
HM INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY IN SCOTLAND

Thematic Review of CONTEST Prepare 2013

June 2014





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HM Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) is established under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012¹ 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. We have a statutory duty to ensure that the Chief Constable and the Authority 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 Authority 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 Authority and the Chief Constable must provide us with such assistance and co-operation as we may require to carry out our functions.
- When we publish a report, the Authority and the Chief Constable must also consider what we have found and take such measures, if any, as they think fit.
- 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.
- We work with other inspectorates and agencies across the public sector and coordinate 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 on what we find.

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

This Thematic Review was undertaken by HMICS in terms of Section 74(2)(a) of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and this report is laid before the Scottish Parliament in terms of Section 79(3) of the Act.

1 Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, Chapter 11.

2 <http://www.hmics.org/publications/corporate-strategy-2014-2017>



Contents

Our Review	5
Key Findings	7
Recommendations	8
Summary	
CONTEST in Scotland	10
Police Reform	12
HMICS Legacy Recommendations	13
A Thematic Review of CONTEST Prepare	14
Appendix One – Methodology	16
Appendix Two – Glossary	18



Our Review

The aim of this Thematic Review was to follow-up on the progress made against recommendations from previous HMICS CONTEST inspections AND to assess how Police Scotland is currently prepared to respond to and recover from a terrorist incident.

CONTEST³ is the United Kingdom's (UK) counter-terrorism (CT) strategy and provides a comprehensive framework for counter-terrorism across the following four strands of work:

- **Pursue:** the investigation and disruption of terrorist attacks
- **Prevent:** work to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and extremism
- **Protect:** improving our protective security to stop a terrorist attack
- **Prepare:** working to minimise the impact of an attack and to recover from it as quickly as possible

HMICS previously conducted thematic inspections of both CONTEST Prevent (2008) and CONTEST Prepare (2011).⁴ We made a number of recommendations to the eight police forces and agencies responsible for the policing delivery of CONTEST in Scotland at that time. Progress against these recommendations was coordinated by the Scottish Guardian Group, which represented all legacy forces and agencies under the auspices of the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS), prior to the establishment of Police Scotland on April 2013. Since the creation of Police Scotland, the responsibility for the policing delivery of CONTEST passed to the new single service, together with responsibility for discharging legacy recommendations from both HMICS reports.

Given the creation of Police Scotland, the importance of CONTEST and the proximity to the Commonwealth Games 2014, HMICS considered that this thematic review of CONTEST Prepare was appropriate. Our fieldwork took place during September and October 2013 which was only six months after the creation of Police Scotland and our findings should be considered within the context of this major reform. The review nonetheless provided a timely opportunity to check progress against our previous HMICS reports and objectively assess the effectiveness of the new national and local policing structures needed to deliver CONTEST.

3 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/302155/CONTESTannualreport2013.pdf

4 HMICS Thematic Inspection 'The police response to CONTEST Prevent in Scotland' dated 2008, and the joint HMICS, NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (QIS) and Scottish Fire and Rescue Advisory Unit (SFRAU) Thematic Inspection of CONTEST Prepare dated 2011. Both inspection reports were classified 'RESTRICTED' due to the nature of the subject matter and not published across the wider public domain



The methodology used in this Thematic Review is summarised in Appendix One.

This Thematic Review was led by Stephen Whitelock and supported by Justine Menzies both from HMICS. My sincere thanks to all who have contributed to this work.

Derek Penman QPM

HM Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland

June 2014



Key Findings

- We are satisfied that of the original eight CONTEST Prevent (2008) recommendations; all eight are now considered closed and discharged.
- We are satisfied that of the original seven CONTEST Prepare (2011) recommendations; all seven are now considered closed and discharged.
- We found that post reform, the CONTEST landscape is more consistent across policing in Scotland compared with previous legacy structures and the foundations are in place for the continued development of CONTEST.
- We recognised the positive partnership working between Police Scotland and other organisations and agencies in developing the response and recovery from a terrorist event.
- We recognised productive working such as the establishment of a single Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism Unit (OCCTU), the establishment of a Single Point of Assessment (SPOA), the use of counter-terrorism skills champions and the multi-agency Counter Terrorism Organisational Learning and Development (OLD) Group to share lessons learned from incidents and reviews.
- We are reassured by the new governance structures established in relation to CONTEST and with the introduction of a new national multi-agency counter-terrorism implementation plan that there is clear direction and governance for the policing delivery of CONTEST.

