, average dispatch times, number of LPAs and direct crime recording appointments. Failure demand metrics are not included.
84. At the end of each quarter, C3 produce a 'C3 Division Performance Report'. We were given an example report which, again, summarises 999 and 101 call handling performance (volume and average speed of answer), number of contacts made through the 'Contact Us' email system, number of 'Notifiable Incidents' and quality assurance activities. Failure demand metrics are not included.
85. There is no management information contained within either the daily, weekly or quarterly performance reports that would allow C3 Senior Management or the SPA to monitor failure demand and, ultimately, the quality of service delivered to the public.



### **Recommendation 3**

Police Scotland and the SPA should capture the failure demand rate through the C3 and force performance framework and outcomes, to ensure the quality of service delivered to the public through CAM is monitored.

### **Resolution teams**

86. The RTs in C3 Division operate across the north, east and west regions of the country and are made up of both police officers and members of police staff, who manage direct crime recording and telephone diary appointments and a wide range of other activities including management of incidents passed from either the SC or ACR. As can be seen from the original CAM Business Case, the strategic intention and purpose in establishing the RTs was to remove 15 per cent of incident demand from Local Policing.
87. During our review we heard about the Public Assistance Desk (PAD), which had been in place within Forth Valley Division before the introduction of CAM. This was a local team of around 12 police officers, who would use police systems and telephone to try and resolve a range of matters, such as following up crime reports; assisting with enquiries relating to ongoing incidents; (e.g. missing persons); or carrying out background checks for firearms licensing enquiries, etc. We understand that many Divisions, particularly in the east of the country, had a PAD or something similar in place prior to CAM.
88. Following the introduction of CAM, Local Policing Divisions had to provide resources to assist with the establishment of the RTs and in Forth Valley, this meant the PAD was disbanded. We heard from officers in Forth Valley Division that this move from the PAD to CAM has felt like a retrograde step, because the RTs do not provide the same flexibility to assist with a wider range of issues.



89. The following feedback, obtained from operational police officers based in Local Policing, highlights the challenges associated with the RTs that were raised during our review.

*“There is absolutely no benefit to the CAM team (Resolution Team) in our area. I can see potential benefits in busy city environments, but it is not uncommon here to have no calls on a shift, only to discover that CAM have taken several that day and arranged future appointments, just causing unnecessary backlogs.”*

*“A common issue is someone wants advice, so they are referred to CAM, however that person says they want to see a Police Officer, so CAM bounce it straight back, without seeing if it can be resolved by just speaking with them (which more often than not, it can be). This totally defeats the purpose.”*

90. Table 2, demonstrates the number of incidents which have had RT involvement. These have remained fairly static between 2020 and 2022; however, in the same period, the number of Direct Crime Reports (also taken by the RTs) have increased by 37 per cent.
91. Following the initial THRIVE assessment by the SC, where an incident is generated and deemed suitable to be passed to the RT, there is an obvious expectation C3 will, wherever possible, manage the incident through to a conclusion, either through direct crime recording, advice/assistance provided by telephone or a referral to a partner agency. None of which should involve Local Policing.
92. As noted above, in terms of the process for direct crime recording, C3 RTs operate a diary appointment system, where members of the public are offered a suitable date and time to record a matter as a crime. They will then receive a call back, either from a police officer or a member of police staff, to take the report in accordance with the [Scottish Crime Recording Standard](#) (SCRS). These appointments and creation of the crime report must occur within 72 hours of Police Scotland being notified of the incident. In ‘exceptional circumstances’ a maximum of seven days is permitted (for circumstances beyond the control of the police).



93. During our fieldwork, we consistently heard evidence from Local Policing Officers that Crime Reports, taken by RTs, were sometimes of a poor standard. This included incorrect or missing details, or the report having to be sent to Local Policing for further enquiry (e.g. for door to door enquiries to be undertaken; suspects to be traced; CCTV to be secured; statements to be taken). We heard from C3 staff that, due to 'demand' and the requirement to comply with the SCRS, they will often create 'skeleton' crime reports, based on the information available on the incidents. They will then return the crime report to Local Policing Divisions for enquiries to be carried out.
94. We found that there is also a strong view held within Local Policing that the process of RTs returning crime reports to divisions results in a poor service to the public, highlighted by the following feedback.

*"A general example of when a crime is reported is - someone phones with a complaint, CAM (Resolution Team) speak with them at length, log it as a crime, it then gets filtered back to local policing, who then have to make contact with the complainer to arrange to get a statement. Sometimes due to other commitments etc., this can be weeks later, by which time the enquiry has already lost momentum, the complainer has grown disgruntled and nothing has been learned that couldn't have been done over the phone by CAM!"*

*"They are known for direct crime recording something, just because they can't subsequently get hold of the complainer. Again, this just defeats the purpose, as Local Policing, who are already under the cosh, then have the responsibility for following this up!"*

95. We identified that victims of crime are having to repeat themselves, due to duplication of effort and the double/treble handling of the incident by the SC (first contact), Resolution Team (second contact to undertake the Direct Crime Report) and Local Policing (third contact to undertake local visit and enquiry). In the case of a sexual offence, for example, this could result in the complainer having to repeat themselves to a specialist department (fourth contact) to undertake the investigation.



96. The aim of the SCRS is to provide a “more victim orientated approach to the recording of crime”. The practice of members of the public having to repeat themselves on two, three and potentially four occasions to report the circumstances of a crime, is not only inefficient but delivers a poor service and does not comply with the SCRS.
97. We found RTs are not currently able, nor equipped, to undertake the full range of tasks necessary to allow them to retain and conclude the vast majority of crime reports taken through direct crime recording, without the involvement of Local Policing.
98. This is hindered, in some cases, through a lack of training and awareness of the SCRS. A recent review identified approximately 8,400 Crime Reports raised by C3 that resulted in the report subsequently being ‘no-crimed’, following review and enquiries by local policing. In addition, the use of multiple crime recording systems from legacy forces, and the inability to obtain statements from complainers and witnesses remotely, is limiting the effectiveness of RTs.
99. We understand the practice of obtaining statements remotely was undertaken by some RTs, during the pandemic. However, for a variety of reasons, including no clear policy or agreement being in place with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), this practice has now ceased.
100. We understand work on remote statement taking and other types of evidence gathering is planned, which would provide benefits to Local Policing in terms of demand reduction. Understandably this will require engagement and agreement with COPFS.
101. We consider that the RTs are not delivering the intended benefits to Local Policing that they could and should be. During our review, we could not find data to properly assess the impact of the RTs on the number of incidents they had dealt with in their entirety – i.e. incidents that did not need to be forwarded to Local Policing or other departments before being concluded. A better understanding of the impact of the RTs is required to measure their effectiveness.



