



HM Inspectorate  
of Constabulary  
for Scotland

A light blue map of Scotland is positioned in the background of the lower half of the page. The map shows the main island of Scotland and the Orkney and Shetland islands.

# Scottish Police College

Primary Inspection 2006

# Scottish Police College

## Primary Inspection 2006

A Report by Her Majesty's  
Inspectorate of Constabulary

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# Recommendations

## Recommendation 1

That ACPOS and the Scottish Executive enter into a debate about the long-term future options for the sequence of recruiting and training.

(Paragraph 1.5)

## Recommendation 2

HMIC recommends that the SPSA and ACPOS clarify the relationship between the police service in Scotland and nationally provided police training, to establish the role of a single 'intelligent customer'.

(Paragraph 1.32)

## Recommendation 3

HMIC recommends that the SPSA consult with ACPOS on the subject of recruiting staff to central service posts and examine the options available to encourage candidates to apply for SPSA secondments, including the possibility of selection procedures that forces would accept for substantive promotion.

(Paragraph 3.7)

## Recommendation 4

HMIC recommends that the SPSA project team consider the capacity of the future Authority to address diversity issues, including the option of creating a diversity co-ordinator post to support all parts of the Authority.

(Paragraph 3.16)

## Recommendation 5

HMIC recommends that the College provide additional diversity training, or a different type of diversity training, to teaching staff. It should also review arrangements for assessing and monitoring teaching staff and develop a robust and consistent system to promote the maintenance of appropriate standards, particularly in relation to diversity and equality issues.

(Paragraph 3.27)

## Recommendation 6

HMIC recommends that ACPOS discuss with the SPSA, and other organisations to which Scottish officers are seconded, the potential for seconded staff to be appraised, where possible, using the new personal development review system. Also, that appraisal processes be led, managed and maintained by the organisation to which staff are seconded, with copies of all relevant documentation being shared with forces.

(Paragraph 3.32)

## Recommendation 7

HMIC recommends that the SPSA seek independent advice and liaise with other UK police training providers, to identify means of measuring costs over time that represent performance and can be benchmarked with other training in the UK and elsewhere as appropriate.

(Paragraph 4.21)

### Recommendation 8

HMIC recommends that the SPSA consult with ACPOS and the Scottish Executive to agree the basis for funding any overall growth in training provision, and for handling savings in the event of any decrease in training need.

(Paragraph 4.22)

### Recommendation 9

HMIC recommends that, as a matter of priority, the SPSA review existing accommodation at the College and the options available to address current shortfalls in terms of both standard and capacity, and develop plans to resolve these issues.

(Paragraph 4.37)

### Recommendation 10

HMIC recommends that the SPSA, in consultation with ACPOS, conduct an exercise to:

- assess the service need for the training currently provided by the College;
- examine those additional national and local training needs of the service which are not currently met by the College, including training in specialisms such as firearms and public order, and the extent to which local training fits or does not fit with the College syllabus; and
- scope the medium to long-term training needs of the service and review this periodically (e.g. 3–5 years).

(Paragraph 5.19)

### Recommendation 11

HMIC recommends that the SPSA use the products of recommendation 10 to formulate a training strategy for co-ordinating all police training in Scotland, including local training being provided by forces.

(Paragraph 5.19)

### Recommendation 12

HMIC recommends that ACPOS and the Scottish Executive consider how best to maintain and develop professional skills, knowledge and personal motivation throughout the career of police officers, particularly constables, including the possibility of introducing periodic booster training and confirmation of qualification assessments.

(Paragraph 5.19)

### Recommendation 13

HMIC recommends that the College, and the SPSA once operational, progress the introduction of an electronically managed learning environment to support the development of distance learning, and liaise with ACPOS to deliver the system nationally so that all except sensitive information is accessible to all police staff via the internet.

(Paragraph 5.44)

# Suggestions

1. HMIC suggests that the SPSA consider whether there is sufficient professional educational expertise influencing College management, for example whether having an educationalist on the College Executive would enhance the service provided.  
(Paragraph 1.39)
2. On completion of the current review, HMIC would suggest that the College values and ethics be clearly displayed, not only in primary College publications and on College walls, but also in the training materials issued to all students.  
(Paragraph 1.44)
3. The College and SPSA will work together to review strategic/business planning and objective setting as part of the new SPSA structure, and within that process HMIC would suggest that links to ACPOS Policing Priorities and their associated monitoring mechanisms be considered.  
(Paragraph 2.9)
4. HMIC suggests that the SPSA, the College and ACPOS discuss ICT training in light of future convergence and integration.  
(Paragraph 2.18)
5. HMIC suggests that the SPSA and ACPOS consider whether the status of police officers seconded to the SPSA needs to be adjusted during secondment so that their people management needs can be supported by the Authority.  
(Paragraph 3.1)
6. In order to help recruit the most appropriate trainers, HMIC would suggest that the College consider whether a training specialist should participate in relevant interview panels.  
(Paragraph 3.3)
7. HMIC suggests that the College consider introducing mechanisms, preferably within the PDR system as referred to in Recommendation 6, to promote the maintenance and development of skills for all training staff.  
(Paragraph 3.21)
8. HMIC suggests that the College and ACPOS liaise on the development of environmental scanning, to ensure that information is shared across the police service and duplication of effort is avoided.  
(Paragraph 4.9)
9. HMIC suggests that in setting its strategies to achieve its overall aims the College provide a clearer articulation of the aims and purposes of its partnership working, thus enabling a review of current work and providing direction for future development, particularly in the justice sector and in British and European policing.  
(Paragraph 4.12)



10. With the aim of securing Best Value, HMIC suggests that the SPSA seek a review of the extent of devolved budgeting within the College.

(Paragraph 4.20)

11. HMIC suggests that it may be an opportune time to revisit the Best Value review of energy management to assess actual and potential savings, and to consider in general how those matters that present significant cost implications might best be addressed.

(Paragraph 4.40)

12. HMIC suggests that the College review building perimeter security and present options for improvement for the SPSA's consideration.

(Paragraph 4.41)

13. HMIC suggests that the College review procedures both for reporting road collisions involving College vehicles to the police forces in whose areas they occur and for advising police forces of collisions in which their officers were driving.

(Paragraph 4.45)

14. HMIC suggests that the College ensure that best practice in procuring visiting lecturing staff is applied consistently across all divisions.

(Paragraph 4.48)

15. HMIC suggests that the College consider the growing body of available information and good practice around business continuity, and reinforce its IT disaster recovery procedures accordingly.

(Paragraph 4.52)

16. HMIC suggests that the College explore whether there is an expert body which could undertake some review of catering quality. Some benchmarking with other similar establishments on issues of quality and cost may also be of value.

(Paragraph 4.58)

17. Whilst recognising that proper coaching and mentoring requires those performing the role to be trained, and that this in itself is an additional burden, HMIC suggests that such arrangements be considered when developing future training programmes.

(Paragraph 5.27)

18. Given the demand on College accommodation, HMIC suggests that an opt-in arrangement be considered, whereby students are not automatically allocated accommodation but are provided with this on request.

(Paragraph 5.29)

19. The College will wish to be reassured that excessive demands are not being placed on students, recognising that working time can include essential course work that extends beyond the normal teaching day. HMIC suggests that the College, working with relevant representative bodies, assess all courses in relation to working time to ensure compliance with Regulations.

(Paragraph 5.33)

20. Notwithstanding the potential barriers to a compressed training week, HMIC suggests that the College consider courses where this could be an option.

(Paragraph 5.34)

21. HMIC suggests that the College may wish to consider ways to identify and share good practice in delivering training, to enable all instructors to learn from the best practice of their colleagues.

(Paragraph 5.35)

22. HMIC suggests that the College examine ways to improve practical training further and consider whether exercises in the public arena would be viable and beneficial.

(Paragraph 5.39)

23. HMIC suggests that SPSA and ACPOS support further development of Hydra Immersion training to make Hydra Lite training more readily accessible to staff in forces, and increase the exercise options available to support increased practical training and development.

(Paragraph 5.46)

24. HMIC suggests that the College seek ACPOS support in delivering a more comprehensive system of student assessment, incorporating feedback from line managers in forces.

(Paragraph 5.55)

25. HMIC suggests that the SPSA examine options for providing a professional standards capability for its own staff, and possibly for proactive work across Scotland, pending the results of any ACPOS review.

(Paragraph 5.58)

26. HMIC suggests that the College consider a further formal evaluation to ascertain the current views of external providers.

(Paragraph 6.10)

# Areas to be Reviewed

1. HMIC is encouraged by the commitment to develop performance management expressed by the Director and new Deputy Director during this inspection, and will revisit this issue during the next inspection.

(Paragraph 2.15)

2. HMIC will review progress on developing and implementing the benchmarking policy during the next inspection.

(Paragraph 2.20)

3. Plans were in place to address the shortfall in the number of support staff who had received diversity training and HMIC will examine progress during the next inspection.

(Paragraph 3.13)

4. Through the schedule of review, the shortcomings in completing the compliance and equality impact assessment of policies should be addressed. HMIC will examine progress on this during the next inspection.

(Paragraph 5.20)

5. HMIC will wish to consider compliance with project management methodology during a future inspection.

(Paragraph 5.20)

6. HMIC noted that some aspects of internet content were not up to date and will be interested to view progress during the next inspection.

(Paragraph 5.60)

# List of Good Practice

1. HMIC considered the 'Let's Talk' approach to communication with staff to be an example of good practice that may be transferable within the police service.  
(Paragraph 1.40)
2. HMIC considered the open approach to management of the Suggestion Scheme to be an example of good practice that may be transferable within the police service.  
(Paragraph 2.19)
3. HMIC commends the positive progress on civilianisation as an example of good practice and notes that further such opportunities were being suggested by College staff.  
(Paragraph 3.9)
4. The higher education diploma in training and development is a positive investment in the continuous development of staff, which HMIC considers to be good practice.  
(Paragraph 3.21)
5. HMIC considers the practice of examining road collisions involving college vehicles, and of incorporating any lessons learned into subsequent training, to be an example of good practice that may be transferable within the police service.  
(Paragraph 4.46)
6. HMIC considers the recent agreement between the College and forces on a consistent national tutor constable training programme to be good practice.  
(Paragraph 5.26)
7. HMIC considers the development of the 'student learning zone' to be an area of good practice.  
(Paragraph 5.40)
8. The academic accreditation of training provides police staff with transferable skills and is evidence of the professionalism of policing. HMIC considers this to be good practice.  
(Paragraph 5.52)

# Executive Summary

## Overview

1. The Scottish Police College is perhaps the principal common feature of policing across Scotland. Not only do all police officers recruited in Scotland receive initial training at the establishment, but the majority of shared developmental training for specialist and promoted officers is also delivered there. The increasingly generic nature of some training in recent years has also seen a rise in that provided to police support staff. Consequently the College is integral to policing in Scotland, and across the service there is strong ownership and pride in the training delivered. The inspection found evidence of this pride in the dedication and enthusiasm of both staff and students. The fruits of this enthusiasm were apparent in the standards of training delivery, the effectiveness of supporting functions and the attitude and behaviour of staff and students.

2. The inspection was conducted at a time of imminent change for the College, with the introduction of the Scottish Police Services Authority (SPSA) due in April 2007. This development will alter the accountability and the environment within which the College operates. The inspection therefore reflected on the opportunities to further improve service delivery that this change should offer. For this reason the recommendations in this report are predominantly directed not at the College, but at the SPSA and the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS).

## Key Issues

3. A key issue observed during the inspection was the absence of a police training strategy. To address this situation it is recommended that the SPSA ask ACPOS to undertake a number of tasks. The first of these should be an assessment of the service's need for the training currently provided by the College. Thereafter additional national and local training not currently provided by the College should be examined, to be followed by a scoping exercise of the service's medium to long term training needs. Once completed, it is recommended that the SPSA use the results of this exercise to formulate a training strategy for directing and co-ordinating all police training in Scotland, including that being provided locally by forces.

4. The transition to the SPSA means that it will be possible and necessary to clarify the nature of the relationship between forces and the central management of police training in terms of a partnership between provider and client. To aid this clarity and provide a focus for prioritisation, it is recommended that ACPOS establish the role of a single 'intelligent customer' to interact with the SPSA.

5. Diversity and equality are essential to modern policing and the standards set at the College are pivotal to delivering service goals. The inspection found commitment to diversity and examples of good practice, but also some shortcomings. It is recommended that the SPSA project team consider the capacity of the future Authority to meet diversity demands, including the option of creating a diversity co-ordinator post to support all parts of the Authority. It is also recommended that the College provide additional diversity training, or a different type of diversity training, to teaching staff.

6. The continued professionalism of the police service depends on the continuing development of police staff. In this regard it is recommended that ACPOS and the Scottish Executive consider how this may best be achieved, including the possibility of introducing periodic booster training and confirmation of qualification assessments. In support of staff development it is also recommended that the College progress the introduction of an electronically managed learning environment which will help to develop distance learning options.

7. The inspection also considered wider and longer-term training issues. This included the question of whether the current police practice of recruiting officers and then providing training is appropriate, or whether there is merit in qualification after initial training being a pre-requisite for recruitment. It is recommended that ACPOS and the Scottish Executive discuss future options on the sequence of recruiting and training.

# Introduction

## Methodology and Focus

1. This primary inspection of the Scottish Police College (hereafter referred to as 'the College') was conducted in October 2006, under the direction of Assistant Inspector of Constabulary, Malcolm R Dickson, who was assisted by HM Lay Inspector of Constabulary, Peter Daniels. The lead staff officer for this inspection was Superintendent Alan Douglas, who was assisted by Chief Superintendent Ian Burnside. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) conducts a programme of regular inspection of Scotland's police forces and common police services. At the time of this inspection the programme was based on a five-year cycle, commencing with a primary inspection and supplemented by two reviews conducted at 18-month intervals. In the initial stages of a primary inspection, HMIC sends the force or service a protocol questionnaire to complete. The protocol covers all aspects of organisational activity and requires a comprehensive and detailed response from the body under review. Following receipt and analysis of the response, HMIC conducts an options appraisal to identify areas which merit further scrutiny through inspection fieldwork. These will include issues of strategic significance, examples of good practice, approaches or performance results which appear less impressive, or elements where more evidence is needed to make an accurate assessment. Those areas not examined in depth may be revisited during subsequent review or thematic inspections as appropriate. The resulting primary inspection report highlights recommendations aimed at improving service delivery and identifies examples of good practice.