We assess that Police Scotland, working with others, is prepared to respond to and recover from a terrorist incident.



Recommendations

As with all inspections, we have acknowledged a number of areas of effective practice and identified eight recommendations to help improve the delivery of CONTEST Prepare.

- We recommend that the Police Scotland CONTEST Board seek assurance from each of the 14 local policing divisions that robust arrangements are in place to deliver outcome-based activities in support of CONTEST. (Recommendation 1)
- We recommend that Police Scotland provide further guidance to divisional counter-terrorism leads on the type and degree of information that could be shared for a common purpose with partners in support of CONTEST. (Recommendation 2)
- We recommend that a review is initiated of the benefits or otherwise of having Police Scotland chair the CONTEST Multi-Agency Strategic Board, given that CONTEST should not be regarded as the sole responsibility of policing and requires multi-agency commitment. (Recommendation 3)
- We recommend that Police Scotland and Forensic Services, Scottish Police Authority, finalise the draft *Scottish Counter Terrorism Forensic Strategy* and test arrangements in advance of the Commonwealth Games 2014. (Recommendation 4)
- We recommend that Police Scotland in conjunction with Forensic Services, Scottish Police Authority, undertake joint strategic and scenario planning to identify operational risks and future gaps in service provision. The outcome will highlight the requirements of Police Scotland relating to forensic services and the future capacity and capability needs of Forensic Services. (Recommendation 5)
- We recommend that in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, an options appraisal be undertaken on the benefits of data integration of the three independent specialist resource data systems. (Recommendation 6)



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- We recommend that the approach undertaken by the Counter Terrorism Organisational Learning and Development Group to capture both organisational and individual learning and development be considered across other areas of business assessed as high risk by Police Scotland. (Recommendation 7)
 - We recommend that Police Scotland and local partners work together and consider a localised response to CONTEST through local policing plans (LPP) and single outcome agreements (SOA). (Recommendation 8)



Summary

CONTEST in Scotland

1. CONTEST is the United Kingdom's (UK) counter-terrorism (CT) strategy and provides a comprehensive framework for counter-terrorism across the following four strands of work. Collectively, these are referred to as the "Four P" strands:
 - **Pursue:** the investigation and disruption of terrorist attacks
 - **Prevent:** work to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and extremism
 - **Protect:** improving our protective security to stop a terrorist attack
 - **Prepare:** working to minimise the impact of an attack and to recover from it as quickly as possible.
2. Counter-terrorism policy and legislation is reserved to the Westminster Government, but many aspects of preparation, prevention and dealing with the consequence of a terrorist act in Scotland would be managed by the Scottish Government and local agencies working in close partnership with Police Scotland.
3. The threat from terrorism continues to evolve ranging from domestic extremism, the continued support for dissident Irish republican activity to the radicalisation of individuals embracing extreme religious or political views who aspire to or commit acts of terrorism. Scotland is not immune from such activity and Police Scotland, in partnership with other agencies and organisations, must be prepared to respond to a terrorist event.
4. On 1 April 2012 the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 created Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The establishment of the single police service has seen the blending of Scotland's counter-terrorism and organised crime assets into the Specialist Crime Division (SCD), and these have already responded positively to live operational incidents over recent months.



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- 5. Alongside the reform of police and fire services in Scotland, the governance arrangements for CONTEST in Scotland have been restructured and a new implementation plan has been developed across all “Four P” strands. This provides a platform for relevant partners, such as local authorities, and emergency responders, to own activity under the strands in their sector or institution.
 - 6. Scotland’s emergency services, and Local and Regional Resilience Partnership structures have successfully tested their response to major incidents and subsequent consequence management. This took place with a backdrop of the upcoming Commonwealth Games and Ryder Cup, and planning continues at pace with the continued emphasis upon delivering safe, secure and peaceful events.