### **Area for development**

Police Scotland should capture the number of incidents dealt with in their entirety by the Resolution Teams, through the C3 performance framework and outcomes, to ensure their impact on reducing demand in Local Policing is monitored.

102. Overall, we have concluded that working practices and training within the RTs (for direct crime recording, in particular) should be reviewed, to provide a more victim-orientated approach and to reduce the number of Crime Reports being returned to Local Policing Divisions.

### **Recommendation 4**

Police Scotland should review the working practices and training within the Resolution Teams, particularly in relation to direct crime recording, to provide a more victim-orientated approach and to reduce the number of crime reports being returned to Local Policing Divisions or to other areas for completion.

103. The fact that only around half of the 3.4 million yearly contacts to Police Scotland result in an incident being raised (and around 400,000 incidents are recorded as 'non police attendance' (Table 2)), suggests that members of the public are contacting Police Scotland for assistance or advice on a variety of non-policing matters.
104. Such calls may include a request for advice and assistance for matters that may be better addressed by partner agencies including calls for support relating to mental health matters. HMICS intends to examine this latter area, as outlined in our 2022/25 Scrutiny Plan.
105. During our fieldwork we heard evidence of 'demand shift' to Police Scotland from partners agencies as a result of the closure of services during the pandemic. Staff within the SCs reported ongoing difficulties in passing demand back to other agencies with some partners signposting members of the public to contact 101 in the first instance.



### **Case study 3**

*A call received regarding an individual, clearly with mental health issues, refusing to go with paramedics to hospital. GP practice manager was asking for police to become involved, despite the fact there were no police powers to do so (no mental health order was in place and police officers in Scotland have no power to intervene in mental health matters in a private dwelling). The service advisor within C3 Division passed the call to the ACR, which dispatched a police resource to attend. HMICS would consider this an example of an unnecessary police response, where demand has been transferred from SAS.*

### **Case study 4**

*Call received from NHS 24, asking police to attend and undertake a welfare check on an elderly female who may have taken an overdose of tablets, (unconfirmed). The incident was passed to the ACR and Police Scotland contacted Scottish Ambulance Service to have an ambulance attend. As there were no ambulances available, police subsequently attended and confirmed the lady was safe and well. Again, HMICS would consider this an example of an unnecessary police response, where demand has been transferred from NHS 24.*

106. We heard mixed reports of local partnership working and engagement by RTs, with the main partners being identified as local authority anti-social behaviour and social work teams. Some staff within C3 reported difficulties in identifying who the local partners were in different areas. C3 recognise staff may need to be reminded of the need to transfer demand to partners where appropriate, particularly since they have fallen out of the habit of doing so over the past two years.
107. We undertook a review of a range of local authority websites across Scotland and found almost no instances of routine signposting to Police Scotland 101/999. Indeed, we found each of the local authority websites contained easy access and contact details for a range of services for which members of the public may decide to ordinarily contact 101 or 999.



108. This included reporting of anti-social behaviour including neighbour complaints, stray dogs, road/lighting faults, social services, trading standards, parking complaints, litter/fly tipping, reporting of abandoned and untaxed vehicles. Such guidance should assist in ensuring members of the public are able to contact the agency best placed to deal with their enquiry.
109. A common theme throughout our review was the need for police staff working in the SCs and those involved in direct crime recording to be appropriately trained and supported to be able to correctly identify and record incidents, crime types and the most appropriate disposal. This includes contacts from members of the public, where signposting to partner agencies would be a more appropriate disposal.
110. We acknowledge the impact the pandemic had on Police Scotland absorbing call demand, where partner agencies (public, private and third sector) closed their services, either partially or completely. We would expect Police Scotland to remind staff of the importance of members of the public receiving a response from (and directed to) the most appropriate agency. HMICS considers processes should be developed to support staff in this; for example, we heard about the development of a gazetteer function which would assist in the easy identification of services in each geographical area.

#### **Recommendation 5**

Police Scotland should take steps to ensure staff within Area Control Rooms, Service Centres and Resolution Teams are diverting incidents to partner agencies, whenever that agency is better placed to deal with the incident.



## Partnership working

---

111. Police Scotland identified improved partnership working as one of its five strategic benefits of CAM. One of these intended benefits was to reduce unnecessary multi-agency attendance at incidents. For instance, where the matter is the responsibility of another agency, and the matter is in hand, Police Scotland should not attend unless the THRIVE assessment indicates that officers should do so. The intended outcome of improved partnership working is focused on ensuring vulnerable people receive time and appropriate support from the most relevant organisation/s.
112. An estimate of a potential 8.5 per cent reduction in initial deployments of frontline resources as a result of improved partnership working was detailed within the CAM initial business case.
113. We commend the significant levels of engagement that have taken place with external and internal stakeholders during the roll out of each phase of the CAM, including the early discussions with Scottish Government. This engagement intended to provide an explanation of the CAM principles and approach, the drivers for change and the envisaged benefits such change would bring to Police Scotland and wider stakeholders.
114. We learned that relevant internal key stakeholders (including C3, Divisional Commanders, ICT and corporate communications) provided assurances that all were content that pre-go-live work had been completed to their satisfaction.
115. We heard that C3 is often focused on the operational delivery of services, and that engagement between Police Scotland and partners at a strategic and operational level, is often done with the Partnerships, Prevention and Community Wellbeing (PPCW) Division acting as a conduit.



