

Narrowing The Gap

Police visibility and public reassurance –
Managing public expectation and demand



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NARROWING THE GAP

Executive Summary

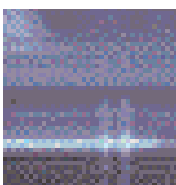
This study examines the impact of police visibility on public reassurance against the backdrop of a time of change in policing in Scotland, in which we find:

- developments on intelligence-led policing;
- significant advances in technology; and
- a growing impetus in performance evaluation.

In addition, this report follows a review by the Scottish Executive of policing structures in Scotland which endorsed the retention of the existing eight forces but initiated an ongoing study of common police services.

Cognisance has also been taken of recent projects in England and Wales, many aspects of which are directly relevant to this study and should be considered in parallel with it. These include:-

- the HMIC Thematic "Open all Hours", which looked at police visibility, accessibility and familiarity in relation to public reassurance;
- the Home Office Research Study, "Diary of a Constable" which explored barriers to police officers spending more time on patrol; and
- the Policing Bureaucracy Task Force Report, which sought to determine ways of releasing patrol officers from unnecessary bureaucracy.



Perceptions, Expectations and Demands

The traditional local roots of policing are reflected in the Police (Scotland) Act 1967 as being

‘to guard, patrol and watch so as to prevent crime...’

highlighting the notion of police presence as representing both deterrence and reassurance; a concept which has appeared unchanged in police statutes since the 19th century. Although this report provides evidence of the importance which the public place on this aspect of policing, it also questions if this expectation can be reasonably reconciled with wider responsibilities now placed on the police, including those assigned within the administration of the criminal justice process.



In this context, it is generally accepted that crime and the fear of crime are increasingly important issues affecting quality of life. Furthermore, that the police service has a crucial role to play in combating crime and associated concerns by the provision of a reassuring presence.

Policing is essentially about communities, and the

police service has in recent years been subject to significant scrutiny in terms of police/community relations, for example, through the ‘Lawrence’ and ‘Chhokar’ Reports.

Public opinion is a fundamental element in informing policy, setting policing priorities and devising appropriate responses. Independent research commissioned as part of this inspection provided a valuable snapshot in relation to public perceptions of reassurance.

For example, this showed that when asked about their awareness of police officers on foot patrol, approximately three-quarters of adult respondents indicated that they had seen officers patrolling on foot in public places at certain times. When asked: *‘where and when would it be most important for you to see, or see more, police officers on foot?’*, the following main options emerged:

- 68% thought it most important to see police officers on foot patrol within housing estates during the evening/at night;
- 39% thought it most important to see police officers on foot patrol outside pubs and clubs at closing time;
- 33% thought it most important to see police officers on foot patrol at known local hotspots at crucial times; and
- 28% thought it most important to see police officers on foot patrol at schools at starting and closing times.

Interestingly,

- over 80% agreed that such an enhanced and targeted visible police presence would make local people feel safer and would either reduce or prevent crime. Ideally such a presence would involve actual contact or engagement between the officers and the public.

HMIC considers that these perceptions have to be reconciled with a context in which deployment demands have continued to diversify in areas such as child protection, race and serious crime. Nevertheless, sample analysis revealed that

approximately 21% of policing activity is devoted to patrol including 4% on foot patrol. In addition, perhaps the perceptions also reflect an insufficient public appreciation of the wider balance which forces have to strike in police deployment to meet proactive and reactive operational requirements within a coherent policing strategy. This has to embrace community reassurance, in relation to issues such as violence and disorder; and global demands, in the context of organised crime and counter terrorism. It also has to manage the competing resource requirements of intelligence-led operations, patrol, and community policing on a continuous basis. However, even if the perceptions in the Survey are taken as indicative and not definitive, they still suggest a potential gap between public expectation and service delivery with regard to police proactivity.

Managing the Gap

Therefore, against this background, there is a need for the police to address more coherently the management of demands and expectations in the community, to minimise variances between public perceptions of need and service delivery in targeting priorities.

It is obvious that the policing of Scotland takes place against a diverse canvas encompassing cities, towns and villages, mainland and islands with dispersed patterns of population and distinct social needs. Accordingly, there is no simple one best fit to achieve desired outcomes. Nevertheless, service delivery can be improved and informed by the promotion of good practice derived from local, national and international experience. The inspection identifies useful examples of alternative policing practices in the UK, Europe and the USA. HIMIC suggests a need to pursue greater efficiencies in resource management. While such improvements in internal police efficiency are very important, they are unlikely in themselves to make a substantial contribution in terms of perception of visibility. Greater potential lies in a combination with other measures including: a reduction in the range of non-core functions which the police

currently tackle; a more informed and realistic assessment by the public of what policing can achieve; and a partnership approach to dealing with the underlying causes of crime and fear of crime. Within this, a by-product of police/public consultation should be a more sophisticated and pragmatic understanding of what can be expected from the police. Indeed, if the service is to continue to make a meaningful contribution to the overall perceptions of safety within communities, continued improvements in consultation and joint working are essential.

The emergence of a stronger emphasis on performance will be important in providing a focus for priorities and there are clear opportunities within the developing Community Planning process to ensure the contribution of an identifiable, managed police presence within wider partnership approaches. While local ownership is essential, there is also an opportunity to establish a more unified set of priorities across forces. This would assist consistency in service delivery in responding to public expectations through sustained, long-term policies. Within this equation, however, the promotion of safer, stable communities has to be part of a wider social responsibility involving not only effective policing but also positive citizenship and public policy.

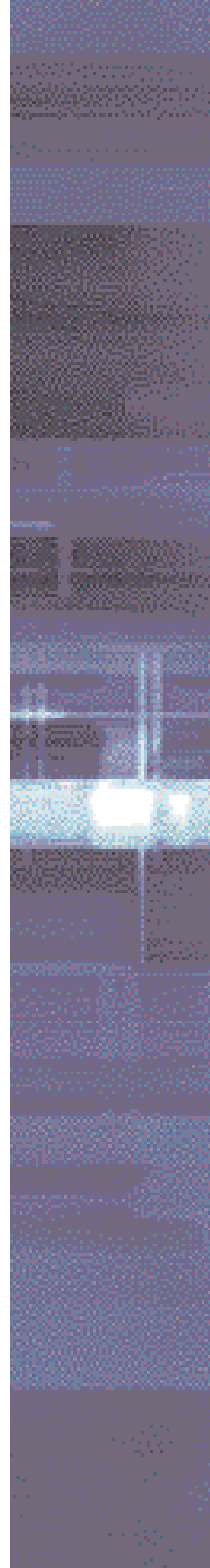
Enablers and Inhibitors

The report highlights enabling and inhibiting factors to development, which, on the one hand, could be exploited, and on the other, could be constructively tackled.

Within this analysis, Scottish Executive spending plans announced for 2003-2006 are taken as setting the funding framework for that period.

As a result of the study, HMIC has identified the following key areas as requiring progress over the current 3 year planning cycle:

- Improvements in community consultation and police involvement with young people to enhance public engagement in the identification of priorities.



- Review of core responsibilities and statutory role to reduce bureaucracy and increase net street strength.
- Efficiencies in resource management including recruitment, shift systems, occupational health, and the use of intelligence to augment proactive capability.
- Improved status to patrol, community policing and problem-solving policing.
- Improvements in the fields of media and marketing to enhance reassurance.
- A more consistent address to public priorities across forces drawing on the lessons of 'Safer Scotland'.
- The development of a single non-emergency telephone number to assist public access for service.
- A Best Value review of call centres and control rooms with robust call grading standards to ensure optimum integration of resources.
- More imaginative use of the special constabulary.
- Improved customer service training.
- A national system of road signage to police stations.
- Clear articulation of these policies through coherent communication.
- Easier access to service by exploiting information and communications technology.
- More consistent management of the grading of calls and police response.
- Development of community intelligence as a proactive aid to local problem solving.
- Personnel strategies which ensure healthy recruitment, retention and efficient resource deployment.