Police Reform

7. Prior to the creation of Police Scotland on 1 April 2013, the responsibility for all policing aspects of CONTEST in Scotland fell to the eight legacy police forces and the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency (SCDEA). Actual delivery of the operational policing response to the threat from terrorism was coordinated by the Scottish Guardian Group, which represented all legacy police forces and the SCDEA under the auspices of the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS).
8. Since the establishment of Police Scotland, the responsibility for the policing delivery of CONTEST passed to the new single service.
9. The Scottish Police Authority (SPA) was created under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and is responsible for maintaining policing, promoting the policing principles, continuous improvement of policing and holding the Chief Constable to account. Both Police Scotland and the SPA face a significant challenge in terms of delivering financial savings, maintaining policing services and restructuring from eight legacy territorial police forces into a single integrated service.
10. The new Scottish policing landscape has 14 local policing divisions, each headed by a Divisional Commander. Complementing local policing is an Operational Support Division (OSD) and a Specialist Crime Division (SCD) providing specialist policing functions including the roles of CONTEST coordinator and a national CONTEST Prevent coordinator.
11. A programme of change was implemented with policy and direction set by the senior executive at Police Scotland with specialist support provided by subject matter experts which included a series of internal briefings and guidance documents. The outcome was the introduction of new CONTEST governance structures locally, regionally and nationally.
12. The new structures provide an effective platform for the consistent policing delivery of CONTEST while facilitating local engagement with key partners. Our findings, six months into the establishment of Police Scotland, paint a positive picture in terms of progress.



HMICS Legacy Recommendations

13. HMICS previously conducted thematic inspections of both CONTEST Prevent (2008) and CONTEST Prepare (2011). We made a number of recommendations to the eight police forces and agencies responsible for the policing delivery of CONTEST in Scotland at that time.
14. Progress against these recommendations was coordinated by the Scottish Guardian Group until the creation of Police Scotland on 1 April 2013, when the latter assumed responsibility for discharging the legacy recommendations from both HMICS reports.
15. We conducted a review of progress made against all legacy HMICS CONTEST recommendations. This included an assessment of the action taken by those responsible for the delivery of CONTEST prior to the establishment of Police Scotland. It also included an assessment of the response provided by Police Scotland. We reviewed each of our legacy recommendations and formed an assessment on whether it still required further action ("open") or whether there was sufficient evidence to conclude that it had been fully completed or was no longer relevant ("closed"). We concluded that:
 - Of the original eight CONTEST Prevent (2008) recommendations; ALL eight are now considered closed and discharged.
 - Of the original seven CONTEST Prepare (2011) recommendations; ALL seven are now considered closed and discharged.
16. **HMICS is therefore satisfied that all the relevant learning from our previous CONTEST thematic inspections has been taken forward and discharged. There are no outstanding legacy recommendations for Police Scotland – only those new recommendations made under this review remain to be progressed.**



A Thematic Review of CONTEST Prepare

17. The second phase of our inspection focused on CONTEST Prepare. During our inspection we saw that following the merger of eight Scottish police forces into Police Scotland, different legacy processes, systems and language existed which led to variation in interpretation of national guidance. We were reassured that as a priority the senior executive of Police Scotland provided clear direction establishing new governance structures to deliver CONTEST across Police Scotland.
18. We found that the rate of progress in terms of introducing robust structures varied across the 14 local policing divisions. A number of divisions had mature and effective processes whilst other divisions, through their Divisional counter-terrorism leads, had a journey ahead to transform legacy organisational culture into an operating environment that delivers CONTEST in an effective and consistent manner.
19. During our inspection, staff were preparing for migration to the new Scottish Crime Campus at Gartcosh; a purpose built facility shared by partners responsible for tackling serious organised crime and terrorism. We recognise that the Crime Campus provides an excellent opportunity to further develop the concept of multi-agency collaboration and coordination in tackling serious organised crime and terrorism.
20. Throughout the inspection we saw that people were both passionate and professional in their role and evidenced many areas of productive working including:
 - The establishment of a single Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism Unit (OCCTU) which provides a platform for covert specialist teams and investigators to hone their skills in the pursuit of serious organised crime groups. Furthermore, the operational flexibility to deploy the same specialist skills to counter a terrorist threat provides added value. This is an effective and efficient use of highly skilled resources and provides opportunities for enhanced interoperability with other agencies.
 - The establishment of a Single Point of Assessment (SPOA) including the Development and Analysis Team provides an overview across legacy operating platforms and processes. We saw that the SPOA acts as a recognised single point of contact for external partners and also provides to key decision makers an early assessment of information and intelligence that has a counter terrorism/domestic extremism theme.