116. Our fieldwork highlighted the challenges Police Scotland encountered as a result of the pandemic. This included having to move away from face-to-face engagement with external partners to ensure compliance with COVID-19 restrictions. However, this was addressed by the introduction of electronic only engagement. HMICS considers this a positive solution to maintaining communications during such a challenging period.
117. During our call audit, we found very little consideration was given to diverting calls to more appropriate organisations. It was evident during fieldwork, that partnership working needs to be reinvigorated as we move out of the pandemic. This includes reminding staff within C3 Division of the need to transfer demand to partners, where appropriate, given the fact they have been less able to do so over the previous two years. HMICS considers the CAM model lends itself well to providing partners with a sound rationale as to when and what demand should be directed to them and expectations should be incorporated into future partnership engagement.
118. We expect Police Scotland and the SPA to explore the reasons why people are contacting the police instead of partners who may be better placed to meet their needs. There is also a need for further engagement between Police Scotland's senior leaders and key partners to set out the realities and decisions made as to where police will no longer continue to attend certain incidents, as part of a more cohesive approach to resource and demand management, as noted in our recent [Assurance Review of Strategic Workforce Planning](#). It was encouraging to learn discussions have already taken place between Police Scotland and COSLA about this; however, HMICS considers that the most effective approach to the wider societal issues lies in a 'whole systems' approach.

#### **Recommendation 6**

Police Scotland and the SPA should progress the engagement with Scottish Government and other strategic partners to ensure service users are being supported by the most appropriate agency.



119. In June 2018, Police Scotland held an initial engagement event attended by 40 partner agencies which included representative groups in respect of:

- Domestic Abuse Victims
- Mental Health
- Children & Young Persons
- Equality & Diversity
- Disability & Accessibility
- Autism
- Missing Persons
- Deafness, Deafened and the hard of hearing communities
- Learning Disability

120. We were given evidence of a draft communication and engagement plan (dated August 2018), which was developed to manage communications with relevant stakeholders. The aim of this plan, which is comprehensive in its detail, was to ensure community needs were understood and fully met.

121. C3 Division has reported that the pandemic and associated challenges negatively impacted on the advances they had made with partnership organisations, but are focusing on resurrecting this work. We also found evidence of confusion in Local Policing regarding the objectives of CAM, including the remit of RTs.

122. We would encourage C3 Division revisiting this engagement as we move out of the pandemic, to renew focus and commitment to the objectives of the CAM. Opportunity should also be afforded for feedback as to the experiences of stakeholders, both internally and externally, as part of this engagement.

123. According to the [Chief Constable's Assessment of Policing Performance 2021/22](#), around 80 per cent of the calls to Police Scotland do not result in a criminal justice outcome. We were told that mental ill health, distress and vulnerability accounts for a significant proportion of the non-crime related calls. Work is underway by Police Scotland to establish a true understanding of this data.



## Mental health pathway

124. The Mental Health Pathway (MHP) is a Scottish Government funded partnership between the SAS, NHS 24 and Police Scotland. Phase 1 saw the establishment of a mental health hub into the NHS 24 call centre intended to create a pathway for Police Scotland to directly refer callers to the NHS without further involvement of police resources.
125. For phase 2, in October 2020, the Scottish Government provided specific funding of £450,000 for Police Scotland to work with NHS 24 and establish a cadre of mental health nurse practitioners within C3 Division, to form part of the RT at Govan, Glasgow. This funding was allocated initially for one year, to pay for six mental health nurse practitioners and associated training and IT costs.
126. The mental health nurse practitioners are employed by NHS 24 and seconded to Police Scotland under terms set out in a memorandum of understanding. Further funding for subsequent years will be dependent on evaluation of the collaboration. At the time of our review, this pilot had only just commenced.
127. A strategic steering group was also established with representation at executive level by Police Scotland, SAS and NHS 24. The aim of this group was to work collaboratively and constructively to refine approaches in respect of referrals through the MHP, providing correct and relevant response and support to meet the needs of individuals.
128. Police Scotland introduced phase 1 of the project in August 2020. Its service advisors began assessing and considering referral criteria to the pathway as part of their THRIVE assessment of calls from those experiencing mental ill health/distress. Where the call met the criteria of the pathway, the service advisor refers the individual/s directly to trained mental health professionals within NHS 24 Mental Health Hub, providing onward access to health-care services. On successful completion of the referral, the incident is closed.



129. This approach has been described by Police Scotland as the first national pathway in the UK, allowing the re-direction of lower level mental health demand into the NHS. Police Scotland carried out simulated and live call referral testing in a controlled manner to ensure the proof of concept could be incrementally introduced in a safe and assured way.
130. The [Preliminary Mental Health Pathway Evaluation](#), jointly compiled by Police Scotland, NHS 24 and the SAS, describes the pathway as a success in enabling the implementation of three interrelated innovations:
- collaborative working;
  - a dedicated telephone helpline between Police Scotland and the Mental Health Hub; and
  - a new care pathway for people presenting to Police Scotland experiencing mental illness/distress and poor mental well-being.
131. The report highlights that, although Police Scotland had gathered a rich dataset of person-level data, it was unable to complete full analysis for the evaluation due to capacity and capability constraints.
132. We are aware there is an intended next stage of the evaluation to examine the full journey of callers using the helpline and their outcomes. It will also include the complete journeys of repeat callers, highlighting their unmet needs and the resource implications for Police Scotland. We await the results of this evaluation.
133. During our review we heard officers and staff within C3 speak positively about the benefits the MHP has brought in respect of service delivery to those in mental health crisis or distress, and reducing the demand on frontline policing.



134. Those interviewed from local policing were positive about the potential of this project, but many officers reported experiencing little impact from the pathway. Many felt there was no change in the volume of mental health incidents and that the reduction anticipated in the CAM for this type of demand had not yet been realised. The main issue reported was that responsibility for responding to mental health related incidents was continually being dealt with by the police as a result of other, more appropriate services, being under-resourced. They also reported a lack of evidence of such calls being diverted to the most appropriate partners at first point of contact.
135. Some of those interviewed within local policing emphasised their dependence on, and appreciation of, local community triage services. This is a result of the minimal impact that the MHP has had on demand, and such local arrangements provide officers with timely support in their decision-making on management of risk when responding to mental-health related incidents (which, they reported, remains a constant). HMICS welcomes the positive steps that have been taken at local level in ensuring people suffering from mental health conditions are provided with the most appropriate service at the earliest opportunity.
136. The aim of this second phase of the project is to ensure that, in every instance, the police response to reported instances of mental ill health/distress that do not initially meet the referral criteria to access the MHP, will be guided by a clinical assessment of mental health need.
137. We were told that the delivery of any benefits from the introduction of mental health nurse practitioners as part of the MHP has been limited by the pandemic. Currently, there is a mental health nurse practitioner successfully assigned to each of the five RTs within Govan as part of the test of change. Those nurses are working in conjunction with dedicated trained mental health nurse police liaison officers to provide specialist support, ensuring the most appropriate response to relevant incidents arising initially in the west geographical area, as per the phased approach.
138. The mental health nurse practitioner and liaison officers are notified of relevant incidents by means of a 'mental health nurse' tag which is applied by the ACR Controller or RT officer dealing with the incident.