Finally, the inspection recognises the need for this study to be followed by complementary thematic studies to provide a body of informed recommendations to enable continuous service improvement. These will cover:

- crime management;
- community policing/partnerships; and
- performance and information management.

In addition, it is anticipated this will be augmented by further joint working with Audit Scotland on resource management.

Conclusion

HMIC considers that the recommendations arising from the study offer a challenging but practical template for managing the potential gap between perception and delivery, thereby improving proactive and reactive policing capability to target local needs.

In summary they embrace a set of principles which if successfully pursued are likely to be helpful in narrowing this gap between expectations/demands and actual policing delivery, viz:

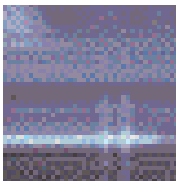
- Consultative, evidence based, sustained policing policies.
- Policing strategies which have a wide national resonance but which remain locally sensitive.



NARROWING THE GAP



Summary of Recommendations



HIMC recommends:

1. That forces consider the detailed findings of the research carried out by Market Research UK and combine the outcomes with information from their own consultative processes. (p 18)
2. That forces take renewed steps to review the extent to which they are engaging with and are accessible to their communities, particularly in relation to quality of life issues connected to young people. (p 18)
3. That the Scottish Executive, in liaison with stakeholders, undertake a review of the statutory definition of the police role commensurate with 21st-century demands and expectations. (p 22)
4. That the Scottish Executive, Police Staff Associations and Police Authorities engage in a robust review of Core Roles and Responsibilities which takes full account of the findings of the Bureaucracy Task Force within the Scottish context. (p 23)
5. That the Scottish Executive, ACPOS and Police Authorities examine ways to promote recruitment more effectively and competitively market policing as a career in the light of projected turnover. This should embrace a research study of the employment market to inform the strategic recruitment needs of the service and should take full account of the emerging developments in the use of wardens. (p 25)
6. That forces give added impetus to the review of efficiency of shift systems and consider accentuating the role of resource managers and computer-assisted resource management systems to aid efficient deployment. (p 28)
7. That ACPOS and the Scottish Executive address occupational health within a developing human resource strategy to ensure best practice and consistent management. (p 30)
8. That as part of the commitment to community consultation ACPOS and the Scottish Executive undertake a review of existing practices to establish relevant performance indicators in respect of the effectiveness of problem-solving policing systems in addressing fear of crime. This would enable improvements to be made in evidence-based policy and allow performance benchmarking in this critical area. (p 36)
9. That ACPOS as part of its commitment to achieving consistency of approach to mainstreaming the National Intelligence Model (NIM) develop a project plan, with specific tasks, a timescale and evaluation criteria to support developments in this important area. (p 38)
10. That forces examine and develop the opportunities which exist to optimise community intelligence, firstly to provide a foundation for the higher-level intelligence framework within NIM and secondly to act as a catalyst for meaningful problem solving within tactical tasking and co-ordinating. (p 38)
11. That ACPOS encourage further enhancement of problem-solving policing as a means of addressing local issues and consolidating the community-planning ethos. (p 39)
12. That forces accord due status to patrol and community policing as distinctive elements of service delivery. (p 44)
13. That ACPOS further draws on the lessons of the Safer Scotland concept to assess the scope for consistently addressing priorities across forces in ways which heighten effective policing while remaining sensitive to local needs. (p 45)
14. That, within existing arrangements, forces set targets to increase the number of active special constables. (p 48)

15. That ACPOS explore novel ways of engaging civic interest and skills in voluntary assistance to the police within the community. (p 48)
16. That the Police Advisory Board for Scotland oversee a wide-ranging review of the Special Constabulary in the medium term. (p 48)
17. That forces consider their local media arrangements specifically to better balance the perception whereby fear of crime is disproportionate to the risk of crime, and within which the established needs of communities are emphasised, as well as fluctuating trends in crime. (p 52)
18. That ACPOS develop a national media/marketing strategy for the Scottish Police Service to improve public reassurance by providing a better understanding of major policing issues and the service response. (p 53)
19. HMIC fully endorses the approach by ACPOS towards the establishment of a single, non-emergency number and recommends the continued development of this project coherently linked to developments in information technology. (p 55)
20. Within the compass of the ongoing common police services review, HMIC recommends that ACPOS, along with relevant stakeholders, initiates a best value review of call centres and control rooms to ensure optimum integration of use across/between forces and other emergency services and that ACPOS should ensure a robust, consistent strategy to provide guidance on call grading and call management. (p 55)
21. That forces increase the provision of Customer Service training to personnel involved in direct or indirect contact with the public and link this where possible to qualitative performance monitoring. (p 55)
22. That ACPOS and the Scottish Executive develop a national strategy of road signage to police stations. (p 59)

What the public want

There have been many surveys carried out into public perceptions in relation to police and policing, but these are set within their own context. To enhance understanding on the specific issues relevant to this study, Market Research UK were commissioned to undertake independent primary research to:

- identify the nature and impact of concerns that underlie public demand for greater reassurance through police visibility and accessibility;
- identify the nature and extent of gaps that may exist between perceptions, expectations and policing provision in relation to these concerns; and
- gather information to aid identification of targeted solutions to public concerns and demands.

The study, which was carried out between February and April 2002, also sought to explore views on accessibility and communication between public and police, examining links between high visibility policing and public reassurance across the range of different environments and contexts. Finally, the research sought views on how public reassurance could be enhanced.

To reiterate what has been said above, many surveys have been carried out into public perceptions in relation to police and policing, each set within its own context. Although the nature of this research and that of the recent Scottish and British Crime Surveys in particular overlap, there are a number of important differences, not least in the focus, nature and wording of the questions asked that warn against making direct comparisons. Thus these findings should be viewed not in isolation but as offering additional insight into this area.

This section summarises the main findings of the research, concentrating particularly on how crime and fear of crime inhibit daily life. The full report, with details of the methodology employed will be published as a separate research work by the Scottish Executive in the near future. HMIC considers that forces will find value in comparing the research findings with their own consultative processes.

The survey had two separate but interrelated aspects. Firstly, a **qualitative** dimension which elicited general opinion on relevant issues, consisting of 30 focus group discussions and 53 in depth interviews across the eight Scottish police force areas. These groups were balanced in terms of gender, location, socio-economic group and age to canvass the widest possible spectrum of opinion. The cross-section of the community involved encompassed the general public, minority groups, young people aged between 12 and 15, police officers, MSP's and members of Police Boards.

The second aspect of the research was a **quantitative** element which was designed to provide robust data on the views, attitudes and perceptions expressed in the qualitative phase. During this phase of the research 1170 home interviews were conducted comprising:

- 1000 random interviews with a representative sample of the population across all age ranges;

- an equal number of interviews in each force area; and
- a Booster Survey which provided
 - 100 additional interviews with school age children
 - 70 additional interviews with ethnic minority members of the population.

Significantly there was close similarity between the qualitative and quantitative sections of the research findings, a factor which enhances confidence levels in the validity of the conclusions, which are summarised below.

Qualitative Findings

Overall, within the general population, there was a varied perception of safety and fear of crime, although generally crime was thought to be on the increase and often motiveless. Greatest concerns related to violent crime and the risk of physical harm, though this was more from the point of view of the consequences of such crime than the perceived likelihood of becoming a victim. In relation to more immediate day-to-day levels of concern, young people and groups of youths repeatedly emerged as prime generators of fear and anxiety.