2. Through the options appraisal process on this occasion, HMIC determined that inspection fieldwork and detailed scrutiny should focus primarily on:

- the impact of the imminent introduction of the Scottish Police Services Authority (SPSA) on the College;
- definition of the contractor/client relationship between the College and police service;
- academic accreditation strategies;
- the balance between central and in-force training;
- the development of e-learning and other alternative training; and
- diversity compliance.

3. HMIC was assisted during this inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and its experience in assessing educational and training establishments. Inspectors interviewed numerous representatives of senior management, staff and students and observed training. Direct reference is made in the report to some of the HMIE findings, but it should be noted that these findings influenced the fieldwork in general and provided evidence for other aspects of this report.

4. HMIC also liaised with staff from Audit Services within the Scottish Executive Financial and Central Services Department, given their responsibilities for financial review and their previous examination of the College and subsequent report in April 2005.

5. HMIC consulted with all police forces in Scotland and common police services, that is, the principal users of the College. This process involved discussion with all chief constables, as well as with senior staff and training practitioners. Areas for further examination and potential improvement were identified, but generally HMIC found strong support for College services.

6. HMIC also spoke with a variety of external stakeholders and partners. This once again revealed a positive impression of the College and of the professional attitude and quality of training delivered by staff.

7. Focus groups were conducted with College staff and students, and a questionnaire was circulated to students from three probationer training courses. Staff clearly took pride in the service delivered by the College and were committed to achieving high standards. Students were also very enthusiastic, displaying a positive attitude that was impressive and encouraging.

## The Changing Scene

8. There is clearly a widely-held view within the police service in Scotland and its partners organisations, and indeed in the wider policing and justice community in the UK and beyond, that the Scottish Police College is a successful institution that delivers a quality product. Within Scottish policing there is also a largely justified understanding that the College is more than a training establishment: it is a very important part of the fabric of the service that helps to maintain the positive aspects of its culture and ethos.

9. HMIC is very conscious of this almost sentimental but nevertheless valuable perception of the College, which tends to be most prominent naturally among those whose personal development from probationer to senior officer has been punctuated by sojourns within its walls. Moreover, the Inspectorate is also aware of the deserved reputation which the College enjoys outwith Scottish policing, representing as it does a unique combination of all levels and all disciplines of police training, and of a pride in the service which is not always apparent in other police training establishments.

10. However, in making an objective assessment of the College and how it faces up to the challenges of 21st-century policing, HMIC has also had to take into account the wider picture of public service reform, the imminent birth of the Scottish Police Services Authority and the need to make connections between the investment made in the College and what it provides.

11. Though this inspection concentrated on the College, it inevitably strayed occasionally into wider policy areas for police training and people management. At a time of dynamic and positive change within the service, and within common police services in particular, HMIC must take every opportunity to fulfil its aim of encouraging improvement and advising Ministers. Consequently, a greater number of recommendations and suggestions than usual is directed not at the subject of the inspection, i.e. the College, but at the soon to be formed SPSA, the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS), and the Scottish Executive. One national issue which does not fall naturally in to any of the following chapters is outlined below.



## Recruit and Train or Train and Recruit?

12. Currently police officers are recruited to the service and then trained. Recruiting involves considerable expense in conducting a selection and vetting process, only for some wastage, though not a high volume, to occur during the two-year probation period.

13. Many other semi-skilled and skilled professionals (nurses, doctors, teachers, solicitors and so on) train and are then recruited. In other parts of the world, some police services recruit fully trained officers who have achieved the necessary qualification under their own steam.

14. HMIC does not advocate a full swing from one extreme to the other for what may be arguable benefits. However, these benefits need to be considered and assessed more fully than is possible here. There may well be some merit in linking the training process more closely to the qualification process (this is also touched on for post-probation officers later in the report at para 5.18). In this way the service would be more fully appraised of a candidate's suitability or unsuitability once initial training is completed, allowing a more informed recruitment decision to be made.

15. In current efforts to modernise the workforce of policing, no conventional wisdom can be left unchallenged.

### Recommendation 1

That ACPOS and the Scottish Executive enter into a debate about the long-term future options for the sequence of recruiting and training.

# 1. Leadership

## Overview

1.1 The College is a central training institution established by Scottish Ministers by virtue of Section 36 of the Police (Scotland) Act 1967, as amended by Section 46 of the Crime and Punishment (Scotland) Act 1997. The College provides training for the police service in Scotland, where that can most efficiently be done centrally. This applies in particular to the core training for recruits, promoted officers and to most of the specialist training needs for the eight Scottish police forces, the Scottish branch of the British Transport Police and the other Common Police Services. From time to time officers from outwith Scottish forces also attend. The College currently has a role in preparing the Police (Scotland) Promotion Examinations for the police service in Scotland. It will also have primary responsibility for delivering the new Diploma in Leadership and Management, which will replace the current promotion examinations.

1.2 In legal terms, the College is a service provided nationally by Scottish Ministers who are accountable to the Scottish Parliament on all relevant matters. The College enters into contracts in the name of Scottish Ministers, who hold the title to its assets and are statutorily responsible for its funding and maintenance. The Director, the College Secretary or the Head of Administrative Services are signatories to the contracts. Since 1 April 2004, the College has been funded fully by the Scottish Executive, having previously been subject to a shared arrangement between the Scottish Executive and local authorities.

## College Structure

1.3 The diagram at Figure 1 outlines the management structure of the College. The College Executive comprises the Director (currently a police officer holding the rank of deputy chief constable), Deputy Director (currently a police officer holding the rank of assistant chief constable) and College Secretary.



## 1. Leadership

1.4 Below the Executive, the functions of the College are divided into 11 different divisions. The core purpose of the College is to deliver training and it does so through four training divisions: Probationer Training; Crime Management; Road Policing; and Leadership and Management. Direct training support is provided by the Learning Support Division.

1.5 The College would be unable to provide this training, however, without significant support functions. These form the remaining six divisions, namely: Human Resources; Corporate Development; Administrative Services; Property Services; Estates; and Information Technology.

1.6 The structure and function of each area can be summarised as follows:

1.7 Probationer Training Division (PTD) is led by a police superintendent, with a chief inspector as deputy. They oversee 55 staff. This division delivers the principal output of the College, namely the initial training of new recruits to the service. The division is divided into four training sub divisions, three of which are for probationary officers on their initial 15-week training course while the fourth delivers the two-week reconviction course that all probationary officers attend early in their second year of police service. In addition, the division has staff in support and research functions who contribute to the work of all sub divisions.

1.8 Crime Management Division (CMD) is led by a detective superintendent, with a detective chief inspector as deputy. They oversee 21 staff. The division is divided into four areas: detective training; specialist training; community safety; and SCiAT (Scottish Centre for Intelligence and Analyst Training). Principal training delivered includes courses for detective training, senior investigating officers, crime prevention and intelligence analysis.

1.9 Road Policing Division (RPD) is led by a chief inspector who is assisted by two inspectors. They oversee 20 members of staff. Training is divided between classroom theory and 'on the road' practical driving, with one of the inspectors responsible for each. In addition to the core advanced driving course a variety of specialist driver training is provided, including pursuit and security driving as well as more technical training that includes collision investigation.

1.10 Leadership and Management Division (LMD) is led by a chief superintendent, with a superintendent as deputy. They oversee nine members of staff. The focus of training is on leadership for various levels of police and support staff managers, centred on initial, intermediate and senior leadership development training modules. The Division also interacts with Centrex in England and Wales on delivering training to the most senior members of the service and preparing staff for chief officer roles.

1.11 Learning Support Division (LSD) is led by a superintendent, with a member of support staff as deputy. They oversee 18 members of staff. The range of activities undertaken in this division includes international development, flexible learning, legal research, training development and the learning resources centre. The Division is pivotal to assessing and evaluating training and to developing new courses.

1.12 Human Resources (HR) is led by a support staff head of function, supported by an assistant and two administrators. This function develops and maintains the systems of personnel management that support staff recruitment, welfare and development.

1.13 Corporate Development is led by a chief inspector who performs the College Staff Officer role. The staff officer is assisted by an inspector and ten other members of staff. This function supports the College executive team on a day-to-day basis and assists in delivering the College's strategic objectives.

1.14 Administrative Services is led by a support staff head of function, who is assisted by eight members of staff. Funding, procurement and accommodation management are some of the functions they deliver. They do not oversee the administrative functions within other divisions.

1.15 Property Services is led by a support staff Property Manager, who is assisted by 20 members of staff. Matters addressed within Property Services include health and safety, property maintenance and security.

1.16 Estates is led by a support staff supervisor, assisted by five members of staff. The principal role of these staff members is gardening, as they maintain the College grounds. However they also adopt other roles in maintaining the estate, including road clearing in winter, to provide a year long support function.

1.17 Information Technology is led by a support staff head of function, with a support staff deputy. They oversee 18 members of staff. In addition to the IT-based development and analyst roles, the division incorporates reprographics and media resources.

1.18 The Director maintains an overview of all College activity, with personal oversight of Human Resources and Corporate Development. The Deputy Director oversees delivery of the College function, having responsibility for training provision and Learning Support Division. The College Secretary has an overview of the supporting functions that enable the training function to be delivered, being responsible for the areas of Administration, Property, Estates and Information Technology.

1.19 HMIC found a strong team ethos within the College, and strong interaction between the College Executive, senior management and staff. This approach encourages communication and complements the formal meeting structures in place to discuss and document the development of strategy, policy and procedure. HMIC considers the management structures to be suitable and fit for purpose, but is concerned about the lack of a suitable qualified educationalist within the Executive (see Suggestion 1).

## Common Police Services Programme Board

1.20 The College provides a service in support of the police service in Scotland, on behalf of the Scottish Executive by whom it is funded. At the time of the last Primary Inspection, oversight of the work undertaken at the College was exercised by a Board of Governors. Following a review of common police services (CPS) a CPS Programme Board, chaired by the Head of the Scottish Executive Justice Department, took on these responsibilities on an interim basis from July 2004. The remit of the Programme Board was to provide an oversight over both current activity and the introduction of the new Scottish Police Services Authority (SPSA) that will be responsible for all the common police functions.

1.21 The CPS Programme Board met every two months and consisted of representatives from the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS), the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and the Scottish Executive. Due to the imminent introduction of the SPSA the work of this Board has effectively concluded.

### Scottish Police Services Authority

1.22 The new SPSA will come into being on 1 April 2007. Under the direction of a Board and its Convener, and with the leadership of a Chief Executive, it will have a duty to provide police support services including the development, provision, procurement and delivery of training and education. This includes the service currently delivered by the Scottish Police College.

1.23 In the lead up to the introduction of the SPSA the Scottish Executive appointed an Interim Chief Executive, with whom the College Director has maintained steady dialogue. The timescale for the appointment of the Board and new Chief Executive has delayed the revision of strategy and objectives, as common police services were asked not to develop new strategy until these posts were filled. This should ensure that the first Board and Chief Executive have due influence over developments.

1.24 HMIC was pleased to note the positive attitude of the majority of staff to the forthcoming change, who felt that they had been kept as informed of developments as they could have been. The Interim Chief Executive's attendance at a staff meeting was seen as particularly positive in providing reassurance. Nonetheless, staff were frustrated by the uncertainty they felt around developments.

1.25 The introduction of the SPSA will undoubtedly alter the current avenues of influence over the College's training programmes. At present there are many different influences, most of them valid, which reach the College through a variety of channels. The chief influence is properly ACPOS, which represents the most important stakeholder in the College i.e. the leadership of policing in Scotland. However ACPOS' communication with, and procurement of, training from the College is often routed through the various Business Areas and their sub-groups, rather than through a single channel such as the Personnel and Training Business Area. There is also direct contact between the College and force training departments and other common police services. The high volume of communication is on one hand a strength, as it maintains the College's awareness of emerging issues so that it can react accordingly. However, this awareness tends to lead to planning and changes in training being made with no single central consideration of priorities against a strategic plan. Without the aid of a strategic plan, a 'can do' mentality means that College staff continue to create more new training. Without being able to conduct a cost benefit analysis, HMIC cannot say whether this increases the cost to the public purse or adversely impacts on other training that should have a higher priority. Ironically, the College's positive and co-operative attitude prevents a consistent, coherent, holistic and cost-effective approach being taken to the development of police training in Scotland.

1.26 During inspection fieldwork various stakeholders raised the question of whether the relationship between the College and the rest of the police service in Scotland was a partnership or one of contractor and client. HMIC acknowledges that ACPOS was considering this at the time of the inspection. HMIC's view is that essentially it is both. The partnership aspects are detailed later in this report, but relate to the interaction between the College,

forces and ACPOS for mutual benefit. It is important, however, that there is also a contractor/client relationship, something that will be aided by the creation of the SPSA. The police service must clearly articulate its training needs and communicate these to the SPSA. The SPSA will then need to consider how much of these needs can be met, at what cost and by whom. This should be a matter of regular discussion and negotiation between the SPSA and ACPOS, and only when training change relevant to the College has been agreed should the College develop its priorities and objectives accordingly.

1.27 HMIC believes that a framework for agreeing changes to training does not require an overly bureaucratic approach that would delay implementing these. The majority of training issues are longer term and can be adequately addressed within a regular meeting structure. But a framework could enable comparatively minor amendments to existing training or more significant change where time is an issue, to occur between meetings.

1.28 Clearly the SPSA will need to consider procuring training that offers best value to the service. This may occasionally mean selecting providers other than the College (as occurs at present to a degree e.g. Strathclyde Police for firearms command training, Centrex for the Strategic Command Course). However the Inspectorate sounds a small note of caution here. Given that most stakeholders agree that the College provides the police service in Scotland with more than just training, and that this extra indefinable factor can be an enormous strength, there will be an optimum level of training provision at Tulliallan below which it would be dangerous to fall. HMIC judges that, provided most mainstream training is provided by the College, there should be enough flexibility on a year-to-year basis to gain from the benefits of competition.

1.29 Whilst positive communication at various levels between ACPOS, forces and services and the College is beneficial and must continue, there must be a consistent view from the police service on what the priorities are. Currently the College itself has to consider the variety of training demands and take this into account when tailoring its programmes, whilst attempting to maximise available resources. There is a consequent danger that the training divisions may be left to operate independently, instead of resources being moved between them as required to address the priorities of the service. The bigger danger is that College training expands without direction and prioritisation from the main customer.

1.30 In any case ACPOS will wish to consider how best to review, confirm or alter, and articulate its training requirements so that the optimum benefit can be derived from the new structure. The ongoing work within the College to review its internal meeting structures and develop an approach based on the National Intelligence Model (NIM), may provide some assistance.