139. We learned that it is not the role of the mental health nurse practitioners to routinely speak to members of the public to make any form of assessment of their mental health. However, where appropriate, they will make direct contact with a caller when it is necessary to obtain further information. Some of those interviewed would like to see those discussions become routine prior to any police deployment (this is currently available in some forces in England).
140. It is envisaged this test of change will run until November 2022, to allow sufficient time to carry out a meaningful, informative review and, thereafter, a national roll-out will be considered. HMICS will maintain an interest in the outcome of this review.

### **Distress brief intervention**

141. We also heard details of the Scottish Government funded [Distress Brief Intervention](#), (DBI) programme, which is currently being rolled out across Scotland. This programme is led by Scottish Government and is a further example of local partnership working between Police Scotland, NHS 24, SAS and third sector services in responding to mental health-related incidents.
142. Frontline officers who are trained in delivering DBI Level 1 intervention have the ability to signpost and offer a referral to a DBI Level 2 service. This service is operated by trained third sector staff who contact the individual within 24 hours of receipt of a referral, providing compassionate community-based problem-solving support, wellness and distress management planning, supported connections and signposting for up to 14 days.
143. In April 2020, DBI was expanded and developed into the aforementioned Mental Health Hub to provide a nationwide response for people presenting in distress during the pandemic. This development provided a DBI telephone service rather than face-to-face contact.
144. Our fieldwork identified a lack of engagement between the CAM Project Team and the Scottish Government DBI Programme Board (through the PPCW Division) when developing the MHP. More effective engagement may have presented an opportunity for shared learning in respect of facilitating referral pathways and improving Police Scotland's operational response to people in mental health crisis.



145. Within Police Scotland, DBI is led by the PPCW Division and should not be confused with the MHP. The MHP and DBI are separate entities. Some of those interviewed felt the introduction of the MHP should have been discrete and running parallel to DBI Programme with DBI linked into NHS 24 the same way as the MHP from the beginning.
146. We learned that the PPCW division has recently been invited to the steering group for the MHP and working with the CERP to deliver DBI training to RT members. This progress/collaboration should be encouraged since it will afford opportunities for shared learning as the MHP and DBI further develops. Such progression will also provide RTs with an additional option to respond to those in need.
147. We found during fieldwork an element of confusion and a general lack of knowledge within local policing about the MHP and how to differentiate it from local arrangements. However, good local arrangements, which are proven to be effective in responding to those in mental health crisis or distress, should always be encouraged. Therefore, the MHP and DBI should not be viewed as a replacement for those local arrangements, and C3 Division should revisit communication and engagement with local policing to alleviate such confusion.
148. Despite some scepticism among those interviewed, many welcomed this access to professional advice to RTs to better inform THRIVE assessments and subsequently improve the response/outcome to those in need.
149. We understand work is being progressed by the CERP with 'Direct Partner Referral Pathways' (one of three work-streams) with an implementation date of between November 2021 and November 2022. This work-stream will concentrate on further developing the process of co-location of mental health practitioners into C3, along with other partnerships pathways focused on vulnerability-driven police demand.
150. We commend the progress Police Scotland has made with its partners in respect of the MHP, which is showing signs of early promise. We will watch with interest any further developments of this project with a view to revisiting this during our intended assurance review on the Modernised Contact and Engagement Programme.



151. As previously mentioned, an estimate of a potential 8.5 per cent reduction in initial deployments of frontline resources as a result of improved partnership working was detailed within the CAM initial business case. We could not find evidence of the methodology by which Police Scotland arrived at this percentage, or any measurement to better understand and quantify whether the desired reduction in initial deployments had been realised.
152. We found evidence of acknowledgement from C3 Division, within a briefing paper dated 20th August 2020, of the lack of first contact resolution through collaboration with partners. We also learned through fieldwork that many felt the CAM had not realised the anticipated benefits of diverting demand to partners. We are interested in the outcome of work being carried out by Police Scotland's Demand and Productivity Unit (DPU) aimed at better understanding and quantifying demand on policing from partner organisations.
153. We would also welcome improvements in the sharing of good practice and learning across the country along with communications which are informative and provide clarity on levels of demand taken from frontline by the MHP which may provide better understanding of the impact/outcomes.

**Area for development**

Police Scotland should establish indicators that will measure the effectiveness of its partnership working arrangements in relation to delivering CAM benefits.

154. We wanted to understand if there were any wider pieces of work on how CAM policies and procedures are aligned to those of its partners regarding police attendance/non-attendance, but we found no evidence of this.



155. The consensus among many of those interviewed is that police were considered to be the service of last resort, with partners withdrawing and reducing face-to-face contact and the level of services provided as a result of the pandemic. It was reported that this withdrawal of services shifted demand to Police Scotland, which has negatively impacted on the effectiveness of CAM. In many cases, this demand was from people who would be better served by those partners and cannot, therefore, be addressed by police in isolation.
156. We also heard local officers voice their frustration at spending lengthy periods with people who are physically or mentally unwell, and experiences of SAS passing responsibility for calls to the police as a result of their own resourcing issues, which included conveying individuals with physical injuries to hospital. Some interviewees offered the suggestion of co-locating SAS into Police Scotland Control Centres.
157. There was also mention of partners not knowing their own protocols when calling for police attendance, which some felt should be looked into further. Some of those interviewed believed RTs should be more challenging to partners. HMICS support this position.
158. We were encouraged by the ongoing work between the Police Scotland Collaboration and Transformation Team and SAS to explore operational issues. We were also informed of the Reform Collaboration Officers Group (RFOG) which is currently looking at developing a tri-service gazetteer (see recommendation 19 in our 2015 [Independent Assurance Review Police Scotland – Call Handling Final Report](#) ). The group also has a remit to identify areas for improvement, including changes to the SAS operating model. This is in addition to the Continuous Improvement Team who undertook an independent review of operations and service across the Contact, Command and Control Centres, with the intention of identifying opportunities for continuous improvement. Surprisingly, there was also no mention within this review of partnership working and level of demand diverted to partners at first point of contact.