At one extreme, major and everyday concerns regarding crime were typically found in what would be described as socio-economic category 'C2DE' areas where this centred on the immediate locale and was based on direct or indirect practical experiences of respondents. At the opposite extreme, in areas which would be described as socio-economic category 'ABC1', fear of crime was found to be an underlying concern rather than an actual reality. Worry in these areas focused more around geographically-removed locations such as city centres and shopping areas rather than the local neighbourhood.

Reasons for Anxiety

The study is firmly based on perception – it reflects the thoughts of the public whether derived from real or imagined experience. Against that background, the core reasons for the anxieties expressed can be divided into two categories; *ineffectual prevention* in the longer term and *ineffective intervention* at source in relation to the more immediate issues. According to the survey:

Ineffectual prevention flows from:

- wider societal factors
- lack of parental discipline and schooling
- lack of respect for authority including police
- economic factors such as poverty and unemployment

Ineffective Intervention includes:

- lack of police on the beat and slow police response times – a perception that the police are not there when required
- a perception that the police and other agencies do not act when required. This is coupled with a recognition that they are sometimes unable to act.
- a perception that the Criminal Justice System is inefficient and lenient
- a perception that the system protects the rights of the criminal.

The Need for Reassurance

As regards a sense of reassurance, police and police visibility were frequently the first factors mentioned as important, with visibility being linked to greater police engagement which the public expected would impact on crime and fear of crime. Overall, it was considered that there were not enough police on the beat and the desire was expressed for a proactive rather than reactive presence.

There was a broad understanding of the role of the police with visibility linked to that role. Visibility was perceived to relate to foot patrol which

respondents preferred to mobile patrol as this was seen as providing little or no opportunity for officers to interact or deter. Police visibility was seen as a means of facilitating engagement and intervention which, when combined, would be expected to enhance quality of life, reduce fear of crime, fear of intimidation and reduce the incidence of crime.

There was support for greater use of CCTV but this was tempered to some extent by the perception of a lack of impact on speedy intervention or rapport building.

With regard to perceptions on non-police uniformed patrols the qualitative survey indicated little support for the concept, even were these to consist of trained, monitored or police-related individuals (e.g. traffic wardens). It was assumed that such patrols would have no power of arrest and therefore no deterrent effect. Concern was also expressed that inappropriate individuals would be attracted to this role and overall it was considered that the money could be better spent on police patrols. In respect of special constables little or no awareness was found.

Young People

Young people, the survey found, did not have the same frame of historical reference as adults and were generally more accepting of the 'present' situation regardless of what that was.

Police officers were considered neither common nor accessible in young people's lives and although they accepted a need for police, young people did not view them positively. Indeed police were associated with negative personal experience. Greater police visibility was not important to young people and whilst the most common response to improving visibility was to have more officers on the street there was the counter concern that this may lead to more harassment for young people. Reassurance and reduction of tensions between police and young people were believed to be more dependent on positive interaction than visibility.

Young people had a limited perception of the police role, evidence of which was the 'to serve and protect' answer given by some respondents to the police role question. This comes from the film 'Robocop' and perhaps serves to illustrate how perceptions of the police may be formed.

There was, as with the general public, a lack of awareness of the Special Constabulary, with many young people finding it difficult to believe that people would carry out this role unpaid. Within the sample young people showed no interest in a police career.

Views of Minority Groups

As part of the research the views of minority groups were solicited including gay and lesbian, disabled and minority ethnic members of the general public. Minority ethnic community members surveyed included Indian, Pakistani, Chinese and Israeli. Amongst gay and lesbian people surveyed the underlying concern was fear of assault and a concern about lack of acceptance within the community. However, there were no specific concerns about the police. Amongst minority ethnic communities concern related to abuse and assault which was not always linked to being a member of a minority ethnic group. Opinion was expressed that police should have a better understanding of differing cultures and values. In respect of the minorities involved in the research there were very few differences in the views expressed from those of the general public, including the desire for greater visibility and engagement. The only exception to this related to the perceptions of crime directly attributable to the minority status of the victim. (HMIC will publish a review report on police race relations in 2003.)

Elected Representatives

In respect of the MSPs involved in the research, the need for 'Public Reassurance' was thought to have multiple causes and solutions. Solutions were thought to include police visibility, CCTV and community policing. Here again visibility was linked to greater engagement/interaction between the

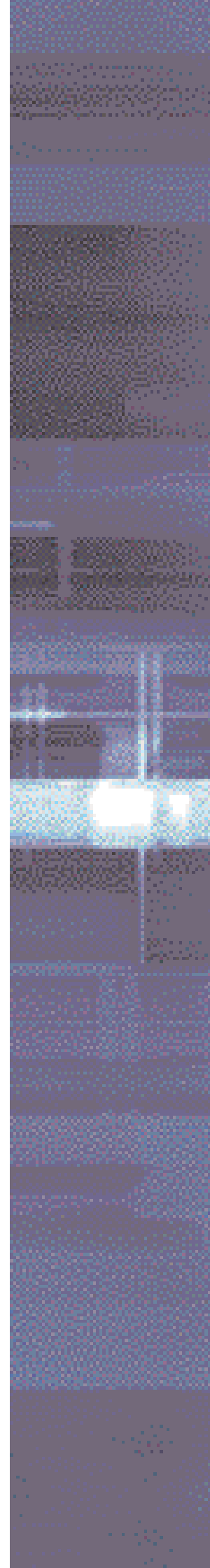
police and the public. As with the general public, MSPs within the survey were not in favour of non-police uniformed patrols, due to a lack of power of arrest and lack of authority.

Police Board members and Councillors displayed different views despite being from the same tier of government. Board members were generally more positive in respect of key issues, identifying the existence of a relationship with police. On the other hand Councillors who were not Board members were generally more critical and perceived a need for more community police officers and greater links between police and residents. However, both Councillors and Board members expressed concern over police responsibilities being transferred to non-police uniformed patrols. Other methods of increasing public reassurance were thought to be the introduction of CCTV, occupying and motivating young people and more efficient promotion of crime prevention.

Police Officers

Along with all the other groups mentioned, a cross-section of police officers of varying ranks were involved in the research. Their opinions do not differ greatly from those of the other groups consulted, and can be broadly summarised as follows:

- all ranks thought there was a need to increase proactive inter-agency working;
- for many officers there was an increasing frustration that police time was being taken up by non-core functions;
- the majority believed that the service lacks officers and is underfunded;
- operational officers considered that there is a need for more targeted, high-visibility policing within communities to reassure the public;
- the majority of officers defined public fear of crime as fear of violent crime with higher-ranking officers believing fear of crime to be disproportionate to actual risk of victimisation;



- for most frontline officers, visibility went beyond a physical presence to encompass more community engagement; and
- the majority of police were uncomfortable with the idea of non police uniformed patrols, although there was a generally positive opinion of special constables.