1.31 HMIC is aware of the work which ACPOS has undertaken in creating a business change directorate. This has brought clarity to the development of ACPOS policy priorities and the way in which these are to be tackled. Much of the work has focused on a significant project to develop policies on Information and Communications Technology. However, ACPOS has made it clear that the same arrangement should apply to prioritising all areas of business change in the years to come. This may afford the opportunity for training priorities to be included in the directorate's agenda.

1.32 However it is achieved, HMIC believes that a single channel through which training provision and change is agreed is necessary. This does not mean that existing channels, which promote awareness and cross-fertilisation, need to be closed down. Rather, that whenever discussions reach the point at which training change is required, the matter must be referred to a single 'intelligent customer' who communicates on behalf of ACPOS with the SPSA. The inspectorate understands that ACPOS is already forming a similar view. This issue is relevant to the development of a training strategy and recommendations 10 and 11.

### Recommendation 2

HMIC recommends that the SPSA and ACPOS clarify the relationship between the police service in Scotland and nationally provided police training, to establish the role of a single 'intelligent customer'.

### Senior Management

1.33 The Director maintains a strategic overview of the College function and is responsible for delivery against objectives. The current incumbent took up post in February 2006, but was already well versed in the operation of the College having been the Deputy Director from 2002 and through previously held roles on the College staff. In addition to regular dialogue with other members of the College Executive and division heads, the Director chairs the Management Team Meeting where progress on issues including objectives, financial performance, process improvements and future developments are reported and considered. The high profile of process improvement on the agenda of management team meetings demonstrates senior management's commitment to supporting change, innovation and improvement. Among the external roles she also holds, the Director is a member of the ACPOS Personnel and Training Business Area. At present she also acts as the Deputy Chief Constables' representative on ACPOS Council.

1.34 The Deputy Director, who took up post in June 2006, has managerial responsibility for the training delivered by the College. Formal consultation with the heads of training divisions and Learning Support Division is maintained through a weekly Training Heads Meeting. Some of the issues discussed at this meeting replicate issues on the Management Team agenda and support the Executive's commitment to meeting College objectives.

1.35 A particular area of work being progressed by the Deputy Director is a review of internal and external communication structures. The intention is to introduce a NIM based approach that may allow the College to react better to national training needs, and to support a more flexible approach to that training delivery which does not rely on Tulliallan as a training base.

1.36 The College Secretary is a member of support staff. The current incumbent has been in post since 1996, but previously worked at the College as Director of Administrative Services from 1985 to 1992. His area of responsibility is delivering the support functions that underpin the day-to-day operation of the College. He meets regularly with heads of the support functions, namely the Head of Administrative Services, Head of Communications and Information Technology, Head of Human Resources, Property Manager and Estates Manager.

1.37 At present the College Executive structure does not contain an individual with experience elsewhere in the field of education. This is currently less of a problem than it might



be with different post holders: both the Director and the Head of Learning Support (who is also a police officer) have a number of relevant qualifications as well as considerable experience in police training. The Deputy Head of LSD is a member of support staff who is a fully qualified educationalist with a background in that arena. However, the police officers in particular will not remain in these posts indefinitely and there could be an advantage in importing educational experience from elsewhere onto the management structure of the College. Whilst there is a view that the College is a training rather than an educational establishment, the increasing accreditation of College courses (largely initiated by College staff) aligns the College ever closer to further education providers. HMIC agrees that the training focus must not be lost. Nevertheless the College has already benefited from increased contact with other educational establishments; this cross-fertilisation of ideas and developments in the wider world of vocational training could be enhanced by importing current experience at executive level. The Inspectorate was surprised to find that there were not stronger links and benchmarking between the College and other areas of professional training (see para 2.20). At this time the Director is satisfied that senior management within the Learning Support Division (LSD) can provide the necessary knowledge and understanding.

1.38 Whilst current provision appears to be satisfactory, HMIC is concerned that relying on two individuals with particular skills does not demonstrate long term resilience. There is no guarantee that there will continue to be suitably experienced and qualified people within the police service to provide the educational knowledge and experience necessary. Moreover, the advantage of having someone with external experience in the management team is in itself worth exploring.

1.39 The issue of the benefits of academic influence at Executive level has been raised previously and was echoed by some staff during the inspection. **HMIC suggests that the SPSA consider whether there is sufficient professional educational expertise influencing College management, for example whether having an educationalist on the College Executive would enhance the service provided.**

1.40 During the inspection it was noted that members of the College Executive make themselves available to their staff and make a point of meeting all new members. A well established forum for staff to highlight issues is the monthly 'Let's Talk' meeting. All members of staff have the opportunity to attend this meeting and receive personal invitations on a rotational basis. HMIC attended one of these sessions and found it to be a useful open forum where staff were clearly free to raise any issues, both positive and of concern. The Director was present and gave open and frank answers to all the points raised. **HMIC considered the 'Let's Talk' approach to communication with staff to be an example of good practice that may be transferable within the police service.**

## Scottish Police College Values

1.41 In 2001 the College introduced its Vision, Mission and Values. These are published in the College Annual Report and Corporate Plan. More recently there has been a desire within the College to review and revise them. An encouraging response from staff not only delivered a high number of proposals, but also demonstrated a broadly shared understanding of what the College represents and is attempting to achieve. For an organisation whose teaching staff change in rotation every two to three years, this reflects a strong and largely positive culture and sense of self identity.

1.42 At the time of the inspection the review was on hold, pending the appointment of the Board and Chief Executive of the SPSA and acknowledging the possibility that an alternative approach, partly in conjunction with other constituent parts of the new Authority, may be required. HMIC fully supports the need for the College to play an important part in delivering the overall strategy of the SPSA. However, the Inspectorate also believes that the high standing and reputation of the College in the UK policing community and beyond should not and need not be diminished by any corporate identity of the SPSA. As in most multi-commodity organisations, the branding of the product at point of delivery can be more important than the profile of the parent company.

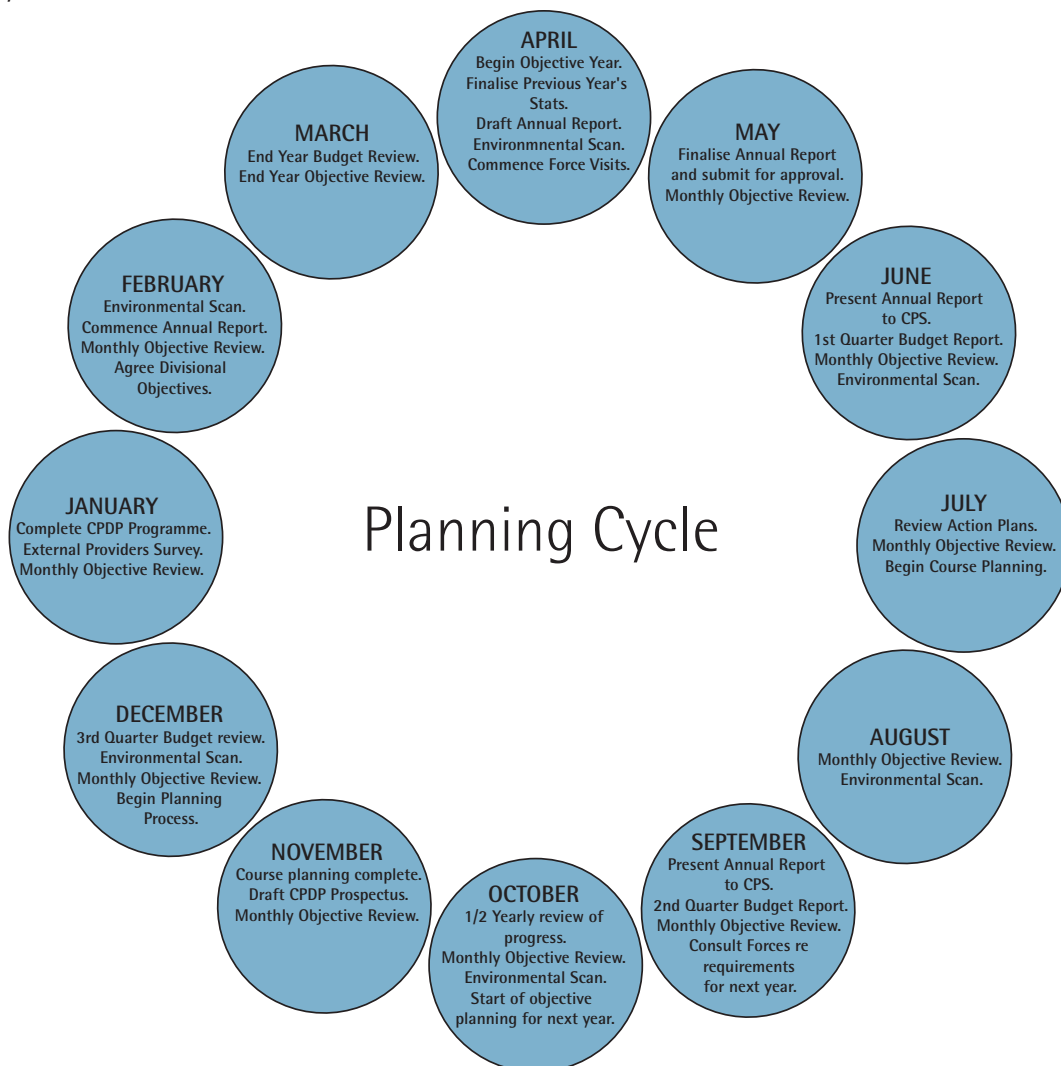
1.43 As a result of the pending change, the existing Values were not on prominent display through the College. That said, in each division HMIC found copies of its specific objectives on display and staff able to demonstrate an understanding of those that directly affected them. The values and ethics of the College are important and integral both to training delivery and staff and student confidence.

1.44 As with all police services, the ethics of the organisation are just as important, if not more so, than the codes of conduct of its staff. Indeed the first contributes, positively or negatively, to the second. Police culture is a strong influence on the actual ethics and values of forces and services, for good and bad, and expressing and promoting a statement of values and ethics is one way of identifying what is good and rejecting what is bad. This inspection and its findings have revealed a number of areas where individual and organisational ethics may need a clearer steer: diversity and equal opportunity (para 3.10); work-life balance (para 5.32); the idea of pre-eminent excellence (para 2.14); and using performance management to become a learning organisation (paras 2.11). This report should therefore afford an opportunity to recognise what may be missing from its statement of ethics the College and values and what needs to change in order to improve these areas. **On completion of the current review, HMIC would suggest that the College values and ethics be clearly displayed, not only in primary College publications and on College walls, but also in the training materials issued to all students.**

# 2. POLICY & STRATEGY

## Strategic Planning

2.1 The planning process for the College currently follows a structured approach, starting in April and extending through the financial year. The planning cycle is illustrated in figure 2. HMIC recognises that both the new overview by the SPSA and the ongoing review of College structures and application of NIM processes, may lead to the process being revised for future years.



2.2 The College recognises the need to consult with its customers and stakeholders in the process of setting objectives and directing the training programme. The planning cycle to date refers to force visits, environmental scanning, the course planning process which involves consultation with all forces and other common police services, as well as to a survey of external providers.

2.3 The information from consultation feeds into an EFQM framework from which the College has identified four key policies, namely:

- developing and delivering quality training;
- developing our people through lifelong learning;
- continuous improvement of our service; and
- embracing the changing environment.

2.4 The objectives set at divisional level are designed to contribute to delivering these policies. HMIC found that whilst the selected objectives were presented in line with the structure, not all could be considered to meet SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed) criteria. This failure indicates that while the process appears suitably structured to deliver a robust result, some of those involved could perhaps have a better understanding of the process.

2.5 The majority of ACPOS Policing Priorities focus on areas of general development that would not be reflected in College Objectives. That said, HMIC did see scope for a closer relationship with the Community Engagement priority. There is room under all of the Policing Priorities too, for ACPOS to consider whether specific training is required. HMIC found various objectives that linked with the strategic goals of the ACPOS People Strategy, specifically in the areas of IIP accreditation, the development of Professional Development Awards and accreditation, developing staff skills, mainstreaming diversity in training programmes, and implementing flexible working. However, either because the People Strategy does not specifically set out training objectives, or because it is not closely linked to the Policing Priorities, there is no document describing what training needs to be developed to help the police service in Scotland achieve what it must in the medium to longer term.

2.6 To monitor progress against objectives, the College used a series of template documents. If used properly these documents would provide evidence that the process was well managed and could withstand audit. HMIC found examples, however, where documents were not properly completed, thus undermining the process.

2.7 For each objective a document was drawn up, setting out specific actions, timescales, monitoring processes and the personnel involved. Examination of these revealed inconsistencies in the published objectives and sections that were incomplete.

2.8 Divisions also submit monthly reports, intended to detail progress over the previous month and activity planned for the following month. This information is then collated in a monthly updates report. HMIC found that while some submissions provided succinct and effective reports on progress, others did not appear to be routinely completed and were poor by comparison. The collated report itself summarised progress using a traffic light system for easy reference, but once again certain sections were incomplete.

2.9 The Director recognises that the number of objectives being pursued is high, as the result of a conscious decision to include input from across the range of College departments. This is to be reviewed in due course in consultation with the SPSA. During that process the College will wish to consider whether all staff understand the purpose of the objective setting process, and whether a properly linked hierarchy of action plans supporting fewer objectives might suit the organisation better. It may also wish either to revise the monitoring mechanisms or to ensure that they are properly complied with. **The College and SPSA will work together to review strategic/business planning and objective setting as part of the**

new SPSA structure, and within that process HMIC would suggest that links to ACPOS Policing Priorities and their associated monitoring mechanisms be considered.

2.10 The nature of links between College objectives and both the ACPOS Policing Priorities and ACPOS People Strategy, serves to highlight the absence of a specific ACPOS training strategy. This matter was raised on numerous occasions during inspection fieldwork and is explored later in this report at para 5.10, within the context of training development.

## Performance Management

2.11 While the Corporate Plan for 2005–10 details key performance indicators (KPIs), the Annual Report for 2005–06 did not report performance against all of these. It became apparent to HMIC that use of the KPIs had been abandoned pending the introduction of an integrated SPSA Corporate Plan. This was not explained in any formal documentation and had not been clearly articulated in reports to the CPS Programme Board.

2.12 A lack of clarity in performance reporting was apparent. The Annual Report provides statistical information across a broad range of areas, but much of this is not placed into any form of context. For example, the reaction level evaluations detail student assessment of the benefit, challenge and satisfaction derived from courses attended and, where applicable, compare scores with the previous year. How these results shape future course content is not explained and no assessment is made of particularly positive or negative assessments.