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- Counter-terrorism skills champions are in place, responsible for monitoring and reviewing operational needs across a number of core areas including: the counter-terrorism police operations room (CTPOR), counter-terrorism investigators and the Scottish Terrorist Detention Centre (STDC). This function ensures that the capacity and capability levels of specialist counter-terrorism roles are regularly monitored.
 - We found that with the introduction of the Operational Support Division 'events calendar', a more informed picture of public order events across the country was provided, enabling forward planning and engagement with local policing divisions in terms of the operational deployment of resources.
 - During our inspection we attended a meeting of the multi-agency Counter Terrorism Organisational Learning and Development (OLD) Group. Members discussed and examined issues that emerged from operational reviews, debriefs and inspections and lessons learned from the reviews are then fed back into the business. We recognise this approach to be particularly productive and recommend that this method for organisational and individual learning and development be considered across other areas of business assessed as high risk by Police Scotland.
 - We recognise the positive partnership working between Police Scotland and other organisations and agencies in developing the response and recovery from a terrorist event.
21. It is clear that in the first year of operation there has been considerable activity undertaken by Police Scotland in establishing new governance structures whilst encouraging a locally tailored response. The CONTEST landscape is more consistent across policing in Scotland compared with previous structures and the foundations are in place for the continued development of CONTEST.
22. **Overall, HMICS assess that Police Scotland, working with others, is prepared to respond to and recover from a terrorist incident.**

Appendix One – Methodology

In completing our review we carried out desk-top analysis of the response to the previous recommendations. We also conducted a number of interviews with police officers and police staff predominately from the counter-terrorism portfolio.

Our second phase fieldwork incorporated observations at operational meetings and training events including a series of interviews and mini-focus groups with:

- the Assistant Chief Constables responsible for Local Policing, Organised Crime and Counter-Terrorism and Operational Support
- the Divisional counter-terrorism leads and CONTEST Prepare leads across all 14 local policing divisions
- the Deputy Chief Constable and Assistant Chief Constable Commonwealth Games 2014 planning team
- the Director Forensic Services and Criminal Justice, Scottish Police Authority.

This approach enabled us to gather a range of evidence on the quality of the leadership, structures and processes in place to deliver CONTEST Prepare.



High level themes	Key questions
Leadership and governance	Are there clearly defined and commonly understood structures, roles and responsibilities for the delivery of CONTEST Prepare?
Capacity and capability	Are there arrangements in place to assess counter-terrorism capacity and capability to respond to and recover from a terrorist incident?
Planning and business continuity management	Is there adequate planning and exercising for a terrorist threat?
Interoperability and mobilisation	Are there arrangements in place to mobilise resources and achieve interoperability?
Information sharing and communications	Are there information sharing and communication arrangements in place and are lessons learned from incidents and exercises incorporated into plans and shared across the service?



Appendix Two – Glossary

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACC OCCT	Assistant Chief Constable Organised Crime and Counter-Terrorism
ACPOS	Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland
CG 2014	Commonwealth Games 2014
CONTEST	UK Government Counter-Terrorism Strategy
CT	Counter-Terrorism
CTPOR	Counter-Terrorism Police Operations Room
DE	Domestic Extremism
FS	Forensic Services
HMICS	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland
LPP	Local Policing Plans
OLD	Organisational Learning and Development
OCCTU	Organised Crime and Counter-Terrorism Unit
OSD	Operational Support Division
SCD	Specialist Crime Division
SOA	Single Outcome Agreements
SPA	Scottish Police Authority
SPOA	Single Point of Assessment
STDC	Scottish Terrorist Detention Centre
UK	United Kingdom



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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.

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