Quantitative Findings

The quantitative research results reflected the above findings of the qualitative research. Some of the key findings are as follows:

Figure 1

48% perceived that crime had increased in the last year

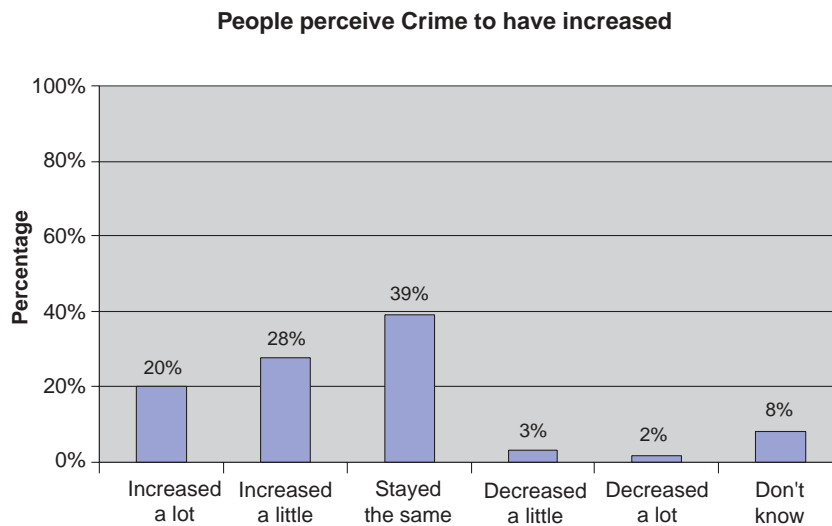
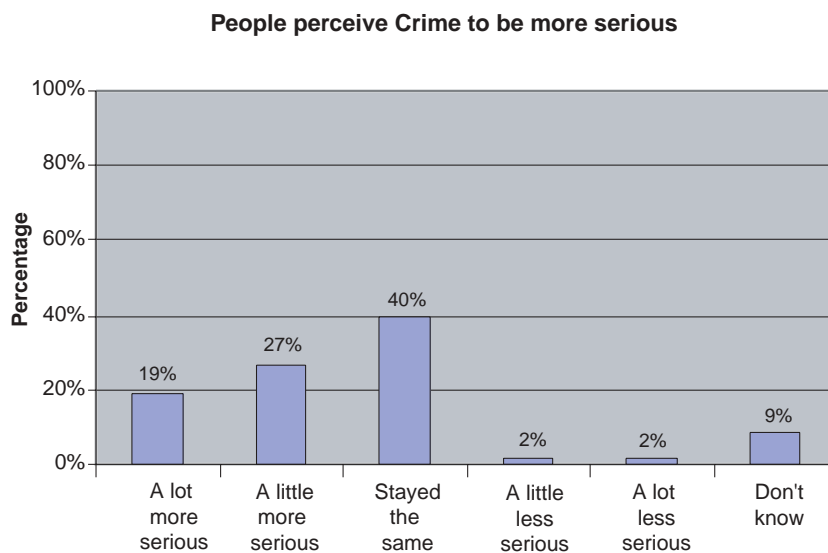


Figure 2

46% perceived crime to be more serious in the last year



In addition to these general impressions about crime there were tension indicators evident when responses regarding personal safety were provided:

- 32% were very worried or worried about becoming a victim;
- 26% thought it likely that they would become a victim;
- 67% rarely or never had concerns about their own safety in daytime; but only
- 32% were never concerned about their safety after dark;
- 65% worried at least sometimes about their children being out of the home during daytime; and only;
- 10% said they never worried about their children being out after dark;
- 40% had increased worries about their own safety in the last year.

When asked about the top three issues that contribute to fear:

- 32% said housebreaking;
- 32% said gangs of youths; and
- 29% said the presence of drug users.

Fear connected with young people consistently emerged as a major contributor towards the feeling of being unsafe. A number of factors influenced this fear. Lack of parental control was mentioned by 65% as contributing most to levels of crime and disorder, 51% mentioned lack of respect for authority, and lack of police on foot patrol and in general were mentioned next by 44% and 33% respectively.

When asked about the top three police-related factors that would have the greatest impact in reducing crime and disorder:

- 38% indicated officers patrolling on foot at certain times and locations;
- 37% indicated greater use of CCTV; and
- 32% indicated having dedicated officers assigned to the community.

These findings were consistent with attitudes expressed by youth and minority ethnic contributors to the research.

With regard to non-police related issues that would have the greatest impact in making people feel 'a lot' or 'much' safer, the following prompted perceptions emerged:

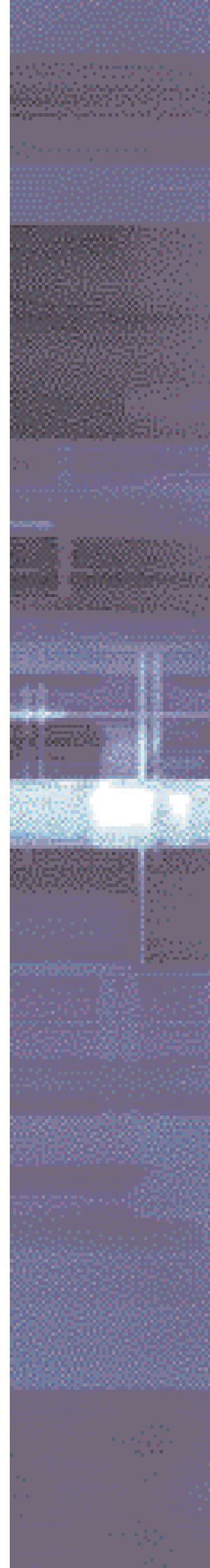
- 77% said a more efficient criminal justice system;
- 69% said more activities and designated areas for young people;
- 67% said better home security;
- 67% said better lighting in public places;
- 61% said improved social issues, e.g. unemployment.
- 52% said improved building/environmental design;
- 48% said better public transport;
- 33% said uniformed non-police security personnel patrols.

Police Visibility

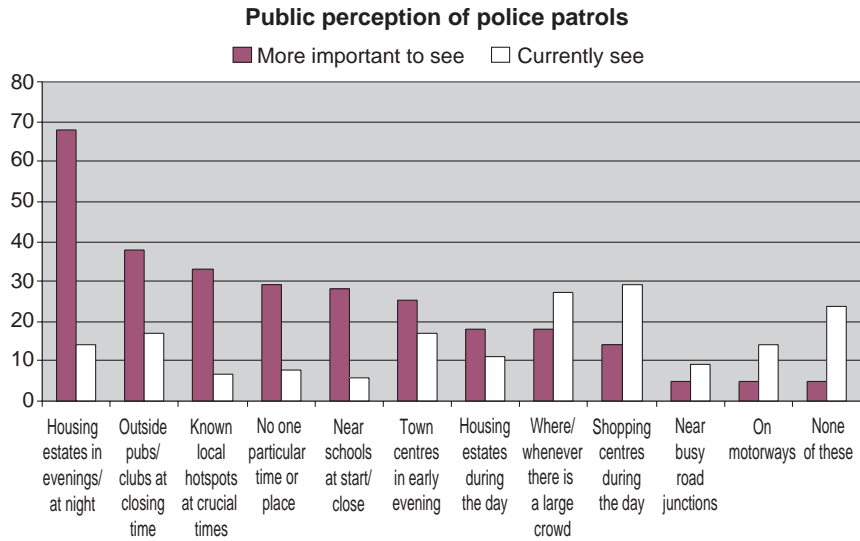
Policing and police visibility were consistently expressed as key factors in addressing the need for increased public reassurance. Essentially, a visible police presence was thought to allow for greater police engagement across communities with the expected outcome being a reduction in crime.

The following figure illustrates public perceptions expressed in relation to police foot patrol. When asked where and when it was most important to see more police officers on foot respondents identified a range of public areas and times of the day. To summarise, within housing estates during the evening/at night was by far the most commonly chosen option (68%), followed by outside pubs/clubs at closing time (39%) and at known local trouble spots (33%). However, there was also a marked desire to see police officers on patrol outside schools at opening and closing time (28%).

These findings were similar to those amongst minority ethnic respondents.