2.13 The inconsistent approach to reporting performance indicates the limited value of the performance information that the college collates. There is scope for improving the information collated and how that information is used to influence future training, and for better reporting of information both internally and in the public arena. The College recognises these shortcomings, and proposes to link measurement more closely with objectives and to reflect national developments on performance management. This proposal forms part of the early work on developing the NIM in relation to college structures.

2.14 Any apparent reluctance to act on performance information may reflect a flip-side of the positive College culture. The strong achievement focus properly nurtured at the College can be misinterpreted as discouraging legitimate challenge. However, the Inspectorate was pleased to note during inspection that the Director discourages misconceptions about excellence.

2.15 As HMIC's thematic inspection on performance management ('Managing Improvement' published in September 2005) demonstrated, all police organisations need to become more comfortable with the fact that they are not always perfect, that self-doubt for an organisation is healthy, and that when things go wrong or performance is poor it does not necessarily mean that someone is to blame. Performance reporting and monitoring is of no use if management action is not influenced by it. The police service and all its constituent parts need to become learning organisations, eager to understand themselves and how they can change performance. HMIC is encouraged by the commitment to develop performance management expressed by the Director and new Deputy Director during this inspection, and will revisit this issue during the next inspection.

## Future Development

2.16 The College currently supports the police promotion examination process by authoring questions. The process itself is administered by the Scottish Qualifications Authority on behalf of the police service. The forthcoming introduction of a new Diploma in Leadership and Management brings a new challenge for the College which, with the agreement of ACPOS, will administer the whole of the new process. For the next two to three years the two processes will run in tandem, but after 2009 the diploma will become the necessary qualification to achieve before a police officer in Scotland can be considered for promotion.

2.17 To meet this new demand additional posts are being created at the College. Oversight of the diploma will come from the head of LSD. Day-to-day management will be the responsibility of a chief inspector, performing a role that has been combined with the existing Accelerated Promotion Scheme Co-ordinator post. Additional staff will include two police sergeant course tutors, two support staff tutors and two administrators. Whilst the diploma has been developed principally to assist in preparing officers for promotion, it can also be considered in the longer term as a general development opportunity for all police officers.

2.18 On a separate development matter, HMIC has noted the significant efforts of ACPOS and the Scottish Executive to move towards integrated police ICT in the medium term. The adoption of common systems has eluded the police service in Scotland for many years and these new plans are welcome. Adopting common operational police applications brings with it the opportunity to consider delivering ICT training from a national perspective. **HMIC suggests that the SPSA, the College and ACPOS discuss ICT training in light of future convergence and integration.**

## Innovation and Learning

2.19 There are many factors which should contribute to the continued evolution of the College, not least creativity, innovation and learning. The College was seen to encourage input from members of staff on ways to improve service delivery, a primary example being the Suggestion Scheme. Operated in a transparent manner, the Scheme attracts numerous suggestions, with staff able to view these on the College Intranet. The list also shows whether suggestions are supported and the reasons behind those decisions. **HMIC considered the open approach to management of the Suggestion Scheme to be an example of good practice that may be transferable within the police service.**

2.20 The learning process is stimulated by examining practice elsewhere. In this regard the College has a benchmarking policy, though at the time of the inspection this was being reviewed with the aims of removing aspects that were considered onerous. Despite the fact that this existing policy proposes a structured approach to benchmarking, the reality appeared to be more ad hoc. As already noted in the Leadership chapter, there was no clear strategy for benchmarking to support the delivery of high standards. It will be very difficult for the College in the future, when exposed to greater scrutiny and accountability by the SPSA, to show how it is achieving best value if transparent and tested benchmarking is not in place. **HMIC will review progress on developing and implementing the benchmarking policy during the next inspection.**

# 3. PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

## Overview

3.1 The Human Resource Management (HRM) function is delivered by the Head of HRM, supported by an assistant and two administrators. The College does not have a strategy to guide activity, but instead follows the principles of the ACPOS People Strategy. Policy and procedure overseen by the function is focused principally on the support staff, given that police officers on secondment are governed, in general and for the time being, by their home force practices. When the common police services fall under the umbrella of the SPSA, it may be appropriate to review the potential anomalies presented by differing conditions and support for police and support staff. The same applies to Health and Welfare, as noted in paragraph 3.17. **HMIC suggests that the SPSA and ACPOS consider whether the status of police officers seconded to the SPSA needs to be adjusted during secondment so that their people management needs can be supported by the Authority.**

3.2 Support staff are in the unusual position of being managed through the College despite being employed by Fife Council. Terms and conditions are therefore consistent with those for Fife Council. The introduction of the SPSA will see the new Authority become the employer for all support staff. Such changes can have a significant impact on staff, through uncertainty about job security, pay and conditions. During the inspection HMIC found staff to be largely comfortable with the arrangements, albeit a number of issues had not yet been resolved. Nevertheless, assurances about job security and conditions of employment appear to have been effective.

## Recruitment and Selection

3.3 Police staff are recruited via advertisement to police forces. As far as possible the College recruits police officers to start in April or October, which helps with the organisation of foundation courses and the induction of new staff. The stages of recruitment follow a defined process to ensure a consistent approach. The selection process involves a formal structured interview. It was noted that while interview panels for training posts included representation from the relevant division, they did not necessarily include a qualified training specialist. **In order to help recruit the most appropriate trainers, HMIC would suggest that the College consider whether a training specialist should participate in relevant interview panels.**

3.4 HMIC found the College to be experiencing some difficulty recruiting police officers as instructors. A recent advertisement for Probationer Training Division instructors attracted only four applicants for six posts. A consequence of this problem was that PTD remained four instructors below its recognised complement at the time of inspection. One factor, which ironically appears to have had a negative influence, is the almost universal adoption by forces of fair and transparent promotion systems that are open to everyone. This means that officers who have not yet succeeded in their in-force promotion selection process and who apply for promoted posts on central service, tend to be given temporary promotion by their forces. Officers can participate in their promotion processes while on secondment; success in this normally leads to conversion from temporary to substantive rank, within the secondment.

### 3. People Management

3.5 Nevertheless, this means that officers who are successful in their in-force promotion process are unlikely to apply for central service, as a result of the 'bird in the hand' principle. While those who have not yet been successful may feel that a temporary promotion and two years away from their force is too much of a risk to longer term prospects.

3.6 HMIC strongly supports the introduction of fair and transparent promotion policies by police forces. However, HMIC also believes that (a) officers seconded to central services should be amongst the best of their peers, and (b) time spent on central service is valuable development for officers who have ambitions to progress further.

3.7 There is no easy solution to this state of affairs, but it needs to be addressed in respect of all central services offering promoted posts. One ameliorating measure would be to introduce selection processes for all central services, which chief constables would be happy to treat as equivalent to their own i.e. by rewarding success with substantive promotion – or at least substantive promotion on return to force, subject to performance reports. The longer-term solution for all forces, which would add value by applying consistency and completely transparent impartiality, would be a common national selection system designed by and administered on behalf of, but independent of, individual forces.

#### Recommendation 3

HMIC recommends that the SPSA consult with ACPOS on the subject of recruiting staff to central service posts and examine the options available to encourage candidates to apply for SPSA secondments, including the possibility of selection procedures that forces would accept for substantive promotion.

3.8 The stages of support staff recruitment currently follow a defined process similar to that used for police staff. As support staff are currently employed by Fife Council, the procedures follow that local authority's policy and guidance. Posts are advertised through the College, Fife Council, police forces and Job Centre plus. Posts are not generally advertised in specific publications. Consideration has been given to targeted advertising, particularly to address a current diversity imbalance. The range of areas to be considered and the consequent prohibitive cost has apparently prevented the College from adopting such an approach, even though it has successfully been adopted by the smaller common police service, the Scottish Criminal Record Office.

3.9 As Best Value practice, when posts become vacant they are assessed to confirm the job requirement. For police officer posts this includes consideration of whether the post can be civilianised. The effect of such reviews over recent years is evident in the increasing proportion of support staff at the College. Good examples of this can be seen in the employment of specialist training co-ordinators and physical education instructors. In addition to providing best value, this approach helps to maintain the corporate memory of the College, which would be under threat if too many staff members were on fixed-term secondments. HMIC commends the positive progress on civilianisation as an example of good practice and notes that further such opportunities were being suggested by College staff.



## Equal Opportunities and Diversity

3.10 HMIC found some evidence of the College's commitment to achieving high standards in equality and diversity. This was particularly apparent during the inspection in the messages given out by all members of the Executive team; the team maintains a high profile on the issue, including participating in the College Diversity Action Group. The College introduced an Independent Advisory Panel in 2002, with members nominated by Scottish police forces. The remit of the Panel is to facilitate external consultation and to provide a mechanism for training design and quality assurance to ensure that content and methods of delivery meet the needs of the communities served. The panel meets quarterly and conducts regular visits to training divisions.

3.11 The College has an equal opportunities policy, which may be considered to be its benchmark for standards in this area. During the inspection, however, evidence suggested that these standards were not universally maintained. Members of the inspection team witnessed some training situations where expected standards of diversity were not fully complied with and found some training materials that did not have necessary references to diversity issues. This suggests that the intention to introduce quality assurance has not been completely successful and ought to be reviewed.

3.12 Similarly, the College intention to recruit a representative workforce has not been particularly successful. Whilst HMIC recognises the challenges faced, it considers that there is scope for greater innovation in attempts to address the current imbalance in this important area.

3.13 The College does have a diversity action plan based on the ACPOS Diversity Strategy. The action plan comprehensively addresses the issues. However, some actions marked as complete should more appropriately be considered as requiring further review in the future, such as the steps taken to recruit a more diverse workforce referred to above. HMIC was also disappointed to note that, whilst all police officers on the College staff had received the nationally agreed diversity training, only 40% of support staff had been trained. This does not compare favourably with Scottish police forces. **Plans were in place to address the shortfall in the number of support staff who had received diversity training and HMIC will examine progress during the next inspection.**

3.14 HMIC was made aware of positive progress being made through the relationship between the College and the Gay Police Association (GPA). The College now has a staff member who can act as a point of contact and provide confidence and support to gay men and women who attend the College. The GPA has welcomed this development. Discussion was also under way on the possibility of the GPA providing a seminar for the Continuous Professional Development Programme.

3.15 It was apparent too that the College had identified scope for further improving its diversity practices. An external consultant was engaged to review its diversity action plan, corporate plan and other strategic documents and to help develop a new equality and diversity strategy that would incorporate gender, age and disability responsibilities. At the time of the inspection the College was considering the draft strategy.

3.16 HMIC found that the College, like the other constituent parts of the new SPSA, has no dedicated diversity officer. Aspects of that role are covered by HR staff and the diversity training co-ordinator. Nevertheless it will be necessary to appoint someone with that specific remit for the Authority, if desired standards are to be developed and maintained and the potential of staff maximised. Such an individual might also be able to develop further options to improve the diversity balance of staff across the Authority. The College also has a responsibility for diversity beyond its staff. It must take diversity into account in its relationship with police forces, other stakeholders and in the way it prepares and trains police staff. Though ACPOS' decision to introduce a national diversity co-ordinator is a positive development, this person cannot be expected to take on ownership of day-to-day diversity issues within the SPSA.

#### Recommendation 4

HMIC recommends that the SPSA project team consider the capacity of the future Authority to address diversity issues, including the option of creating a diversity co-ordinator post to support all parts of the Authority.

#### Health and Welfare

3.17 Attendance figures for College staff appear to indicate a supportive working environment and a committed workforce, with low absence levels for both police and support staff. The positive outlook of staff was evident throughout the inspection. Staff were enthusiastic, dedicated and took a clear pride in the establishment. An occupational health nurse is available to all staff on three half days a month, while support staff also benefit from specialist consultants as required via Fife Council. Whilst the nurse was recognised to be very busy on occasions, College staff are content and feel the current level of provision to be sufficient to meet demand. Specialist assistance for police staff is provided from home forces. Though separate service provision can work, it does not necessarily suggest ease of accessibility. Changing the status of seconded police officers, as proposed in Suggestion 4 after paragraph 3.1, would help to create the circumstances where police officers could be supported by the same HR staff and policies as their support staff colleagues, as part of the SPSA.

#### Health and Safety

3.18 The College has clear policies on health and safety, and an established committee with representation from across College divisions meets on a quarterly basis. The Executive's commitment to health and safety is demonstrated by the committee being chaired by the College Secretary, while the Director personally undertakes an annual cycle of reviews.

3.19 The College has a formally qualified Health and Safety Officer who manages the organisation's response to health and safety issues and ensures compliance with legislation. In addition, each division appoints 'representatives of employee safety' (ROES) who conduct workplace inspections, workstation assessments and risk assessments. The ROES have been trained by the Health and Safety Officer to conduct these inspections and assessments, demonstrating shared ownership across the establishment.

## Staff Development

3.20 On appointment to the College, new staff undergo personal interviews with each member of the College Executive and a two-day induction course. Each is also allocated a mentor to help them integrate into the College. HMIC noted that the induction course had recently been reviewed and that a written pack was being developed for staff who join the College outwith the normal recruitment periods. Such staff would, however, still attend the next induction course, which provides an overview of the College, a meeting with the relevant head of Division and input on the College vision, mission and objectives.

3.21 In addition, on taking up appointment at the College teaching staff attend a foundation course to develop the skills necessary to deliver lectures. This course forms part of the curriculum for the diploma in higher education in training and development, which is a developmental course open to staff during and beyond their time at the College and for which the College provides the necessary financial support. **The higher education diploma in training and development is a positive investment in the continuous development of staff, which HMIC considers to be good practice.** It was noted, however, that the only compulsory aspect was the foundation course. Whilst a commendable number of College staff commit themselves to the ongoing development offered by the Diploma, others do not. As a consequence, there is no requirement for training staff to undergo any continuous professional development to update their skills. This is inconsistent with the overall aims of the College. **HMIC suggests that the College consider introducing mechanisms, preferably within the PDR system as referred to in Recommendation 6, to promote the maintenance and development of skills for all training staff.**

3.22 The quality of teaching delivered by instructors is the subject of a structured assessment approach in training divisions: colleagues and line managers observe inputs and complete written reports which comment on specific aspects of the instructor's input. These are then reviewed with the instructor to identify areas for improvement.

3.23 In terms of development needs beyond instructor training, the College supports any staff who, on their own initiative, undertake other external training within the terms of a published policy. This includes financial assistance of up to 80% of the cost for support staff, while police officers are able to seek funding from their home force. Both police and support staff can receive time off for study and examinations.