159. We welcome these collaborations, and consider there should be more involvement and direct engagement from C3 Division in these discussions. Extending this collaboration provides increased opportunity for shared learning and feedback, while providing the ability to challenge issues as they occur, i.e. where partners abdicate responsibilities to the police with regards attendance.



## Workforce

---

160. The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model states that an outstanding organisation regards its people as key stakeholders, has a supporting People Plan, empowers and enables them, and creates an environment where they can thrive and their wellbeing is supported.
161. As part of our assurance review, we sought to assess whether police officers and staff within C3 felt they were both empowered and enabled to perform their respective roles. To do this, we sought evidence from Police Scotland on:
- how the senior management team within C3 Division assessed the perceptions of its people on culture, wellbeing, working conditions, training and continuous professional development (CPD);
  - what measures were in place to help staff within C3 Division feel empowered
  - whether staff felt sufficiently trained and supported to apply THRIVE assessments and deliver the CAM.
162. As part of our evidence-gathering work, C3 Division, through the self-evaluation and documentary submission process, provided a copy of the current version of their [‘People Strategy: Empower, enable and develop our people’](#), dated 2018 - 2021. The plan, first published in August 2019 has an overarching philosophy which is - ‘Putting our people at the heart of the division’ and reflects on the importance of its people, empowering and enabling people to feel confident about their duties, knowing they will be supported by colleagues and line management. These are areas that we examined closely during our fieldwork interviews and they are referred to later in this section.



163. The People Plan is divided into three key themes each with a senior officer/member of police staff lead:

Figure 8 – C3 People Plan themes



Source: Police Scotland

164. For the purposes of this review we have sought to focus on evidence showing the outcomes of 'Inspiring Leadership', which places an emphasis on the need (particularly with the roll out of the CAM) for staff to be empowered and make values-based decisions and 'Positive Environment', which includes ensuring staff are equipped to perform their roles.

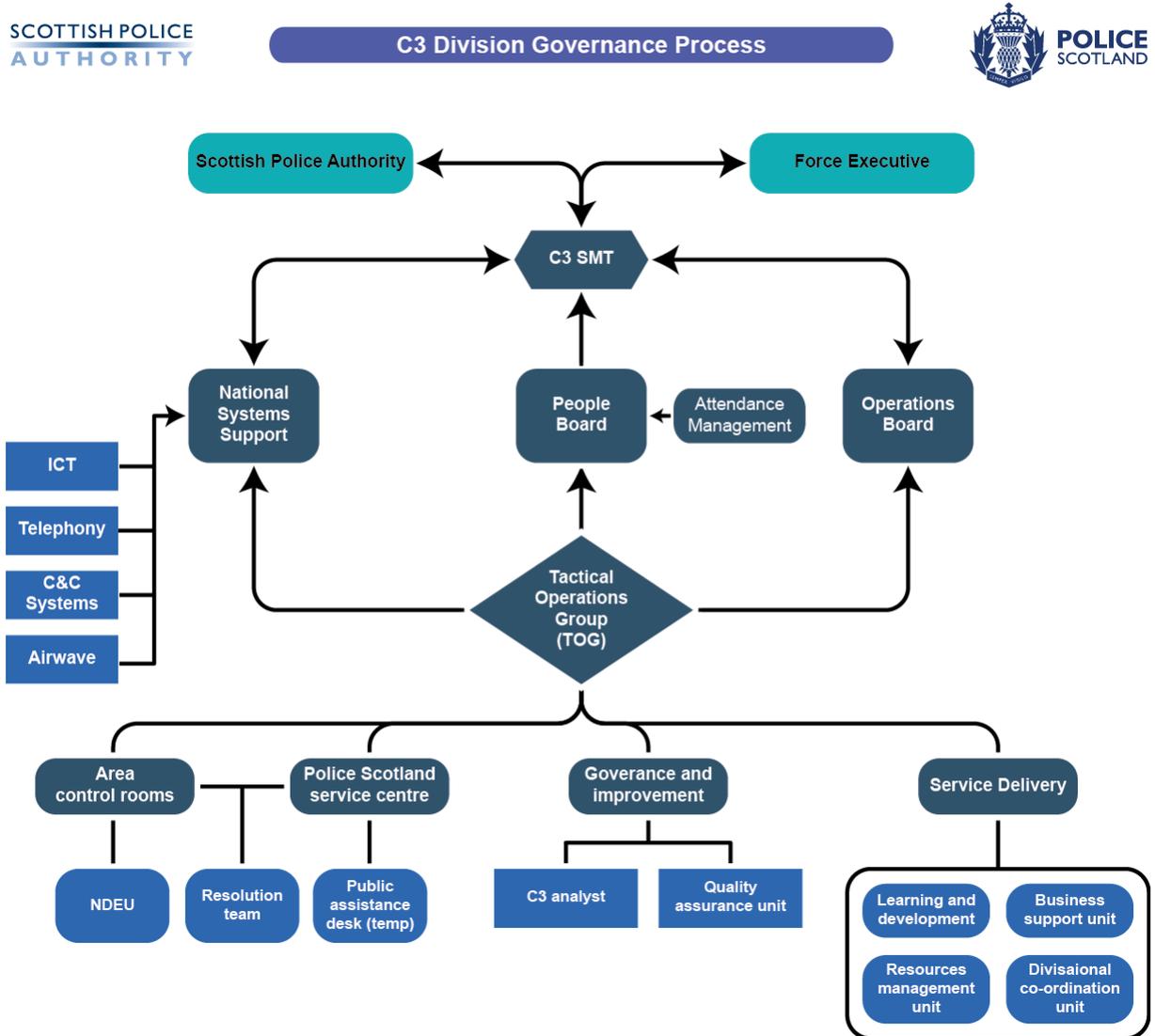
### Measuring perception

165. We have concluded C3 Division has good processes in place by which it seeks to understand the perceptions of its people; including culture, wellbeing, working conditions, training and CPD. This is undertaken at a strategic level through the Your Voice Matters Survey and at a local level through the C3 People Board, chaired by the Superintendent (Support and Service Delivery) as well as bespoke surveys and events, including staff development days. To inform the content of staff development days, C3 Division conducts 'Pulse Surveys' using the Citizen Space platform.