Public perceptions of police



Having identified a desire for increased visibility and directed foot patrols the issue of what these patrols would be able to achieve was addressed:

- 81% of people believed a visible police presence would deal with the root causes of crime and disorder;

- 83% thought it would prevent crime; and
- 89% thought that a visible police presence would make people feel safer.

Table 1

A visible Police presence would . . .						
	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neither/ Nor %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Don't Know %
Deal with the root causes of crime and disorder	29	52	8	5	2	3
Prevent crime and disorder	26	57	7	5	2	3
Reduce crime and disorder	26	61	7	2	1	4
Move crime and disorder on to other areas	12	35	17	19	8	8
Make local people feel safer	30	59	5	3	1	4
Lower people's impressions of the area	11	20	15	34	13	6
Reduce the availability of police for other policing functions	10	31	21	23	7	8
Reduce police response times	13	34	16	22	6	7

(N.B. – figures are rounded off so do not add up to 100% in each case)

Generally, CCTV, officers on foot and building personal relationships were perceived by the general public and ethnic minorities as having the greatest impact on safety. Amongst school-age children, building personal relationships was viewed as having a greater impact on safety than were patrolling officers.

This finding that over 80% of the respondents believed that an enhanced and targeted visible police presence would make them feel safer and would either reduce or prevent crime perhaps highlights the principal reason for a gap between perception and reality; that the public have an unrealistic expectation of the impact which visible

policing can deliver. A visible presence on the streets is an important aspect of an integrated approach to police deployment, but the prioritisation given to the various aspects of police work must be balanced against need rather than simple demand.

Deploying resources to prioritise visible police presence might result in an enhanced level of reassurance, but with the prospect of diverting resources away from other aspects of police work that actually reduce the likelihood of the risk of crime. On the other hand reducing visibility through patrol might enable additional resources to go into more effective crime-reduction measures.

Community Consultation

When it came to being able to influence the police agenda the qualitative findings had suggested that participation in and awareness of consultation processes were limited. This was validated by the quantitative research which ascertained that:

- 79% of participants responded that they had not had the opportunity to contribute to police consultation processes in the last year; and
- 46% were interested in being given a chance to air views and concerns on these issues.

These are interesting results in view of the efforts HMIC knows that forces expend on public consultation exercises, particularly in relation to annual objective setting. There is little doubt that there are wide opportunities to express views on these matters either directly or indirectly to forces; that only 21% believed that they had had that opportunity is a significant issue for forces to address. This issue is further discussed in Chapter 3.

Linking this to satisfaction levels, just over one-third of adults were satisfied with the standard of service provided by their local police. In addition, a smaller minority indicated that they were very satisfied, producing a total of 42% who were satisfied to some extent. In contrast, more than

one quarter were dissatisfied to some degree. (Again differences in the wording of the questions prevent direct comparisons being made with force surveys and the Scottish and British Crime Surveys.) There was also a widespread belief that the police were inadequately resourced. This was, however, tempered by a view that the police themselves need to manage more efficiently. To this end respondents were asked to consider various options that might help to release police officers from dealing with non-urgent matters:

- 44% of people responding indicated that they would consider it appropriate to be dealt with over the telephone or internet rather than requiring face-to-face contact with a police officer;
- 50% indicated that they would consider being dealt with by a force support officer rather than a police officer;
- 56% indicated that an appointment at a mutually convenient time with a police officer would suffice; and
- 30% would consider it suitable to be dealt with by an agency or other organisation rather than the police.

Interestingly across the survey, a consistent proportion of the sample (of the order of 40%) did not express any strong opinions on issues raised, suggesting perhaps a degree of disinterest in policing matters despite current efforts to engage with and inform the public.

Conclusion

Overall, the survey gives an important insight into the value the public places on the police as an organisation and indicates scope for change in the way that policing responds to public perceptions, expectations, and demand including:

- Clarification of statutory role and core responsibilities
- Acquisition and retention of personnel
- Community consultation

- Deployment and resource management
- Consistency of operational priorities
- Communication
- Access to services
- Status of Patrol/Community Policing and Special Constables
- Responsiveness to local problems

More specifically as a direct response to the research:

RECOMMENDATION 1

HMIC recommends that forces consider the detailed findings of the research carried out by Market Research UK and combine the outcomes with information from their own consultative processes.

RECOMMENDATION 2

HMIC recommends that forces take renewed steps to review the extent to which they are engaging with, and are accessible to, their communities, particularly in relation to quality of life issues connected to young people.

Finally, a clear finding to emerge from the research was the public's perception that the Police Service is under-resourced. This is despite comparatively high headline numbers. HMIC notes the proposed

spending plans for policing in Scotland for the period 2003-2006 as setting the basis of planned police funding in sustaining these numbers.

What the police can provide

Recognising the Gap

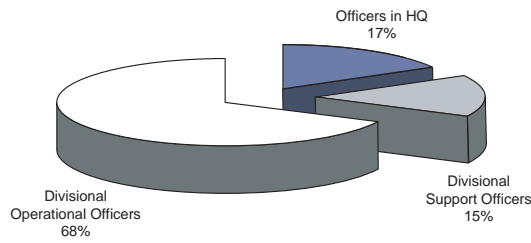
To further inform the inspection and augment the public survey, an activity analysis was carried out in partnership with ACPOS and co-ordinated by Lothian and Borders Police. These data represent a snapshot of one division from each of the eight Scottish forces and relate to all uniformed officers within the respective divisions contained in the sample for the period 20-26 March 2002. Additional disposition data were collected during May 2002 on a similar basis. This research expanded on previous grant-aided expenditure activity analysis carried out across all Scottish forces in February 2001 to inform funding allocation. These figures, whilst not conclusive, are indicators of a gap between public perception and the police ability to respond.

NARROWING THE GAP



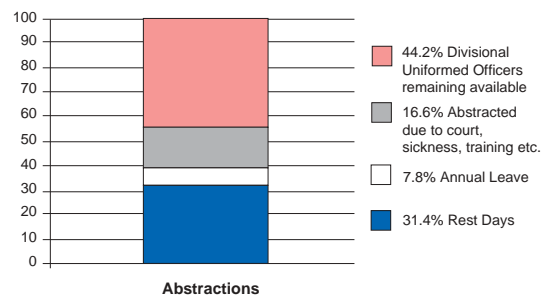
The analyses from both pieces of research were complementary giving the following illustration.

Figure 3: Disposition Analysis



The visibility research indicates that 83% of all officers within forces are deployed to divisional duties. 68% are allocated to divisional operational uniform duties, and 15% are deployed to all other duties within divisions. The remaining 17% are deployed in Headquarters and specialist departments within forces.

Figure 4: Analysis of Abstractions



Based on the sample period, analysis of abstraction data for divisional uniformed operational officers suggests that at any given time 7.8% are on annual leave, with 31.4% of officers on rest days. The figure for rest days includes time off taken in lieu of overtime previously worked. In addition, 16.6% of our target sample were abstracted through court attendance, sickness absence and training. Whilst the research does not give details it is clear that particularly with court and sickness there is no uniformity of distribution across shift groups and consequently there is potential for fluctuating levels of absence related to these issues across such groups.

After allowing for the abstractions which have been previously mentioned, 44.2% of divisional operational officers remained available for deployment over a 24-hour period. This figure equates to approximately 30% of overall force strength. However, this figure of 44.2% is further reduced when it is revealed that at any given time 11% of this group of officers are within offices dealing with paper work (e.g. case preparation), or attending meetings, leaving 33% of divisional operational officers available for patrol or to attend incidents. This figure of 33% equates to 22.6% of the total officers in the force.