3.24 General staff development is delivered as part of the appraisal and development process. Support staff and police officers complete a personal development plan relevant to their appraisal process. A skills matrix is prepared for support staff which details the skills level necessary for the post and the actual skill level of the staff member. These PDPs provide the basis for identifying any training necessary to help the staff member maximise his or her potential.

3.25 The budget for staff development is devolved to each College Division. Costs are a factor in assessing and prioritising staff training needs, although efforts are made to provide the type of training and development where cost is not a major factor. Such development can also enhance career development, something that was apparent from support staff who had progressed through different roles at the College. HMIC found various good examples of staff training and development across divisions, demonstrating the College's commitment in this regard.

3.26 Reference has been made to the foundation training provided to new teaching staff. One area that is not covered during that training is diversity, presumably on the basis that teaching staff will attend, or have attended, a training course consistent with the National Equal Opportunities Training Strategy. During the inspection HMIE staff witnessed training in diversity that they considered to be of high quality, but as noted in para 3.11 they also observed three separate incidents in other classes where the expected standards were not maintained.

3.27 The arrangements for evaluating instructors at the College have been described earlier in this section. The shortcomings found by HMIE may indicate that the evaluation processes may not be sufficiently frequent or robust, and HMIC considers that both the training and evaluation of delivery merit review.

#### Recommendation 5

HMIC recommends that the College provide additional diversity training, or a different type of diversity training, to teaching staff. It should also review arrangements for assessing and monitoring teaching staff and develop a robust and consistent system to promote the maintenance of appropriate standards, particularly in relation to diversity and equality issues.

#### Staff Appraisal

3.28 Support staff are currently appraised using the Scottish Executive appraisal system. Shortly before the inspection, the College started to operate the HRS human resource system being developed by the Scottish Police Information Strategy (SPIS). This system supports the new performance development review (PDR), which will replace the existing national police appraisal system and which was the subject of a recent successful trial on behalf of ACPOS by Grampian Police. The College will shortly introduce this new appraisal system, though as HMIC learned during the inspection, these new arrangements will apply only to College support staff.

3.29 The appraisal of police officers seconded to the College is currently governed by practice within their home force. This means that whilst the core principles of appraisal and evidencing behaviour and performance throughout the year will be consistent, supervisors must be conversant with a variety of reporting systems. This does not appear to be efficient practice, particularly when the College will have access to the new ACPOS-approved system of appraisal. Some College staff expressed concern that moving away from the home force appraisal process might in some ways disadvantage the officers concerned, for example with regard to promotion processes at force. Given that all appraisal processes have the same aim, and that the new process is designed to be a national arrangement, HMIC does not believe that this should be the case.

3.30 It was noted that a new system of appraisal for probationary students has been developed in liaison with the team developing the PDR. The new approach allows teaching staff to submit evidence on student performance at any stage. When recording the information they are provided with a clear competency based structure, supplemented by descriptors which help to assess whether performance is competent or still developing.

3.31 Staff and managers in all organisations need to be and feel part of the same, consistently applied system. They also need unity of management and responsibility. As suggested at the beginning of this Chapter, the people management needs of all staff at Tulliallan would be best served by these being much more closely aligned with the College itself, within the SPSA.

3.32 Consequently, the issue of appraisal should be considered in the context of the forthcoming personnel arrangements for the SPSA as well as for other staff secondments outwith the SPSA. HMIC considers that staff on secondment for a year or more should, wherever possible, be appraised under the new PDR arrangements, with management delivered by the organisation to which they are seconded and home forces being updated as required.

### Recommendation 6

HMIC recommends that ACPOS discuss with the SPSA, and other organisations to which Scottish officers are seconded, the potential for seconded staff to be appraised, where possible, using the new personal development review system. Also that appraisal processes be led, managed and maintained by the organisation to which staff are seconded, with copies of all relevant documentation being shared with forces.

# 4. PARTNERSHIP & RESOURCES

## Partnership Arrangements

4.1 The principal partnership the College has is with ACPOS and police forces. This places the College in a somewhat unique position, in that it is a partner as well as a service provider in a contractor/client relationship. To keep a proper balance between these two relationships is a challenge, but HMIC considers that both must be maintained. The contractor/client relationship should be more easily understood and practiced with the advent of the SPSA.

4.2 The partnership aspect comes from the need for a shared vision for the police service in Scotland. It is too simplistic to picture success at the College as being limited to producing staff who have received identified training. Success should extend to delivering new 'public value' through improved policing, delivered by people who have gained skills from College training. The College's contribution to Scottish policing goes beyond training to the forming and norming of partnership relationships on an individual and group basis. The common factor to all police officers in Scotland is the College: it is where their introduction to the service begins and where managers and leaders develop their thinking, their skills and their personal networks within the service, throughout their careers.

4.3 Part of the more tangible reciprocation of that contribution is the supply of police officers from forces to the College to act as instructors, without which the College could not operate effectively.

4.4 A third aspect of this partnership approach is the ability and willingness of the College to react to emerging demands in the policing arena, to amend existing training or meet new training demands. Elsewhere in this inspection report it has been suggested that such willingness may have recently contributed to a situation where there is no firm control from the ACPOS side of training prioritisation. Nevertheless, it would be detrimental to Scottish policing to swing completely in the opposite direction and operate the relationship as strictly contractor/client without a sense of partnership.

4.5 The principles of the contractor/client arrangement are essential, however, as the SPSA comes into being. The police service, through ACPOS, must strive to ensure that it gets the best possible value for money from its investment in the College and that the College's contribution to training and policing in general reflects the considered need. Scottish Ministers and Parliament will be equally keen to be assured, through a clear line of accountability, that public investment in police training is delivering what is needed. And Ministers in particular will hold the SPSA to account for achieving its stated aims and objectives on police training, and will expect the College to contribute to the Government's agenda for transforming public services.

4.6 The College Executive team currently leads liaison with the police service, through frequent visits to forces and participation in ACPOS Business Areas. This is supported by liaison between all training divisions and police forces. HMIC found the relationship between Probationer Training Division and training staff in forces in particular to be strong. As has

already been observed in Chapter 1, these contacts should persist after the advent of the SPSA, but decision-making between the partners which affects the content or delivery of training should be progressed through a new contractor/client relationship between the Authority and ACPOS.

4.7 Outwith the police service in Scotland, the College has established a variety of partnerships. Of significant importance is the relationship between the College and educational establishments that assist in delivering training or accredit College courses. In particular, Stirling University is closely involved in the accreditation of the probationer training programme, and the Scottish Qualifications Authority is involved in the new diploma in leadership and management. The development of these relationships is beneficial not only to the College but to the police service as a whole, as it enhances the credibility of training and professionalism in Scottish policing.

4.8 In terms of personnel numbers, the police service is the most significant component of the justice sector. Partnership working in this arena offers opportunities to share best practice and learn more about the aims, objectives and working practices of the other components, to improve service delivery. Whilst there is clearly some interaction there appears to be scope for greater involvement with Skills for Justice, the dedicated sector skills council for the justice sector. There are clear links between Skills for Justice and the College, given their shared goals of workforce development, but HMIC would have expected these links to be more prominent.

4.9 There is considerable expertise and intellectual property within the College which it can share with partners in and outside the service. One such product noted during the inspection was the detailed and structured environmental scanning. Although this focuses on issues from the College perspective, much of the generic content could routinely be shared with forces through ACPOS to minimise duplication of effort. **HMIC suggests that the College and ACPOS liaise on the development of environmental scanning, to ensure that information is shared across the police service and duplication of effort is avoided.**

4.10 During the inspection HMIC found that the international links which the College has established also reflect positively on policing in Scotland and, by extension, on the country itself. The College has introduced an International Development Unit, headed by a chief inspector. Working closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, this officer co-ordinates interaction with developing nations seeking to improve their policing and hoping to benefit from the skills of the Scottish service. Of particular note is the work undertaken in Guyana to help develop a business development plan for the Guyana Police Service. HMIC noted that every effort was made to recover the cost of the chief inspector post through charging for his services and thereby eliminating the resource impact on college staffing.

4.11 The College has also made links with police forces and investigative bodies in the United States of America, Canada, Australia and the Netherlands, as well as played host to visitors from across the globe. Whilst this interaction is beneficial, HMIC found little evidence that the choice of foreign country or police force followed any particular rationale. The previous Director had also worked hard to raise Scotland's profile on the European policing stage, and it may well be the case that interacting with European policing organisations will be more fruitful, relevant and appropriate in coming years than will contact with the New World. However, during the inspection none of the many staff at the College who were asked to point to benefits or improvements which this had brought to the College, could do so.

4.12 In addition, given the different policing environments in other countries it was surprising to find few examples of partnership with policing services in England, Wales or Ireland, where the policing environment is similar to that in Scotland. HMIC considers that the College would benefit from a more strategic and structured approach to developing partnerships, within and outwith the policing environment, to ensure that the service derives maximum benefit from the necessary investment of resources which partnership demands. HMIC suggests that in setting its strategies to achieve its overall aims the College provide a clearer articulation of the aims and purposes of its partnership working, thus enabling a review of current work and providing direction for future development, particularly in the justice sector and in British and European policing.

4.13 The inspection found clear positive links between the College and the community of Kincardine. This extends beyond community access to the grounds and facilities at Tulliallan, to the College hosting events and making charitable contributions. HMIC was impressed with the way the College approaches community relations, recognising the impact it has on the local environment and its people.

### Resource Management

4.14 Staffing levels within divisions appear to follow historical development rather than being based on any structured assessment that would align staff numbers to delivering functions. Although staffing levels in the Road Policing Division have increased to address greater demand in the area of surveillance, training divisions generally appear to deliver training up to the capacity of staff to deliver same, instead of staff numbers being defined by the training demand. This situation will change as the number of completed design specifications for training courses, such as that used for probationer training courses, grows.

4.15 It did not appear to HMIC that any training being delivered was inappropriate or that there was an imbalance between demand and capacity. But in the absence of any structured assessment of the resource implications of the training syllabus, this cannot be verified. The lack of any such assessment must also hinder the movement of staff within the College and the prioritisation of demands from ACPOS.

4.16 This clearly links to the need for a national training strategy (see para 5.10), the current funding position (see para 4.17) and the need to improve the budget setting process, all of which the SPSA will wish to consider together.

### Finance

4.17 The College is directly funded by the Scottish Executive. Funding levels tend to follow historical provision, although the College does submit funding bids each year. These bids reflect demand from both training and support divisions, who submit funding requests based on their operational goals.

4.18 A proportion of the budget is devolved to divisions, including lecture fees, staff training, protective clothing, and travel and subsistence. Where the budget allocated by the Scottish Executive does not match the levels sought by divisions, the College Executive adjusts allocations accordingly. The devolved budgets exclude some expenditure which is managed centrally, of which staff salaries is the most significant. The devolved management appears to be effective, with frequent reporting to the Head of Administrative Services who provides an overview of the position.



4.19 The budget that incorporates printing is not devolved to divisions but is managed by the Head of Communications and IT. HMIC could find no reason for this anomaly. This is a significant budget, partially because it incorporates lease costs for reprographic equipment but also because of the large volume of training materials printed. Without responsibility for these costs, divisions have no incentive to pursue efficiency in this area. An example is the vast difference in cost between printing documents in black and white and printing in colour, where the 'customer' in the shape of divisional staff can choose between the two while unaware of any subsequent effect on budget. Given the potential benefit of devolving this budget head, HMIC considers it to be worthy of consideration.

4.20 In addition to the above, devolving staff salaries to divisions may stimulate more innovative approaches to training delivery. The potential to devolve some energy costs may be prevented by technical difficulties, but merits examination. **With the aim of securing Best Value, HMIC suggests that the SPSA seek a review of the extent of devolved budgeting within the College.**

4.21 In speaking to chief officers across Scotland for the purpose of this inspection, HMIC noted a majority but not unanimous view that the College delivers both best practice and good value. Those who did not hold this view felt that while it might well be the case, proving it would be difficult with the information currently available. Having completed the inspection, HMIC must also conclude that there is insufficient information to assess this properly. To demonstrate that the training delivered at the College delivers Best Value would require an understanding of how it compares financially with other institutions, in addition to performing other qualitative and quantitative comparisons. The College has previously completed activity based costing, and was conducting another similar exercise at the time of the inspection, but has not routinely analysed training cost. This issue is allied to earlier comment on benchmarking to improve delivery or demonstrate quality (see para 2.20).

### Recommendation 7

HMIC recommends that the SPSA seek independent advice and liaise with other UK police training providers, to identify means of measuring costs over time that represent performance and can be benchmarked with other training in the UK and elsewhere as appropriate.

4.22 The funding process has been commented upon above. Developing suitable costing mechanisms may help the SPSA to allocate funding appropriately and to engage with ACPOS on training issues. The importance of training to the continued improvement of the service cannot be overstated, and there is a clear need for funding to be understood in order for training to be properly prioritised. The SPSA will undoubtedly realise for itself that early efforts will be needed to develop mechanisms for budgeting across its component parts, and that ACPOS and the Scottish Executive will need to be consulted on how any future growth is funded or how any savings resulting from decreased need are handled, for all SPSA support services. HMIC simply takes this early opportunity to flag this up.

### Recommendation 8

HMIC recommends that the SPSA consult with ACPOS and the Scottish Executive to agree the basis for funding any overall growth in training provision, and for handling savings in the event of any decrease in training need.

## External Audit

4.23 The most recent audit by the Scottish Executive Financial and Central Services Department, Audit Services was reported in April 2005. That audit was a risk-based review intended to provide an opinion on the systems of internal financial control within the College. The report concluded that the College had established a sound system of internal control and had a strong focus on achieving value for money and maximising income. Financial records were well maintained.

4.24 Further development of asset and inventory control procedures was one of 15 recommendations detailed in the report. A follow-up check on progress in March 2006 found that 13 of the recommendations had been implemented, with the remaining two partially implemented.

## Internal Audit

4.25 The College has a defined protocol for internal audit, reviewing one division each month. This is a positive approach to assist in maintaining and developing good practice and should ensure that, despite the high levels of change and innovation, divisions do not lose sight of daily management responsibilities.

4.26 Looking at the questions asked by the audit process, HMIC felt that some of these could be improved. There are a number of issues, for instance, which can be addressed by assessing compliance with established College procedures. An example is in the area of lost and found property, where divisions are questioned on the procedures adopted despite there being a College policy in this regard. It would be more appropriate to ask whether College policy is followed, and for the audit to examine records that evidence this.

4.27 HMIC was surprised to find that the social integration of staff was an area for review. While the importance of team working in a residential setting is not disputed, staff participation in social events outwith working hours is a matter of personal choice, and where they elect not to get involved this should not be seen as a negative factor.