166. There has been good stability within the C3 Divisional Senior Management Team (SMT) in recent years and we found, during our fieldwork, that there is a shared passion in the SMT for the wellbeing, development and training of C3 staff. C3 Division has an established governance structure in place by which it aims to ensure the effective delivery (and monitoring of outcomes) of its people-focused activities.

Figure 9 -



Source: Police Scotland



167. In terms of assessing how C3 gauges the perceptions of its people, we were referred to the results of the Police Scotland Your Voice Matters Survey, which was undertaken by Durham University Business School in September 2021. This was a force-wide survey conducted during the pandemic, which received 7,389 responses (31 per cent response rate) from individuals in Police Scotland. The survey results covered a wide range of issues, including (of note to this review), the contrasting impacts of leadership styles on the fear of making mistakes. Results showed that 63 per cent of police officers and 58 per cent of police staff reported experiencing 'being put down or treated in a condescending manner', with varying degrees of regularity. No local results were contained in the survey feedback for C3 Division.
168. 'Smart Thinking' is the Police Scotland suggestion scheme which is open to all police officers and staff to submit ideas on how improvements could be made across the organisation. Ideas are triaged to the appropriate business area by the PSOS Continuous Improvement Team and sent to the relevant point of contact for progression. The group meets bi-monthly and reports to the PSOS Continuous Improvement Lead, Head of Portfolio Management and Chief Digital and Information Officer. C3 Division is included as a core member of the group.
169. The current action log we reviewed has no actions that relate to C3 Division and the meeting note provided, for the meeting of 9 February 2022 has no mention of C3 Division. The February overview report provides a breakdown of divisions who have submitted ideas for improvement. C3 staff have submitted five ideas to the process, but conversely, the number of ideas raised and passed to C3 Division for progression is higher.
170. The documentary submission shows C3 Division staff have made a low number of continuous improvement submissions via the SMART thinking portal; however, this submission rate is on a par with most other divisions in Police Scotland.



171. C3 Division runs annual staff development days, and to inform and tailor the content of each towards staff needs, also conducts 'Pulse Surveys' using the Citizen Space platform. We were provided with evidence of three separate surveys, conducted in 2020, used to gauge employee perceptions.

- There were 67 respondents to the C3 Employee Equality Diversity and Inclusion Pulse Survey Evaluation, which was conducted via Citizen Space in June and July 2021.

**41** per cent found C3 to be an inclusive workplace;

**38** per cent said C3 is supportive and provides opportunity for a good work/life balance; and

**28** per cent said they were comfortable with bringing their whole self to work as they believed C3 provided the right environment to thrive.

- In December 2021, C3 Division opened a Citizen Space Survey to seek views and ideas from staff on what they would like to see incorporated into the forthcoming C3 Division Development Day in February 2022. Following this event, a further survey was undertaken to understand the outcomes. It was noted both C3 Division staff and external divisions attended the event, with representatives from CJSD, Operational Support Division, Specialist Crime Division, PPCW, A, P, Q, V, P and D Divisions.

Of those attending the development day, 55 per cent found the inputs beneficial to their career and self-development.

- The C3 Division Operation Urram<sup>7</sup> Survey was conducted between 25 November and 9 December 2021 and sought views from officers and staff on communications, roles, responsibilities and wellbeing. It received 54 responses.

---

<sup>7</sup> Operation Urram was name of the multi-agency operation to facilitate the COP (Conference of the Parties) 26 meeting in Glasgow in 2021.



172. HMICS considers the use of internal staff surveys to be a positive step, aligned to the objectives of the C3 Division People Plan, but considers the submission rates to the survey to be very low i.e. 67 respondents to the 'Equality Diversity and Inclusion Survey' and 54 to the 'Urram Survey'.

#### **Area for development**

C3 Division should seek to improve staff survey submission rates, to reap the maximum benefits.

#### **Notifiable incident process**

173. The Notifiable Incident (NI) process was implemented following our 2015 [Independent Assurance Review of Police Scotland Call Handling](#). A Notifiable incident is defined "as any incident where the effectiveness of the C3 Division response is likely to have a significant impact on the reputation of the Division, Police Scotland or our partners and from which learning could potentially be obtained as a result of the manner in which it was dealt with". The process aims to ensure experience is shared across C3 Division, from incidents that have either been dealt with exceptionally well, or where there are areas for improvement.

174. The C3 Division Notifiable Incident Annual Report provides an overview and process chart by which a NI is identified, through to recording, investigation and tracking of improvement action where appropriate. In the report there is a focus on identifying learning opportunities.

175. In 2021 there were 129 NIs recorded, representing 0.006 per cent of calls received, which is consistent with previous years. Nine learning opportunities were identified. Each NI form is categorised and assigned up to two key themes. In 2021, the highest theme (53 per cent) was 'not following procedure', followed by 'failure to recognise risk' (24 per cent). The failure to recognise risk was an improvement on the previous year (39 per cent) which is attributed in the report to a better understanding of CAM.



176. Failure to recognise risk is defined as *‘poor application of THRIVE principles leading to an inappropriate grading or response. Includes failing to properly identify domestic, child protection etc., or act on THRIVE information.’*
177. The SC have the highest number of NI forms attributed to them; however, as the report states, this is likely due to the number of contacts handled.
178. During our fieldwork interviews the majority of officers and staff we spoke to said they felt empowered to perform their roles. However, despite assurances from C3 Division Senior Management and the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner (PIRC), some officers and staff reported being scared of making wrong decisions, lest there should be an adverse outcome from that decision. Examples given included a complaint about the police, and a death following police contact.
179. We found evidence of a degree of risk aversion and unwillingness to transfer demand to partners. In the interviews, we found evidence of a culture of wanting to do/prioritise everything, where policing becomes the service of last resort. There is a risk that this culture can result in an organisation becoming paralysed, and unable to cope with unfettered demand.