Going back to the 44.2% figure for uniformed officers available for deployment over any given 24-hour period, some further analysis can be made utilising data from the national activity analysis conducted in February 2001 in all Scottish police forces. For the purposes of that exercise the definition of patrol varies from force to force.

Taking this into account, research indicated that on average 21% of duty time of uniformed officers was recorded as patrol. This figure is not dissimilar to the 17% patrol figure identified by the Home Office Research Paper 'Diary of a Police Officer'. In the National activity analysis it was of particular note that the average duty time allocated to foot patrol was 4% compared to 17% recorded as mobile patrol.

Only one force utilised the National analysis data to identify that the figure for proactive patrol (i.e. not at that time dealing with calls) was 38% of total patrol time. It is accepted that there are difficulties associated with estimating proactive patrol time and the foregoing figure is obviously a generalisation. *In addition, current progressive developments on high-profile marking of police vehicles can obviously have a positive bearing on general visibility even if reactively committed. HMIC encourages forces to review the scope to extend the proportion of the vehicle fleet which is marked.*

However, the deployment data suggest limited capacity for officers to be consistently engaged in high visibility proactive patrol activities in public places. This limitation can be further evidenced in a brief examination of the context of modern policing.

The Context of Policing – External and Internal Change

HMIC's Annual Report for 2001-2002 (www.scotland.gov.uk/hmic/publications.asp) highlighted that the modern police service faces formidable demands, with a need to reconcile global challenges, including the threats of organised crime and terrorism, with pressing community safety issues. The emerging international dimension to demand can be further exemplified by the current increasing police commitment to the investigation of internet paedophilia.

Communities are affected by a combination of these factors which impact on their sense of personal safety and reassurance. It is possible that in this global climate, good work by a force in reassuring the public in relation to the local crime situation can be overshadowed by extensive news coverage of a crime problem elsewhere.

In addition to addressing demands of the external environment, policing has also had to resource internal change management. Professionally, the police reform programme in England and Wales, particularly in relation to conditions of service, has influenced debate and publication of expectation/demand related studies in England and Wales, including:

HMIC Thematic Inspection 'Open all Hours'

Home Office Research Paper 'Diary of a Police Officer'

The report of the Policing Bureaucracy Taskforce

have a current relevance.

While a White Paper on Policing in Scotland is planned, in recent years the following agenda has

provided the main drivers for change in Scotland:

- The review of Common Police Services
- Consultation on Complaints against the Police
- Advances in Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
- Best Value
- Community Planning
- Community Safety

In addition the following current developments are of operational significance:

- Policy refinements on race and diversity
- The production of a 'Framework for Action' in response to the Scottish Strategy for Victims.
- High levels of police recruitment
- Proposals on relieving police officers of prisoner escort and custody duties with limited extension of support staff powers
- Piloting of the National Intelligence Model
- Development of the Scottish Intelligence Database
- Introduction of digital trunk radio network for the UK (Airwave Project).

The Statutory Role of the Police

Within this framework of review and change, the Police (Scotland) Act 1967 statutorily defines the role of the police as being:

'To guard, patrol and watch so as to prevent the commission of offences; to preserve order and protect life and property'

In fact the origins of this ethos can be found in earlier legislation, notably the Glasgow Police Act of 1800, which provides:-

*'That the magistrates and their commissioners herein after named are authorised and required to appoint such a number of watchmen as they shall judge necessary, for **guarding, patrolling and watching the streets of the City**, in such manner, and under such rules and regulations, as to the said magistrates and other commissioners shall appear proper and expedient'.*

In effect, in a climate of continuous development, the Scottish Police Service operates within a statutory role definition which has changed little since its inception. With ongoing change in the level, nature and complexity of the demands society places on its police service, it is imperative to recognise the extent to which the modern police requirement departs from this legislative base-line. Thus, policing remains a source of first and last resort, required to have the capacity to deal with problems from parking to terrorism, dog fouling to drugs, from complex international

political sensitivities to local diversities of race, religion and sexual orientation. In addition there are residual administrative liabilities in relation to criminal justice support eg citations, warrants and civic administration such as stray-dogs, lost and found property and to a limited extent school crossing patrols. It is difficult to envisage this diversity and complexity from the language of the 1967 Act which evokes imagery of a sentry style beat model of the 19th Century.

HMIC believes there is a need to review legislative provision to reflect current responsibilities.

Recommendation 3

HMIC recommends that the Scottish Executive, in liaison with stakeholders, undertakes a review of the statutory definition of the police role commensurate with 21st-century demands and expectations.

Core Roles and Responsibilities

Complementary to a redefinition of statutory purpose, HMIC is convinced there is a need to achieve a more realistic balance between expectations, demands and capacity to respond, through a re-examination of the core roles and responsibilities of the police. This would enable police officers to stick to clearly defined core roles, which would release resources to be deployed where they could maximise their professional contribution.

In 1995 following on from a Home Office Review of Core and Ancillary Tasks for the Police a Scottish review was conducted with little effect. A significant hurdle was budget retention and redistribution around realignment of non-core police tasks.

However, the policing climate continues to be characterised by constantly expanding demands and increasing public expectations which co-exist within a finite capacity to respond to these expectations. Innovations in policing such as the National Intelligence Model (NIM), allied to new legislative requirements such as RIPSAs (the

Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 – which deals with surveillance and the interception of communication) – and Sex Offender legislation (requiring the registering and monitoring of specific sex offenders), accentuate demand within these finite resources.

Crucially, if it is to make a positive impact, any adjustment in police roles and responsibility to alleviate administrative burdens which reduces costs must allow the retention of savings to support service delivery improvements. Reallocating tasks should not simply be a question of diverting responsibilities and resources. These reforms offer the potential for additional resources to be devoted to work on public reassurance by reducing the effort devoted to non-core work. This might mean a reduction in the headline number of police but represent a real increase in operational deployment to address public concerns.

There is also scope for greater internal efficiency. The expansion of technology through developments in the use of ANPR (automatic vehicle number plate readers) CCTV and DNA

will make police work more effective. The programme for the delivery of a national IT structure via the Scottish Police Information Strategy (SPIS) should support performance improvement. In addition, structural and procedural reform under the Common Police Services Review (CPSR) presents opportunities for rationalisation and joint working. However, to exploit this potential there has to be greater consistency across and between forces, the dissemination of good practice and elimination of inefficient practice.

In relation to administrative processes there are proposals from the Policing Bureaucracy Task Force, which reported to the Home Secretary in July 2002, which could be applied in Scotland. The Task Force recognised that in England and Wales there is considerable scope to transfer responsibility for non-core tasks to other organisations and for patrol officers to hand over some administrative work to civilian support staff. It is anticipated that this transfer of ancillary responsibilities to other organisations, particularly local authorities, could greatly reduce the abstraction of uniformed officers to deal with non-core tasks. The findings of this Task Force are wide reaching and its report goes into a significant level of detail as to how improvements in this arena can be made.

In respect of core roles the Task Force observed that:

' Relieving the service of responsibilities that can be delivered, often to a better standard by other providers will reduce demand on officers still further. . . . The list of non-core tasks considered suitable includes parking,

noise abatement, alarms administration, non-suspicious deaths, lost and found property, dealing with animals, liquor licensing and betting and gaming regulation.'

The report also examined police roles in respect of stray dogs, abnormal loads and abandoned vehicles, concluding that these roles also should be shed. While current police functions south of the border are not mirrored exactly in Scotland the report is highly relevant to Scottish forces and the research leading to these conclusions by the Task Force is worthy of examination by them.