## Best Value

4.28 The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 gave powers to both the Accounts Commission and HMIC to scrutinise the response of police authorities to the provisions of the Act relating to Best Value. Although the Act applies to police authorities, as opposed to police forces or police organisations, virtually all work on Best Value has been undertaken by the latter. Only recently have police authorities begun to address this matter themselves.

4.29 The College has carried out several Best Value service reviews over the last five years. Most of these have been of higher level subjects, e.g. energy management (completed in 2002) and property management (completed in 2005), although some lower level topics have also been reviewed, e.g. reprographics (completed in 2006). HMIC noted that the College had introduced a post review process, to monitor the implementation of recommendations coming from service reviews.

4.30 At the time of the inspection no further service reviews had been scheduled. This was said to be due to the work ongoing in the Common Police Services Project Board, the intention being that when the SPSA is established a joint review would be done to identify areas for improvement. Nevertheless HMIC feels that by thus deferring further Best Value work, the momentum has been lost somewhat. This appears to stem from a view within the College of less emphasis being placed on Best Value nationally. However, the College continues to use the principles of EFQM to identify areas of continuous improvement in its services.

4.31 It would be a mistake to assume that nationally Best Value is being afforded lower priority. Best value is being rolled out across the public sector, including the police service, and considerable work is underway to determine the most suitable model to be applied to police authorities. With the formal establishment of the SPSA now only a few months away, the College should anticipate discussions with this new body by coming to its own view on areas of the College that need to be reviewed. This would allow the College to build on the good work that has been done to date.

## Property Management

4.32 The Scottish Police College is set in 90 acres of land surrounding Tulliallan Castle. The grounds are attractive and well maintained, which is a credit not only to estates staff but also to other College users who clearly take pride in their surroundings. The training and recreation facilities were, in general, considered to be of a high standard and during the inspection the College environment was universally praised as positively enhancing the training experience.

4.33 The College buildings have evolved through various developments over the past 50 years. The inspection found that the majority were of a high standard and fit for purpose. There were, though, some exceptions. A minor issue was the layout of some classrooms in Probationer Training Division, where it was noted that some students would have difficulty seeing the viewing screen.

4.34 Of more concern was the transformation of single occupancy study rooms into double rooms, due to the pressures on bedroom accommodation. The problem was particularly acute in smaller rooms where bunk beds had been installed. It is true that many students who were spoken to had not found this overly problematic, but it was also clear that others had found it a difficult environment in which to live. Those especially affected tended to be probationary students who have to spend 15 weeks at the College.

4.35 HMIC has similar concerns about the condition of buildings at Blackhall House, a very old property within the College grounds occupied by Property Services. These buildings provide office accommodation for 13 staff and, being a conversion, are not well laid out for the purpose. The primary problem, however, is the presence of a bat roost in the loft, which prevents some of the building being used and makes the continued use of the rest of the building a matter of concern. As bats are a protected species, options to move them out of the building are limited. The potential impact on health means that the only option may consequently be to relocate staff.

4.36 A business case has been prepared seeking funding to construct additional bedroom and classroom accommodation. This recognises the limitations that the current accommodation imposes on training capacity. The business case considers several options and advocates constructing new accommodation. Though the report provided detail in many respects, HMIC felt there was scope to contain all the considered options in the final analysis. This could have allowed solution to be considered that used a mixture of options or for alternative bedroom solutions. The use of local hotel or bed-and-breakfast accommodation was not included, while scant reference to the benefits of College staff delivering training within forces, which received positive comment, was made. It is relevant to highlight practice that HMIC observed in Eire, where a large number of students at the Garda Siochana College at Templemore reside in the community.

4.37 The issues of accommodation will be an early area for SPSA to consider, and HMIC would expect the problems highlighted to receive consideration as a priority within this process.

### Recommendation 9

HMIC recommends that, as a matter of priority, the SPSA review existing accommodation at the College and the options available to address current shortfalls in terms of both standard and capacity, and develop plans to resolve these issues.

4.38 Maintaining College buildings is managed using a three-year plan of works that prioritises making buildings wind and water tight. The plan of works also incorporates work necessary to make the College compliant with disability requirements. Though some matters in this regard were outstanding at the time of inspection, namely the upgrading of some lifts and dealing with entrances where steps remained, these were included in the three-year plan.

4.39 One final disability access issue which, due to cost is not on the three-year plan, is the need to upgrade one of the castle lifts itself which is too small to meet access requirements. It is understood that a replacement of the appropriate size would require the whole lift shaft to be rebuilt at considerable expense.

4.40 A further significant expense is in the area of energy management. Older buildings at the College are heated using an ageing system that cannot be controlled using a zoned building management system. As a result, many areas are heated unnecessarily, at a consequent cost. To achieve greater energy efficiency would require significant investment. A Best Value review of energy management was conducted in 2002, since when most of the recommendations have been addressed. HMIC suggests that it may be an opportune time to revisit the Best Value review of energy management to assess actual and potential savings, and to consider in general how those matters that present significant cost implications might best be addressed.

## Estate Security

4.41 The College estate does not have a perimeter security fence and members of the public have access to the College grounds. Given the College's involvement with and contribution to the community of Kincardine, there is understandably no desire to alter this arrangement. HMIC acknowledges that this approach is both realistic and appropriate, but considers that improvements could be made to building security. At present, door access is via the main reception entrance or via mechanical key pads – a system which has inherent difficulties such as the need to change codes and to ensure that all staff are aware of and protect new codes. The College previously examined the introduction of a card operated door entry system, but the estimated costs, which included the cost of changing bedroom door locks, were considered prohibitive. Restricting such a system to building access would greatly reduce costs and HMIC suggests that this option be reviewed as a priority. **HMIC suggests that the College review building perimeter security and present options for improvement for the SPSA's consideration.**

## Vehicle Fleet Management

4.42 The College maintains a fleet of 58 vehicles, used in training for advanced drivers, pursuit, surveillance and for general purpose use. The size and constitution of the fleet reflects demand, particularly the number of advanced driver training students. A variety of factors influence vehicle selection, including user consultation and cost, and purchasing is conducted in line with national agreements. The vehicles are maintained in accordance with national guidelines, and an additional external vehicle recovery contract is in place. Overall responsibility for fleet management rests with the Head of the Road Policing Division.

4.43 Collisions involving College vehicles are not frequent. Over recent years, the few that have occurred involved drivers undergoing training. In each case College policy has been followed, whereby the 'collision manager' (Head of Road Policing) is notified immediately and decides whether the local police need to be notified (as in all cases where there is damage to any vehicle or property not belonging to the College). All collisions are investigated and a subsequent report to the Deputy Director is drawn up by the collision manager. Where the driver is a police officer, the circumstances dictate whether or not the officer's home force is notified.

4.44 HMIC acknowledges the College's concern that notifying home forces of relatively minor accidents might reflect negatively on the officers concerned and deter them from taking advanced driver training or instruction. Despite this, HMIC considers that the home force should be routinely informed. It is difficult to predict whether a road accident will have some consequence for an officer at a later stage and forces should have the information available. When providing this information it could be added that it should not necessarily reflect negatively on the officer.

4.45 HMIC also recognises that there is no legal requirement, and it may be considered of no benefit, to report accidents to local police where there has been no injury or damage to other property. Whilst accepting this, HMIC would expect that all but the most minor of accidents be reported. This approach would acknowledge the uncertainty of future events (e.g. passengers in a vehicle may later seek to take legal action) and thus protect the passengers, driver and employer in the event of any future claims. In addition, the resulting external independent scrutiny of such accidents would add integrity to the process. HMIC suggests that the College review procedures both for reporting road collisions involving College vehicles to the police forces in whose areas they occur and for advising police forces of collisions in which their officers were driving.

4.46 The College's practice of investigating accidents internally was introduced as a mechanism to drive future improvement. While the limited number of collisions shows little in the way of particular trends, it has highlighted a problem with skid situations involving some modern performance vehicles following an accident. Training was subsequently amended as a result of the lessons learned. HMIC considers the practice of examining road collisions involving college vehicles, and of incorporating any lessons learned into subsequent training, to be an example of good practice that may be transferable within the police service.

### Procurement Processes

4.47 The College is bound by Scottish Executive procurement guidelines. Major contracts, such as the those for providing catering or housekeeping, are entered into only following a full written submission tender process. Where appropriate the College takes advantage of government contracts, such as for the purchase of vehicles, furniture and IT equipment.

4.48 The Scottish Executive external auditors considered the procurement processes to be satisfactory, although some weakness was identified in connection with procuring outside lecturers. A practice had developed in training divisions whereby the services of outside lecturers were being secured outwith procurement guidelines. The Head of Administrative Services has consequently circulated additional guidance, while one division has included a review of contract arrangements in its objectives. However, HMIC found some divisions to be slower to follow this lead. HMIC suggests that the College ensure that best practice in procuring visiting lecturing staff is applied consistently across all divisions.

### Project Management

4.49 The College follows PRINCE2 methodology for managing projects, in support of which training was recently delivered to ten members of staff. A formal structure has been introduced to support project management, which requires a project initiation document to be formally submitted before a project can commence. The College Executive decides whether a project will go ahead, and once underway the PRINCE2 trained staff will assist with the project. Corporate Development is responsible for monitoring projects, which are regularly reviewed and co-ordinated at College Management Team meetings.

4.50 During the inspection HMIC found ten ongoing projects underway, the majority of which were not being run by the staff members trained in PRINCE2 methodology. HMIC would expect to see this change in the future, with greater involvement from trained staff to improve both the management of projects and the knowledge and understanding of the individuals themselves.

## Information and Communication Technology

4.51 The College is involved in national planning for IT, including the ACPOS High Level Technical Blueprint and Roadmap. The strategic direction of the College is consistent with the national perspective. The area of IT is increasingly integral to delivering training, as testified to by increases to the number of IT staff, including developers and analysts. Within the College an IT Project Board with cross-division representation oversees proposals for new work and projects. This structure helps to ensure that capacity is not exceeded.

4.52 Recognising the importance of IT, the inspection also examined the College's plans for disaster recovery. HMIC found these plans to be insufficiently detailed for use by anyone unfamiliar with the systems. There were no details on network configuration or where passwords would be stored. Nor were there details of the incident response team, or their equivalent, who could decide what might constitute a disaster and the course of action necessary. Similarly there was no information about testing and the results of such tests. HMIC would also have expected to see a risk management plan and perhaps a cross-training programme, an agreement with a specialist data recovery firm or a list of those to ask for help. **HMIC suggests that the College consider the growing body of available information and good practice around business continuity, and reinforce its IT disaster recovery procedures accordingly.**

## Information Assurance

4.53 There is a clear security policy for the College, which details staff responsibilities and encompasses issues relative to security states, security of IT equipment and data. The roles of senior information risk owner, senior system owner and information security officer were clearly identified. However, at the time of the inspection the duties of the information security officer, who was on maternity leave, had fallen to the College staff officer. Given the demands already placed on that member of staff, this constitutes a lack of resilience which HMIC hopes will be resolved within the new SPSA structure.

4.54 During 2006 the College underwent a Community Security Policy health check by the Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO). They were assessed as being 67% compliant and an action plan was developed to address shortcomings. Some slippage in the action plan was noted, apparently due to the aforementioned lack of resilience.

4.55 The absence of the information security officer has meant that responsibility for management of data protection requests has also fallen to the College staff officer. The College has clear policies regarding retaining and disclosing personal data, but the nature of its business is such that requests are extremely rare. The position for freedom of information is identical, with policy and procedures laid out but requests for information rare. Details of the publication scheme are available on the College website. However, some aspects, including policy content, were found to be out of date.

### Environmental Policies

4.56 The College has a policy in place for waste disposal, which includes recycling. The vehicle fleet, including high performance vehicles used for advanced driver training, is being replaced with diesel fuelled vehicles. As regards energy efficiency, information suggesting good practice is circulated periodically. However the Inspectorate found little evidence to indicate that these suggestions had been successful. The age of some parts of the building estate, and the limitations of building services, restrict the opportunities for energy efficiency referred to earlier. Notwithstanding this, HMIC would liked to have seen more innovative and dynamic approaches in this area. As noted earlier in this report, a review of the 2002 Best Value review of energy management may be appropriate.

### Catering Provision

4.57 A significant proportion of the College budget not allocated to staff costs is dedicated to College catering. The College must consequently ensure that the catering being provided meets appropriate standards. A variety of comments on these standards were voiced during the inspection. Whilst some considered the quality to be poor, others were complimentary on the range and quality, particularly when taking into account the funds provided for feeding each student.

4.58 Given the significant cost, the College will wish to confirm that the quality of food being served meets desired standards. The views of individual members of staff and students on food quality will inevitably be subjective, hence the range of views expressed during the inspection. HMIC suggests that the College explore whether there is an expert body which could undertake some review of catering quality. Some benchmarking with other similar establishments on issues of quality and cost may also be of value.



# 5. PROCESSES

## Policy and Procedure

5.1 College policy and procedures are published on its Intranet, and thus are available to all staff. Clear guidance is provided on how policies should be constructed, including issues of format, ownership and review. Each policy must have a compliance and equality impact assessment and all changes to the policy document are recorded, providing a clear audit trail. Corporate Development oversees policy management, assisted by a tracking system which details all current policies and provides a schedule of review.

5.2 At the time of the inspection it was noted that not all policies had been subject to the compliance and equality impact assessment. The requirement to assess policies for diversity compliance is not a new issue for the police service, so HMIC was disappointed to note the possibility that existing policies might be discriminatory. Of further concern was a lack of clarity on whose responsibility it is to assess policies for diversity compliance. There appeared to be a general expectation that the diversity training co-ordinator would perform this function, but this was not a clearly defined aspect of that role. **Through the schedule of review, the shortcomings in completing the compliance and equality impact assessment of policies should be addressed. HMIC will examine progress on this during the next inspection.**

## Training Syllabus

5.3 During the inspection HMIC found forces generally to be happy with the range of training provided by the College. One concern though, was the difficulty of establishing how an overview of training provision is maintained. There also appears to be a lack of clarity about the process used to prioritise training demand, or indeed around whether any process is used to assess whether demand amounts to need. Simplistically, it might be said that the College provides training in response to ACPOS requirements. In truth it actually responds, perhaps too readily, to a variety of influences from forces, ACPOS business areas and other external bodies.

5.4 The inspection team found evidence of good communication and co-ordination between the College and forces, particularly with regard to PTD. Indeed steps have been taken by the College and the ACPOS Training Sub Committee to minimise any unnecessary training overlap. Nevertheless it was clear that some duplication does exist. In addition, some reassurance that the split between training delivered centrally and in forces is achieving the proper balance, would be beneficial.