180. Examples provided included:

**ACR staff**

*“There’s definitely a fear factor involved, staff are scared of making the wrong decision, maybe not at the time, but further down the line if something else was to unfold/happen, if they were supported more this may not be the case.”*

**RT staff**

*“Service advisors do not feel empowered to close calls without a police officer being sighted on them. This can result in incidents going on which are not appropriate.”*

*“Confidence comes with experience in policing example of officer in the Resolution Team with only three years’ service ‘bending over backwards for something which ultimately was not a police matter.”*

**Local Policing Inspector**

*“Personally feels empowered to challenge THRIVE assessments, has never been challenged on this. Feels there is a tendency for the Resolution Teams to be risk-averse.”*

**Service Centre staff**

*“Absolutely feel empowered and enabled. Before CAM you had to follow processes, believes this is one of the key and overlooked benefits of the model, empowered staff are enthusiastic staff and are productive staff.”*



181. A common theme during our fieldwork from officers and staff in the RTs was the lack of training provided specific to the role of the RTs. When CAM was first rolled out, C3 utilised both CAM ‘champions’ and ‘floor walkers’, knowledgeable and experienced officers who would be on hand to support staff, and were available for advice. We understand the practice of having floor walkers was impacted by the pandemic and no longer exists.
182. Overall, we judge C3 has robust processes in place to capture organisational learning, both through its own Quality Assurance Framework and Notable Incident Process. We strongly commend this approach; however, C3 Division should continue to further develop a culture of learning and continuous improvement among its officers and staff.

**Area for development**

Police Scotland should continue to enhance a culture of learning and continuous improvement among its officers and staff.

183. Our fieldwork indicated very little or no awareness of the DBI service within C3 Division and in Local Policing, although we understand there is an intention by Police Scotland to have RTs trained in DBI. Concerns were also expressed by some we spoke to that the PPCW Division, as the force strategic lead for mental health, did not have an awareness of the training provided to C3 Division staff regarding the MHP.
184. At the conclusion of day 1 in THRIVE training, officers and staff are provided with an awareness presentation on the MHP. The purpose of this is to outline the necessary criteria in which an adult caller would benefit from mental health support (i.e. where there is no immediate threat to life and any other reason for police involvement, beyond the apparent need for mental health support). We found staff within C3 Division were aware of the service provided by NHS 24 and were comfortable in using the service where appropriate.



185. As reference at paragraph 123, the Chief Constable's [Annual Assessment of Policing 2021/22](#) states that around 80 per cent of the calls to Police Scotland do not result in a criminal justice outcome and the force continues to work with health colleagues and others, to provide the best response at first point of contact. It is therefore important that, as the main touchpoint for the service, C3 Division staff have an appropriate level of training and awareness about resolution options best suited to the needs of the caller. We found C3 Division staff currently receive no enhanced mental health awareness training (beyond the ability to signpost to the MHP). This, coupled with the lack of awareness of the availability of the DBI, is an area where C3 Division needs to take steps to ensure officers and staff are properly trained and aware of all available support, particularly given the significant number of calls that officers and staff deal with.

#### **Area for development**

Police Scotland service advisors and C3 Division staff should receive enhanced mental health training, including awareness of the Distress Brief Intervention.

186. The C3 Division environment, across all departments (i.e. SC, RTs and ACRs) is heavily dependent on information and communications technology (ICT), with staff requiring access to multiple force systems on a daily basis to perform core tasks.

187. We heard evidence from RT that staff they had difficulties accessing core police systems, which prohibited them from performing their roles effectively. Feedback provided included the following.

*“IT can be frustrating, can log on, but cannot access emails, sometimes have to reset computers three times to get them to work.”*

*“Crime file can be quite clunky to use, Unify takes a quarter of the time and it would be beneficial to have this in place across the country”*



*“Is difficult to know who is responsible for what locally, such as different council departments, and it can take a while to look up a number. It is often easier to put a call on and let controllers use their local knowledge to resolve it. Internet speed at the service centre is an issue and looking up a number can often take 2-3 minutes. Computers also operate different versions of outlook, so some are slower than others. The ‘What 3 Words’ application doesn’t load on some terminals and had to use my personal mobile phone on occasion to get someone’s location.”*

#### **Recommendation 7**

Police Scotland must improve the resilience and capability of its core police ICT systems to ensure C3 Division staff have efficient access to the information required to perform their roles.



## Scottish Police Authority governance

---

188. Our independent assurance review of CAM also considered how effectively the SPA exercised its governance role over the implementation of the CAM.
189. Since the creation of the SPA and Police Scotland in 2013, HMICS, in our annual reports and thematic inspections has highlighted the need for the SPA to exercise appropriate levels of scrutiny and to hold the Chief Constable to account. Given the strategic importance of the management of call handling, the routing of demand and the clear impact it has on public trust and confidence, the role of the SPA was to provide appropriate oversight and challenge to Police Scotland through the roll out of CAM.
190. Improving public contact and engagement was one of the core strategic objectives of the SPA and Police Scotland's ['2026 Serving a Changing Scotland'](#) – a 10 year strategy for policing in Scotland. This was first published in 2017 and included the transformation of the contact and resolution model to enable Police Scotland to recognise and respond appropriately to the needs of individuals and communities.
191. At the SPA Board meeting in May 2019, Police Scotland updated the SPA on plans for the implementation of the 'proof of concept' of CAM in Lanarkshire and Dumfries and Galloway Divisions during the summer of 2019. The update included an explanation of the concept of a 'THRIVE' assessment, response options, the role of the RTs and details of the range of assurance activities and 'go live' governance.
192. In June 2019, the first meeting of the SPA CAM Oversight Group was convened, chaired by a SPA Board Member (the then chair of the SPA Policing Performance Committee). The purpose of the Oversight Group was to provide an advisory forum through which progress updates on the development and implementation of CAM were provided to the SPA on a regular basis. We attended the group as an observer and the Terms of Reference (ToR) made clear the group's commitment to provide a formal reporting structure and assurance to the SPA Board during the project implementation phase.



193. The ToR notes the key areas of governance and assurance to the SPA Board were:

- Overall CAM change programme assurance
- CAM risk management assurance
- C3 performance assurance and reporting of significant performance variation/trigger-points requiring action
- Review performance indicators that cover both operational C3 performance and corporate functions
- Updates on CAM internal and external stakeholder-related communications and engagement

194. In total, the CAM Oversight Group convened on 11 occasions, the last of which coincided with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. In common with other oversight groups held since, meetings were conducted in private. During our fieldwork, we interviewed representatives from Police Scotland who attended the Oversight Group. These individuals reported they found the level of governance and scrutiny exerted by the SPA to be of a high standard, with appropriate challenge and questioning being delivered by group members. It also afforded a 'safe' environment to discuss matters which required improvement.

195. We noted that the SPA had a clear desire to receive performance reporting to monitor outcomes and benefits from the roll out of CAM, but, from the outset received only ad-hoc performance reporting on a month-to-month basis from Police Scotland with no agreed standard or benchmark.