In the Scottish dimension one area of major significance is that of Prisoner Escort and Court Custody Services which is currently under review jointly by the Scottish Prison Service, Scottish Courts Administration Service and the Police Service in Scotland. A scoping exercise carried out by the review team revealed an annual escort movement of approximately 170,000, of which 135,000 were carried out by police. The majority of these involved activity within court buildings. The national activity analysis carried out in February 2001 indicated that over 460 police officers are routinely involved in court services and escort work, although this assessment requires more precise analysis. The Working Group have recommended complete outsourcing of escorts and internal court functions and Ministers have agreed to proceed with the development of proposals for contracting-out of these services. It is worthy of note that the issue of related funding transfer has not yet been determined but Ministers intend that there should be a net gain in police numbers on the street.

Recommendation 4

HMIC recommends that the Scottish Executive, Police Staff Associations and Police Authorities engage in a robust review of Core Roles and Responsibilities which takes full account of the findings of the Bureaucracy Task Force within the Scottish context.

In summary, a review of core roles should improve budgetary efficiency by facilitating an internal redistribution of resources to focus on the agreed core functions as an alternative to growth to keep pace with the developing and new functions.

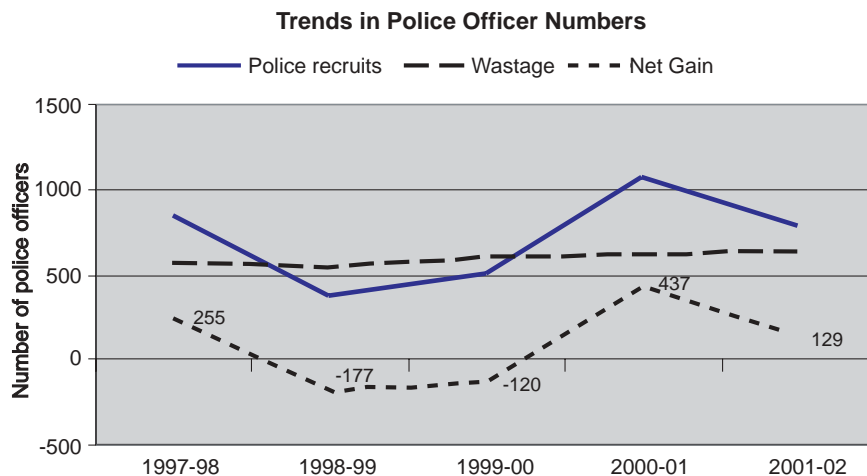
Resource Deployment

Critical factors affecting the level of resource deployment and visibility are funding and recruiting. Grant Aided Expenditure (GAE) is used in determining the allocation of Aggregate External Finance to local authorities, 51% of which is accounted for by Police Grant. Development of a formula for distributing police GAE allocations on the basis of an objective assessment of need is currently the subject of consideration between Scottish Ministers, Local Authorities and CoSLA.

The available funding for forces obviously affects potential total strength, but sustaining that level is

affected not just by recruitment but also by wastage. Recent additional funding by the Executive is put in perspective when the following information is considered. In 2000-2001 forces attracted 981 new recruits, in addition to 72 officers who either transferred from another UK force or were re-appointed having previously left the service. In 2001-2002 a further 709 officers were recruited, with a further 61 recruited through transfer or re-appointment. Against this, in 2000-2001 616 officers left the service and in 2001-2002 641 officers left the service, with retirement accounting for 70% of these officers. These turnover levels reduced the net gains to 437 officers and 129 officers respectively, with, in net terms, the trend being towards a front-line of operational officers with a growing proportion of relatively new recruits.

Figure 5

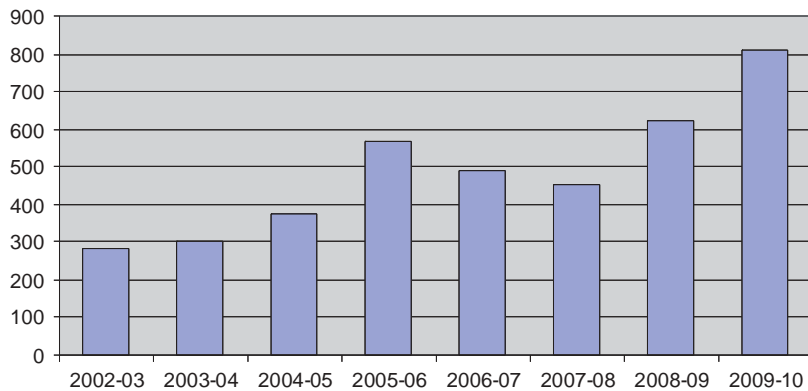


The increasing inexperience in the operational front line will be further exacerbated by the so-called 'Edmund-Davies Effect'. This will start to impact on the service at an early stage around 2005, with a significant proportion of serving officers due to retire onwards from this time towards 2010, creating a potential further recruiting demand. This is a legacy of recruitment and retention difficulties in the early 1970s which led the Government to set up an Inquiry led by Lord Edmund-Davies, resulting in a more attractive

pay structure for the police service. This was successful in re-energising recruitment and reducing this premature wastage, but the officers recruited at that time who established a demographic 'peak' reach retirement on completion of 30 years' service in the mid to late part of this decade. This profile is also likely to have been influenced by recruitment fluctuations post local government reform in 1975.

Figure 6

Projected Annual Number of Retirals (excluding ill-health retirals) within the Scottish Police Service up to 2009/10



In some forces, notably Grampian, the recruiting equation is further complicated by the buoyant employment market where competition is fierce. Whilst there has been some recognition of potential future problems through longer-term Human Resource strategies, recruitment and retention is undoubtedly an issue which cannot be addressed in isolation by individual forces. A clear

requirement to address the balance of supply and demand across the eight Scottish forces is evident and the issue of a more coherent approach to recruitment which has been explored within the Common Police Services Review is a matter worthy of detailed examination in the interest of the service as a whole.

Recommendation 5

HMIC recommends that the Scottish Executive, ACPOS and Police Authorities examine ways to better promote recruitment and competitively market policing as a career in the light of projected turnover. This should embrace a research study of the employment market to inform the strategic recruitment needs of the service and should take full account of emerging developments in the use of wardens.

While most forces currently report a high standard of recruits to the service and little difficulty in meeting recruitment targets, the factors outlined above are a cause for concern and should encourage debate on the marketing of the police service as a career to the widest possible suitable market. Currently, the average age of a constable in Strathclyde police is 37 years and the average age of a person entering the service is 26 years. Is the service doing enough to encourage younger people to become police officers, and, if not, is it missing an employment opportunity as well as perhaps abrogating its responsibility as a major employer in respect of the development and employment of the younger generation?

One way in which this was attempted in the past was through cadet schemes. In moving towards a more mature workforce the service has perhaps inadvertently exacerbated the gap between itself and young people. The survey carried out as part of the inspection process indicated a lack of understanding between young people and the police, with 29% of young people involved in the study thinking that the police do not have a positive image and 25% describing the police as unfriendly. The Police Cadet (Scotland) Regulations 1968 empower Chief Constables to appoint cadets although the majority of forces no longer employ police cadets. Previous HMIC Reports in the context of a past recruitment climate have

been critical of the usefulness of cadet schemes. However, it is a concept which in the current scenario may have potential in up-dated form to address some of the future needs of the police service in Scotland by recruiting young people.

Case Study: Strathclyde Police Cadet/ Modern Apprenticeship Scheme

Strathclyde Police have decided to reintroduce a Police Cadet Programme which is designed to provide a modern apprenticeship-type scheme described as an innovative and dynamic training and development scheme of 1 to 2½ years duration for persons aged between 16 and 18½ years of age.