5.5 There is no consistently followed or applied method of assessing need in the wider context of all police training. Nor is it obvious that any group outwith the College, acting on behalf of the service, has an overview of what training the service requires from the College and elsewhere.

5.6 Historically it has been assumed that the ACPOS Personnel and Training Business Area provides this overview, through the auspices of the Training Sub Committee. In recent years, however, the relationship between specialist training areas at the College and the respective ACPOS business areas has perhaps altered the dynamics and diluted the intended effect of that co-ordination. For example, the Crime and Road Policing business areas do not filter their demands through the ACPOS Personnel and Training Business Area but have direct input to the relevant training divisions.

5.7 Whilst direct dialogue between business areas and relevant training divisions is wholly appropriate, the absence of a 'clearing house' to ensure that service demand is centrally co-ordinated is a barrier to prioritising training need. Under the current structure, any changes in a business area's needs will require the training division to revise its programme to accommodate these. Alternatively, the College Executive may seek to consider what alternative mechanisms for delivering training might help to meet the demand.

5.8 HMIC believes that the creation of the SPSA will greatly help to clarify the relationship. As the training customer ACPOS should first define its training priorities, matched to policing priorities, before asking the SPSA to provide training solutions. HMIC has been advised that the structure of the Personnel and Training Business Area is currently being reviewed, which should assist with this. Recommendation 2, which advocates a single 'intelligent customer', is also intended to address this most critical issue in the development of relationships between ACPOS and the SPSA.

5.9 It must be assumed that the SPSA, in an effort to identify best value for the police service, will look at a range of training options and that these may include outsourcing or alternative police service provision. However, as intimated elsewhere in this report, it is important for the health of the police service as well as for the viability of the College that the latter retains a significant majority of the police training in Scotland which is best delivered nationally. Emerging lessons from elsewhere in the UK suggest that the disintegration of core police training may cause more problems than it cures.

### Training Strategy

5.10 During the inspection, the matter of the lack of a specific police training strategy was raised on several occasions. Whereas under the current structure a training strategy would be compiled and owned by ACPOS, after March 2007 the SPSA will take on this responsibility. Prioritising training need and managing how that need is met would benefit significantly from the framework that such a strategy could deliver. This would link to the establishment of a single 'intelligent customer', as proposed in Recommendation 2.

5.11 Feeding into the development of such a strategy would need to be a co-ordinated piece of research, evidence gathering and analysis, and consultation. This could include three main elements. First, SPSA would wish to learn from ACPOS whether training courses currently provided are absolutely fit for purpose or whether adjustments are required, and how important these are compared with anticipated future needs. The SPSA could accomplish this by reviewing the nature of training courses currently provided at the College.

5.12 Secondly, additional national and local training needs of the service which are not currently met by the College, including training in specialisms such as firearms and public order, should be examined. So too should the extent to which local training fits or does not fit with the College syllabus.

5.13 As the role of the SPSA evolves, it seems likely that discussion will be required on the management structures for all training staff and resources. It may be that the SPSA will consider creating a training directorate structure similar to that created for information and communications technology. In the meantime though, HMIC believes that it will be important to define the relationship between, and the management of, all training resources, whether based at the College or elsewhere. Without this definition it seems likely that overlaps and duplication in training provision may continue.

5.14 Thirdly, there needs to be a scoping exercise of possible future training needs, again led by SPSA but drawing heavily on ACPOS' views. This exercise would need to include a broad environmental scan, reference to the ACPOS People Strategy, consultation with key partners (particularly Scottish Ministers, the Scottish Executive Justice Department, criminal justice partners and COSLA), and a study of available data and analysis (e.g. the Scottish Strategic Assessment and national social and economic statistics).

5.15 These three pieces of work, assessed together and in consultation with ACPOS, would give SPSA an overall picture of the current and likely future training needs of the police service in Scotland. The scoping of future needs would clearly require updating periodically, possibly every three years. From this wider perspective, SPSA could begin to consider options for training provision, consulting with ACPOS on preferred solutions, leading to the creation of a strategy.

5.16 The training strategy could also usefully consider when officers should receive developmental training for promotion or transfers, and whether such developmental training should be compulsory before career progression.

5.17 But more importantly, creating a training strategy for the police service could be an opportunity to address the wider need to professionalise mainstream policing by improving the ways in which skills and knowledge are maintained and developed throughout an individual's career. This inspection found the training profile of a police officer's career to remain very front-loaded. An officer who remains in the constable rank in core policing is likely to receive little except technical training (e.g. driving and IT) after their first two years of initial training. This problem extends to other officers, including those in promoted posts, albeit the further officers advance through promoted ranks the more regular training they are likely to experience.

5.18 HMIC believes that greater emphasis should be placed on providing constables with training updates or 'boosters' throughout their service, to ensure, by examining their competencies, that they remain properly equipped to continue in that role.

5.19 Closely allied to this, Government and ACPOS must recognise that the nature and pattern of working is changing. The police service profile is moving away from 30-year careers and young people who join the job for an active and varied life may not wish to continue working in the same way when they are older. The accreditation of College courses is an extremely useful way of showing that constables have eminently transferable skills that are of value outwith the service.

### Recommendation 10

HMIC recommends that the SPSA, in consultation with ACPOS, conduct an exercise to:

- assess the service need for the training currently provided by the College;
- examine those additional national and local training needs of the service which are not currently met by the College, including training in specialisms such as firearms and public order, and the extent to which local training fits or does not fit with the College syllabus; and
- scope the medium to long-term training needs of the service and review this periodically (e.g. 3–5 years).

### Recommendation 11

HMIC recommends that the SPSA use the products of Recommendation 10 to formulate a training strategy for co-ordinating all police training in Scotland, including local training being provided by forces.

### Recommendation 12

HMIC recommends that ACPOS and the Scottish Executive consider how best to maintain and develop professional skills, knowledge and personal motivation throughout the career of police officers, particularly constables, including the possibility of introducing periodic booster training and confirmation of qualification assessments.

## Training Development

5.20 A Training Development Policy is in place to guide development of the content of College training courses. The policy incorporates student assessment, course accreditation and evaluation. All revisions to training or development of new training should be project managed using PRINCE2 project management methodology, while a training needs analysis (TNA) must be core to any review. **HMIC will wish to consider compliance with project management methodology during a future inspection.**

5.21 Course development has, nonetheless, followed a structured approach. Leadership and Management Division recently reviewed its Initial Leadership Development Programme (ILDLP), which is targeted at sergeants and first-line managers. The training requirement for such staff was reviewed using a structured approach based on CIRO (context; inputs; reactions; and outcomes) methodology. This took into account a number of factors, including the TNA supporting development of the previous version of the course, subsequent environmental change, student evaluation of the training, consultation with forces, and the result of a pilot exercise in Strathclyde.

5.22 A proactive approach to assessing service needs was also apparent. Crime Management Division (CMD) recognised that a proportion of staff from forces who received specialist training were not making use of their new skills. Rather than continually increase force capacity beyond requirement, the division liaised with forces to assess the number of

staff with relevant skills and the extent to which they were used. Rather than continue to train more staff, CMD thereafter proposed to develop refresher training for those who had been trained but had not used the skills. Whilst this process was at an early stage at the time of inspection, it offers an opportunity to ease the training burden on both the College and forces and would allow priorities to be reassessed.

5.23 As has been noted elsewhere in this report, a major part of the training delivered by the College is the probationer training programme. Following a review of probationer training, a detailed Design Specification was developed in 2003 to support the introduction of a new programme. As this programme is accredited through Stirling University, it had to be re-validated in 2006. The latest assessment has endorsed the educational validity of the training for a further three years.

5.24 The College maintains records of attendance on training courses which it publishes in its Annual Report. These figures show that many courses have experienced shortfalls in the numbers of people attending them. HMIC was pleased to find evidence of divisions taking remedial action to address this inefficiency. However, there was no evidence of a systematic approach across divisions that might indicate that good practice was being shared or that performance information was influencing future training provision. Nor was addressing attendance shortfalls an objective for any of the training divisions. One division where the issue of poor attendance was not a problem was the Probationer Training Division. Here the number of students accommodated exceeded the optimum number. Whilst not an ideal situation, HMIC found that the College's willingness and flexibility to react positively to force recruitment fluctuations is greatly appreciated by the service.

## Coaching and Mentoring

5.25 HMIC research into other police training facilities found an increase in coaching and mentoring arrangements in the workplace to support training programmes. There were some examples of this at the College, specifically in terms of the Accelerated Promotion Scheme for graduates and with regard to the Police National Assessment Centre.

5.26 Perhaps the best example is the tutoring arrangements for probationary officers, which demonstrate the strong links between the College and forces and the joint aim of delivering integrated training and development. HMIC considers the recent agreement between the College and forces on a consistent national tutor constable training programme to be good practice. It also demonstrates that the College cannot deliver coaching and mentoring alone, but requires the support of forces.

5.27 Whilst recognising that proper coaching and mentoring requires those performing the role to be trained, and that this in itself is an additional burden, HMIC suggests that such arrangements be considered when developing future training programmes.

## Residential Training

5.28 With the exception of one-day courses delivered through the Continuous Professional Development Programme, training at the College has traditionally required students to stay at Tulliallan. How appropriate this expectation is in terms of compliance with diversity legislation and equal opportunities policies has been challenged over recent years. In practical terms for many students there is no alternative to staying at the College, as the distance from

their homes precludes daily travel. Due to its central location, however, many students could reasonably travel from home in less than an hour and for various reasons may prefer to do so.

5.29 There are strong arguments in favour of residential training, particularly on the more intensive courses like the PTD Initial Training Course or the RPD Advanced Driver Training Course. For example, travelling might impact negatively on necessary study time, would limit the bonding with fellow students that most find extremely beneficial, and would restrict the 'informal curriculum' of learning from fellow students in a more relaxed atmosphere away from the classroom. HMIC does not disagree with any of these arguments and indeed supports the idea that almost as much learning is achieved outside the classroom as is within. Nonetheless, students should generally have the right to make their own decisions on these issues. The College recognises this, and no longer expects students to stay at the College whilst on LMD, CMD or RPD training courses. However, HMIC found that students are still automatically allocated a bedroom and that some were still under the misapprehension that they are expected to stay. **Given the demand on College accommodation, HMIC suggests that an opt-in arrangement be considered, whereby students are not automatically allocated accommodation but are provided with this on request.** This would clarify the terms of their attendance and reduce demand for bedrooms. HMIC recognises that this would involve a slight cost to forces in terms of increased travelling expenses. However from the perspective of the service as a whole this would be offset by an increase in training opportunities as a result of the corresponding rise in available accommodation, and should not be seen as an obstacle.

5.30 The College still expects PTD students to stay at the College, although it is not compulsory and exceptions have been made. This approach is justified by the reasons outlined above. In addition, the assessment process for new officers can include comment on activity, performance and behaviour outwith the classroom (albeit the value of this balanced against the right to privacy might be debated). However, discussions with probationary officers revealed general support for the residential element of their training, due to the demands of evening study. HMIC circulated a questionnaire to PTD students during the inspection and again the majority supported residential training for the reasons outlined. Some students did however comment on being required to remain within the College grounds when they wished to leave to attend specific social events, or simply to have some time during the week with their friends or family. This was particularly relevant for some with children.

5.31 HMIC is supportive of the expectation that probationary training is completed on a residential basis, and fully accepts that the ideal situation may be for all students to spend most nights during the week at the College. However, the service as a whole is endeavouring to realign the current work/life balance to one that is more realistic and less work-heavy, and it will not help if the first experience of police life is quite so intrusive and all-pervasive. Equally concerning is the real possibility that potential recruits, particularly those with caring responsibilities, might be deterred from applying because of a perception that they have to stay at the College. The College and forces should therefore make it clear to students and potential recruits that all circumstances will be considered and that where residential training is not a viable option for a recruit, it will not be compulsory. HMIC would expect the College to be innovative in tailoring learning to individual needs in the minority of cases where this might be necessary.

## Working Time

5.32 The College recognises the impact of working time and monitors this through duty sheets, which all staff are responsible for completing. The position for support staff will become clearer with the forthcoming introduction of an electronic signing-in system. A particular difficulty for the College is in determining what parts of residential staff activity should be considered duty, as it is not uncommon for staff to complete work or assist students voluntarily during the evening. Though staff did not express this concern during the inspection, the College will wish to remain aware of the position and ensure that staff maintain a suitable work/life balance.

5.33 HMIC found that certain training divisions took limited note of student working time. An exception to this was PTD, which had stopped compulsory attendance at meal times and had assessed the demands of evening study to remain within the 48 hour weekly average. In other divisions there is less need to study in the evenings, although the intensity of some courses can add to the amount of additional study necessary. The College will wish to be reassured that excessive demands are not being placed on students, recognising that working time can include essential course work that extends to a period beyond the normal teaching day. HMIC suggests that the College, working with relevant representative bodies, assess all courses in relation to working time to ensure compliance with Regulations.

5.34 In relation to course design, little consideration appears to have been given to the possibility of training being delivered over a compressed working week. If some training courses were delivered across four 10-hour days, as opposed to the current five 8-hour days, this might help the work/life balance of staff and students from further afield. It may also present further options for maximising the use of bedroom and classroom accommodation. HMIC recognises that this approach may not be viable for some of the more intensive courses that tend to require evening study, and that there may be logistical difficulties in supporting such an approach. Notwithstanding the potential barriers to a compressed training week, HMIC suggests that the College consider courses where this could be an option.

## Training Delivery

5.35 As part of the inspection, HMIE inspectors were invited to observe some of the training at first hand. Instructors demonstrated a mastery of their specialist subjects, illustrating their points by reference to their practical experience and wider knowledge of policing. Most used an appropriate range of relevant teaching strategies and media, though it was felt that some instructors should question students more in order to check their learning progress. Instructors made themselves available to answer student questions both within and outwith formal teaching sessions. Some of the training delivery was considered to be of an extremely high standard and comparable to very good practice in other further education establishments. In contrast, some of the other inputs failed to meet these high standards and there was no clear mechanism to identify and learn from good examples of training delivery. HMIC suggests that the College may wish to consider ways to identify and share good practice in delivering training, to enable all instructors to learn from the best practice of their colleagues.

5.36 Good relationships between instructors and students were observed, with instructors responsive to student needs. However one challenge to emerge was the difficulty of teaching classes with a broad range of ability, where the pace of learning was too rapid for some students and too slow and insufficiently challenging for others.