196. At the first meeting, Police Scotland presented the Oversight Group with a 'CAM Evaluation Matrix' upon which management information, linked to business benefits could be reported internally and externally during the rollout of the CAM. The proposed management information was:

Table 4 – CAM evaluation information

<b>External reporting</b>
Average answer time not exceeding 10 seconds for emergency calls (999)
Average answer time for not exceeding 40 seconds for non-emergency calls (101)
Call volumes
Incident volumes
Call routing (I, P, S, N)
Notable incidents
User satisfaction (commissioned externally)
Average dispatch times for 'immediate calls'
Prompt calls dispatched within 4 hours
<b>Internal reporting</b>
Comparison of default grading and CAM grading
LPA arising in CR being raised
Diary compliance (% , reason and deferral numbers)
Grading changes (% and reason)
Training - suitability
Call closure codes (partnership signposting, intelligence, FPOC, RT involvement)
Calls resulting in incident creation (%)
Incident closure codes (RT qualifier including Concern for person and KPS Disclosure)
Number of DCRs recorded
Number of CRs suitable for finalising within RT
Number of transfers from RT to Local Policing
Immediate/prompt grading compliance (dispatch time)
Average call time for RT (inc DCR)
Number of calls managed by RT
Warm transfer to RT & DCR (%)
Qualitative information from RT regarding capacity and capability
Initial local policing deployments (%)
Number of successful forensic service referrals
<b>Local policing benefits (examples only)</b>
<i>Number of officers redeployed in support of local policing plans</i>
<i>Reduction in average time required to finalise crime reports</i>
<i>Reduction in outstanding warrants for execution</i>
<i>Reduction in absence from stress and other mental health related conditions</i>

Source: SPA CAM Oversight Group



197. This management information would have provided the Oversight Group with a wide range of indicators upon which the success of the roll out of the CAM could be judged. However, it became apparent the challenge was that Police Scotland were unable to provide appropriate baseline (pre-CAM) information upon which any performance improvements could ultimately be assessed, and the evaluation matrix was never used.
198. The CAM performance and benefits reporting was remitted to the SPA Policing Performance Committee for integration into the quarterly performance report.
199. However, these reports did not (and currently do not) include management information relating to the impact of, for example, the RTs, LPAs, partner agency referrals or callers routed to the MHP, all of which are key components of CAM. We understand the STORM system has the ability to record incidents that have been resolved either partially or entirely by RTs by adding incident 'qualifiers'. These qualifiers were used during the early roll out of CAM, but this practice has since stopped due to the potential for the qualifiers to be removed inadvertently at the point of incident closure.
200. Overall, we found the governance exerted by the SPA over CAM to be effective in assisting Police Scotland to decide on the continual roll out of CAM. SPA may have benefitted from a better understanding of the full operational impact of the introduction of CAM. While there is evidence of reporting structures through the Oversight Group, the SPA's scrutiny was based on ad hoc reports and verbal updates provided by Police Scotland, which were inconsistent in content, with no set content or monitoring of outcomes and business benefits. The Oversight Group would have benefitted from having a forward looking work plan, similar to those used throughout the SPA Committees.
201. HMICS considers that the Oversight Group would also have benefitted from having a representative from Local Policing to provide a better understanding of user experience on the front line.



## Appendix 1 – glossary

---

<b>ACR</b>	Area Control Room
<b>C3</b>	Contact Command and Control
<b>CAM</b>	Contact Assessment Model
<b>CCTV</b>	Closed-Circuit Television
<b>CERP</b>	Contact, Engagement and Resolution Project
<b>CJSD</b>	Criminal Justice Services Division
<b>Contact Us</b>	The various means by which members of the public can contact Police Scotland
<b>COP26</b>	The UK hosted the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow on 31 October – 13 November 2021.
<b>COPFS</b>	Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal's Service
<b>COSLA</b>	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus
<b>Crimefile</b>	One of the crime management systems used by Police Scotland
<b>DBI</b>	Distress Debrief Intervention
<b>DPU</b>	Police Scotland's Demand and Productivity Unit
<b>EFQM</b>	European Foundation for Quality Management
<b>FBC</b>	Full Business Case
<b>HMICS</b>	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>IVPD</b>	Interim Vulnerable Person's Database
<b>LPA</b>	Local Policing Appointment
<b>MCE</b>	Modernised Contact and Engagement
<b>MHP</b>	Mental Health Pathway
<b>NDM</b>	National Decision Model
<b>NHS</b>	National Health Service
<b>NHS24</b>	National Health Service 24 hour service
<b>NI</b>	Notifiable Incident
<b>PAD</b>	Public Assistance Desk
<b>PIRC</b>	Police Investigations and Review Commissioner for Scotland
<b>PPCW</b>	Partnerships, Prevention and Community Wellbeing
<b>QAU</b>	Quality Assurance Unit



<b>RT</b>	Resolution Team
<b>SAS</b>	Scottish Ambulance Service
<b>SC</b>	Service Centre
<b>SCRS</b>	Scottish Crime Recording Standard
<b>SLB</b>	Strategic Leadership Board
<b>SMT</b>	Senior Management Team
<b>SPA</b>	Scottish Police Authority
<b>STORM</b>	Police Scotland command and control system
<b>THRIVE</b>	Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigative opportunity, Vulnerability, and Engagement
<b>THRIVE-C</b>	THRIVE-COVID
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>Unify</b>	One of the crime management systems used by Police Scotland
<b>URRAM</b>	Operation Urram was name of the multi-agency operation to facilitate the COP (Conference of the Parties) 26 meeting in Glasgow in 2021
<b>What3Words</b>	<a href="https://www.what3words.com">what3words.com</a>



**HMICS** HM INSPECTORATE OF  
CONSTABULARY IN SCOTLAND

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland  
1st Floor, St Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

Tel: 0131 244 5614

Email: [hmic@gov.scot](mailto:hmic@gov.scot)

Web: [www.hmics.scot](http://www.hmics.scot)

### **About Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland**

HMICS operates independently of Police Scotland, the Scottish Police Authority and the Scottish Government. Under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, our role is to review the state, effectiveness and efficiency of Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority. We support improvement in policing by carrying out inspections, making recommendations and highlighting effective practice.

© Crown copyright 2022

978-1-910165-69-0

HMICS/2022/03