5.37 Inspectors found students to be highly motivated and engaged, and saw good examples of ICT and library resources being used effectively. Encouraged to be independent and to reflect on their learning, students used reflective logs and participated in focus groups on the previous day's learning. Students showed good progress in learning during training sessions, and in almost all classes attainment was high or very high.

5.38 Training delivered to PTD students was principally classroom based, though good use was also made of practical training situations. The College has extremely good facilities for practical exercises. As part of the initial course it runs an 'operational' day where students can face a variety of situations. On these days College staff were assisted by staff from forces and actors who take on certain roles to convey greater realism. A particular area of practical training was that of giving evidence in court, where PTD staff were assisted by a representative from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service working at the College, as well as a Sheriff and defence agent. The benefit of this approach is that it ensures a realistic reproduction of what officers will face. The only downside is the time constraints, which prevented the vast majority of students from playing an active role.

5.39 Practical training is consistently well received and beneficial to students, and HMIC applauds the efforts of the College in these areas. As part of a wider research exercise during the inspection, HMIC learned of practice in North Yorkshire, where probationary students complete practical training exercises in public areas such as shopping centres and use members of the public to play roles. Again, the students taking part in these exercises found them beneficial. HMIC suggests that the College examine ways to improve practical training further and consider whether exercises in the public arena would be viable and beneficial.

5.40 The College has created a 'student learning zone' that is accessible to all PTD students. The Zone, which can be accessed from computers within the College, is effectively a website that contains a variety of learning tools including mindmaps, mnemonics, legislative definitions, video clips, and audio clips. These cover the probationer training syllabus and provide a variety of ways for students to learn the course subjects, allowing individuals to identify which learning methods suit them best. This demonstrates the College's understanding that many students have different styles of learning. HMIC considers the development of the 'student learning zone' to be an area of good practice.

### Alternative Methods of Training Delivery

5.41 Providing training to the police service in Scotland requires a broad range of training delivery methods that may go beyond attending the College. The College makes use of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) packages, but is constrained by the lack of an electronically managed learning environment (MLE) which would act as an internet-based host for learning materials. An MLE could be used by all staff across the police service, including officers from outside Scotland, to support the training currently delivered at Tulliallan or in forces and provide a broad range of self-development opportunities.

5.42 The present requirement for ODL packages to be issued in paper format is a barrier both to their effective use and to developing further packages. An effective MLE would not only address this but would support tutor-student interaction and provide discussion/learning fora and a helpdesk.



5.43 Initial attempts to procure an MLE were constrained by the cost, both of setting it up and running it. Nor was the Scottish Police Information Strategy (SPIS) in a position to provide a solution in the short term. The potential for SPIS to deliver a solution in the longer term still leaves an immediate problem, as an MLE is required to support the new Diploma in Leadership and Management. The College has options for an interim solution, for which it will seek support and agreement from ACPOS and SPIS.

5.44 A further factor that must be resolved concerns the application of the Government Protected Marking Scheme (GPMS) to training materials. At present many of the packages which could be used are subject to 'restricted' or 'restricted-commercial' classification, which would prevent their use outwith the secure police networks. But to gain maximum benefit, staff must have the opportunity to access the MLE from home.

### Recommendation 13

HMIC recommends that the College, and the SPSA once operational, progress the introduction of an electronically managed learning environment to support the development of distance learning, and liaise with ACPOS to deliver the system nationally so that all except sensitive information is accessible to all police staff via the internet.

### Critical Incident Simulation Centre

5.45 During the inspection the Critical Incident Simulation Centre was observed in operation. Based in a suite of syndicate rooms linked to a central control room, it places officers at the centre of an ongoing incident and provides a practical learning experience in a safe environment. The Hydra software that is used is recognised as being very effective. HMIC considers the use of this facility to be an example of good practice, and was encouraged by the diverse range of exercises that allow it to be used across College training divisions. The value of this facility was endorsed by students who had participated in exercises and who expressed a desire for further exposure to scenarios that would test their skills and extend their capability.

5.46 HMIC also noted the additional potential of the 'Hydra Lite' package, which allows similar exercises to be held away from the College. The police service in Scotland could make greater use of this tool as these exercises could be run in forces. There seem to be real benefits to this type of training and support for further development would benefit the service. It was noted that Hydra can also be delivered to staff through an MLE, which further supports the need to develop both these systems. **HMIC suggests that the SPSA and ACPOS support further development of Hydra Immersion training to make Hydra Lite training more readily accessible to staff in forces, and increase the exercise options available to support increased practical training and development.**

### Training Evaluation

5.47 The College has a clear structure of evaluation which follows what is known as the Kirkpatrick Model. This internationally established model incorporates the evaluation of training at four different levels, the first three being:

- how people react to the training event;
- how much they learn; and
- how it impacts on their work.

5.48 To prepare this evaluation, students on each course are asked to complete a questionnaire covering relevant issues. A member of LSD also visits a representative sample of courses to ascertain and discuss student views. Workplace evaluation is accomplished by contacting a number of students after the course is completed using a prepared schedule. However the College concedes that this process is not as consistent as it might be due to the number of training courses being delivered and LSD's capacity.

5.49 Though the results of evaluation are used to influence future course content, the inspection did not find these processes to be comprehensive and systematic. The College would benefit from better recording of actions for improvement, and for these to be SMART and monitored appropriately. It was perhaps no surprise therefore that some staff and students failed to see the benefit of the evaluation processes, a factor which could have a detrimental effect on the quality of responses. The College may therefore wish to consider how it manages, markets and resources its evaluation processes.

5.50 The fourth level of the Kirkpatrick Model is evaluation of how the training impacts on the organisation. HMIC recognises the difficulties of measuring impact at this level. Nevertheless, there would appear to be a real need to validate the effectiveness of national training in terms of individual and organisational performance. The new national appraisal system may offer an opportunity for more rigorous review of the impact of training on the performance of individuals, which might in turn create the opportunity for some kind of structured feedback to the College and to ACPOS. The consequence would be validation, or otherwise, of the effectiveness of training from both perspectives.

5.51 The inspection also found scope for teaching staff to be more heavily involved in the regular and systematic evaluation of courses. If such evaluation were to form part of divisional staff meetings, it would enable the aforementioned SMART targets for improvement to be identified and monitored. However at present, it is not included. A further issue was the absence of mechanisms to disseminate good practice across divisions. Whilst some avenues for staff to input to college policy and procedure do exist, HMIC found a few pockets of good practice that did not seem to have been shared between divisions. At head of division level there are meeting structures in place to accommodate this, but some positive developments may be seen as routine business and therefore may not be aired at this forum. This underlines the need, identified elsewhere in this report, for the College to adopt a stronger approach to performance management and organisational learning (see para 2.11).

### Accreditation of Training

5.52 A number of training courses achieve academic recognition through accreditation. The desire of the College to increase the range of courses that benefit from such accreditation is recognised in some divisional objectives. Introducing an accreditation structure around police training which is developmental and relevant to a career outwith the service is a positive step forward. **The academic accreditation of training provides police staff with transferable skills and is evidence of the professionalism of policing. HMIC considers this to be good practice.**

5.53 Fundamental to the accreditation process, however, is the fact that the academic requirements do not supersede the core focus of police training, which is to improve the ability of police staff to deliver a service to their communities. It was apparent that this was not fully recognised by people outwith the College, some of whom were concerned that

course content was being altered to meet academic requirements. The College consequently may care to consider how the issues of course development and accreditation may be better marketed.

## Student Assessment

5.54 In terms of student assessment, HMIC found a variety of methods being used to assess both student performance and learning. This may be appropriate, but in some areas HMIC found little evidence to support the choice of assessment. All courses should have an underpinning design specification that contains an assessment strategy, and all officers attending courses should be subject to some form of assessment. This may be a report on their performance during the course, or the officer may prepare an action plan to demonstrate his or her learning on return to force that can then be evaluated by local line managers. Learning Support Division is increasing the number of courses that have such a design specification.

5.55 The College training development policy is a positive step forward, but perhaps needs to be taken further. While some courses are assessed with a clear pass/fail element, others are developmental and have no such requirement. Though the reflective learning approach encourages staff to self develop, the sums that forces invest in sending their staff to the College merit some show of return. In the absence of some formal process many students may not apply the learning and may view attendance at the College as merely a "tick in the box" exercise. HMIC suggests that the College seek ACPOS support in delivering a more comprehensive system of student assessment, incorporating feedback from line managers in forces.

## Professional Standards

5.56 Alleged misconduct by police officers on secondment at the College is referred to the home force for action in line with force procedures. Misconduct by support staff is dealt with in accordance with a specific College disciplinary policy. Allegations that infer criminal conduct are referred to Fife Constabulary for investigation, under the direction of the Area Procurator Fiscal.

5.57 This multi-tiered approach can create challenges for all those involved. Where conduct issues have a possible criminal element and deal with more than one seconded officer, the chances are that one area procurator fiscal, two deputy chief constables from different forces and the College Executive will all be involved in resolving the matter.

5.58 This is not conducive to shared understanding and quick, consistent resolution. HMIC is aware that ACPOS is currently considering extending its capacity and capability review to cover the area of professional standards. This is in part due to the Inspectorate previously highlighting the fact that few forces have the capacity to conduct proactive professional standards work. Within the review inspection of SCRO, published in December 2006, HMIC recommended that the SPSA have a professional standards capacity. There may be an opportunity here for the SPSA to be given the remit to create a nation-wide capacity and capability for Scotland; this should at least be one of the options considered by ACPOS and ultimately the Scottish Executive.

HMIC suggests that the SPSA examine options for providing a professional standards capability for its own staff, and possibly for proactive work across Scotland, pending the results of any ACPOS review.

## Media and Marketing

5.59 The College operates a policy that provides guidelines for interacting with the media. Where the College has been asked to co-operate with documentary programmes, decisions on whether to participate take account of various factors that include public interest and the College's capacity to accommodate the resulting demands. Requests for information from the media are channelled through the College staff officer, who then liaises with the College Executive, Scottish Executive Media Unit or home forces as required.

5.60 People seeking information about the College can visit its internet website. Site content is managed by a web developer within the IT Division. A user group has been set up to support intranet use and allow divisions to update their sections directly, subject to defined guidelines. This work will feed into an ongoing content management system project that IT Division is implementing. **HMIC noted that some aspects of internet content were not up to date and will be interested to view progress during the next inspection.**

# 6. RESULTS

6.1 During this inspection HMIC attempted to conduct an objective assessment of the College's overall performance against the public funds invested in it, the confidence of its users, and current and future challenges in policing. The lack of meaningful benchmarking and up to date unit-cost information meant that the Inspectorate was unable to make judgements on best value or efficiency. This absence might be explained by the fact that the College has, at least until its absorption into the SPSA, not been held to account in any detail for its performance or standards. The Director herself points to the vacuum in detailed accountability that has arisen since suspension of the Board of Governors and before the creation of the SPSA.

6.2 It is, however, clear that the majority of training provided is at least of the standard expected by ACPOS, and perhaps sometimes exceeds expectations. It is also clear that, to date, neither the College nor its sponsors have rigorously assessed and prioritised requests and demands from the service for increases in the quantity or quality of training. Indeed it seems that the College has been only too keen to accommodate most if not all of the demands received via the several channels between itself and ACPOS.

6.3 All of these factors appear to have combined over time to create the following:

- an unrestricted accumulation of a body of training which may well meet all, and probably exceeds some, of the largely unprioritised needs of the police service in Scotland, as variously assessed by different people using different means at different times;
- a situation where very little of the above is evaluated in terms of the cost of provision against the value added to policing.

6.4 HMIC anticipates that the creation of the SPSA offers the potential to add a rigour to accountability and the impetus to prioritise needs, the lack of which has led to the above situation.

## Diversity

6.5 The College has 209 members of staff, of whom none are of a black or minority ethnic (BME) background. No BME staff have left the College in the past year and no applications for posts have been received from members of BME communities. Approximately 40 per cent of College staff are police officers seconded from forces. Clearly this will limit the number of police officer staff of black or minority ethnic background that can be recruited in this respect. At 31 March 2006 there were 187 such police officers working in the Scottish Police Service – approximately 1.1% of all officers – only 18 of whom were in promoted posts. Nevertheless, the College has no targets for recruiting BME staff. Comment on this matter is made at paragraph 3.12.

6.6 One complaint of racist behaviour has been made against a staff member since the College was last inspected. That allegation was not substantiated. This confirms the trend, across the wider Scottish Police Service, of very few allegations of racially discriminatory behaviour being substantiated.

### Staff Welfare

6.7 The rate of working time lost to sickness absence amongst police officers working at the College is 1.5%, and amongst support staff 3.5%. These figures compare favourably with those for the Scottish Police Service as a whole, at 4.5% and 5.2% respectively. They also mirror the general finding of higher sickness absence rates amongst support staff. No staff have retired on medical grounds.

6.8 For the last three consecutive years the College has conducted staff surveys. At the time of this inspection the 2006 survey was still underway. In the previous year the response rate was very low, at just 23%. This is equivalent to just 17 police officers (19%) and 33 support staff (27%). For this reason it is very difficult to draw any firm conclusions from the findings. That said, one common theme to emerge across many of the responses was that support staff were generally less satisfied than were police officers on issues such as internal communication, performance feedback and involvement in objective setting. The College could not provide an action plan to illustrate its response to these concerns.

6.9 College staff tended to demonstrate good awareness of support and grievance policies and procedures. However these do not constitute reliable indicators of staff morale. To capture that kind of information the College also uses one-to-one meetings, staff fora, appraisals and exit interviews.

### External View on Performance

6.10 The most recent survey of external providers was conducted in December 2003 and reported upon in March 2004. The value of the exercise was demonstrated by a guidance document subsequently being drawn up for external providers. No further formal evaluation has taken place in the three years since this survey. **HMIC suggests that the College consider a further formal evaluation to ascertain the current views of external providers.**

### Health and Safety

6.11 The reporting of accidents and injury has varied greatly over recent years.

2001 (part)	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006 (part)
14	107	167	169	14	17

The significant drop in figures recorded since 2004 is understood principally to reflect an improved understanding of what incidents ought to be formally recorded. This understanding has been complemented by improved procedures within Probationer Training Division. Due to the levels of physical education and officer safety training, this is where most injuries occur.

## Awards

6.12 The College achieved the Scotland's Health at Work (SHAW) Bronze award in 2004 and the Silver award in 2005.

6.13 During 2006 the College underwent Investors in People accreditation, following a new profile where assessment covers 199 areas as opposed to the 35 areas previously examined. The report on this process had not been published at the time of the inspection.





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