During their time within the scheme participants will follow a carefully structured programme comprising a mixture of centrally-delivered formalised training courses, tutorials and on-the-job training. They will complete modules reflecting the core skills and competencies of probationary constables and experienced police officers. Modules include:

- Communication skills
- Use of IT
- Administration skills
- Customer service
- Teamworking and Partnership working
- Leadership.

In addition to the foregoing skills development training there will also be formalised classroom work on issues such as:

- The Scottish Legal System
- Role of the Police Service
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- Human Rights.

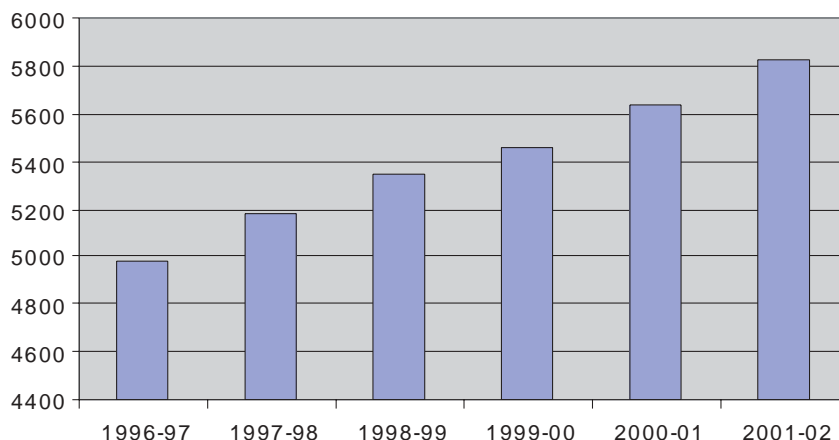
Progress through the scheme will be monitored through the completion of learning modules and a tailored staff appraisal scheme. Three inter-related courses are delivered within a flexible framework according to the needs of the individual. All cadets successfully completing the course will attain the same nationally recognised qualification, namely, a Scottish Progression Award.

Strathclyde Police believe that this programme will provide the force with an opportunity to improve its links with youth and minority ethnic groups, the socially excluded and the community as a whole. The organisation will also benefit through the creation of a pool of highly motivated young people with many of the skills and abilities required of potential recruits to the Police Service.

It is believed that this is the first of its kind in the UK and its progress will be closely monitored following its launch in October 2002.

Civilianisation

Figure 7: Number of Support Staff in Scottish Forces, 1996/97 – 2001/02



In recent years civilianisation has been seen as a valid way of relieving police officers from roles which do not require police skills. Recruitment in this area has increased consistently in recent times and its potential should continue to be explored as part of the resource equation within which coherent principles of recruitment and career marketing should be similarly applied.

Case Study: NYPD – Resource Deployment

During a study of New York Police Department, HMIC noted a very different approach to recruit training and the use of new staff to frequently re-balance staff deployment throughout the force area. While this is firmly fixed in a very different organisational setting, it is of interest to consider how similar problems are dealt with in a somewhat different way.

NYPD only recruit twice a year (about 1500 graduate per intake) with all new recruits undertaking a 6-month course at the Police Academy. Towards the end of each course, the Resource Allocation Department assess the staffing 'needs' of each Borough, initially on the basis of a defined formula, then modified on the basis of professional opinion, to provide options to the Executive to adjust Borough staffing levels through natural wastage and the deployment of the 1300 to 1500 successful graduates from the 6-month course.

The Patrol Allocation Plan (PAP) is the formula used by the Department to determine the distribution of police officers to patrol commands.

The Plan consists of four main components:

- *Radio Motor Patrol Allocation Model* – this computer-generated model utilises the previous years' statistics for 'radio runs' (calls requiring a mobile response) to establish the number of patrol cars required to field calls in a particular area. This is based on a maximum 2-minute delay for crimes in progress.
- *Sustained Operational Component* – to address unique operational needs. These include

embassy duties and recognised areas which become densely populated with the transient work population.

- *Public Safety Factor* – this represents the weighted percentage of crime as a proportion of the entire city. This factor is used to distribute the pool of officers not allocated as above and is weighted towards violent crime that requires a quick response. This component also takes into account population and demographic considerations.
- *Local Police Judgement* – when the above components are combined, the result represents the PAP recommendations by command. Some officers may be redeployed within the model to meet immediate needs and address unforeseen conditions.

Resource Inhibitors

The challenge of responding to increasing and competing demands places significant pressure on police resources. This involves a police force listening to its community, identifying priorities and devising a policing plan which strikes the right balance in the deployment of force resources. In simple terms there are five distinct aspects in the delivery of police service which can be considered in this process:

- (i) Intelligence-Led Policing;
- (ii) Incident Response;
- (iii) Patrol;
- (iv) Community Policing/Partnerships; and
- (v) Investigation.

Effective, efficient and publicly-credible investigations, particularly in high profile cases and those involving vulnerable sections of the community are a key element in public reassurance. HMIC will be undertaking full Thematic Studies on crime management and community policing during 2003, so the current study will focus on the remaining three elements.

As well as police forces at the macro level having a diverse role to fulfil, at command unit level this

translates into a resource and demand management dilemma for managers who have to decide on service provision priorities. Extraneous influences which are to varying degrees beyond immediate local managerial control often impact on the availability of officers for deployment, eg major incidents, large sporting and public events, parades and demonstrations.

Other main issues which can have a negative impact on the resourcing equation are shift systems, absence through sickness, courts and training.

Shift Systems

The issue of shift systems is one which has proved difficult to resolve for the Police Service. It has not been found easy to define a system which optimises effective and efficient deployment of resources within the demand framework in which the service operates and at the same time meets the welfare needs of operational officers.

In many forces variable shift arrangements have been put in place with the co-operation of operational officers to meet local needs. There is, however, no corporacy of approach in this area. There is clearly no one size fits all option. An ACPOS Shift System Review Group has recently reported. They found that in 75% of English and Welsh forces, at least one Resource Manager is employed with a dual responsibility of ensuring that the shift system and resource allocation match the organisation's business needs whilst taking cognisance of legislative and welfare issues.

The Review Group has recommended that Scottish forces adopt a method of patrol planning. The principle behind this technique, which was examined during the current inspection in Merseyside Police, is to determine the number and distribution of patrol units over time and area

to meet organisational objectives. Patrol plans are not shift systems. Rather, they provide a mathematical model on which different shift systems can be gauged to measure how they match the force's demand profiles. The requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the European Working Time Directive are identified by HMIC as significant issues in reconciling the demands of the organisation with the needs of the individual.

The use of a computerised system to assist in management of resources aligned to shift systems has been developed in some forces in Scotland but is still at a relatively early stage. In Merseyside Police the use of such a computerised system has been developed in a comprehensive manner. The Policing Bureaucracy Taskforce recognises that, in the area of flexible matching of resources to demand supported by information technology, Merseyside lead the way with estimated savings from redeployment of £3 million over a 3-year period.

Using a system called CARM (Computer Assisted Resource Management) along with other software they analyse when and where the greatest demand for police service is going to be. Using the Variable Shift Agreement in effect within the force, the system is able to adjust shift patterns, enabling officers to be given appropriate notice and ensure that sufficient officers are on duty when required. Integrated into the system is a facility for the Crown Prosecution Service to interrogate the system to establish the optimum time when police officers will be available to attend court. Use of this system cuts down on time wasted at court, cuts down on overtime and enables managers to best fit their resources against demand profiles some time in advance. A summary of the Grampian Police use of CARM to assist their court programming in a pilot scheme is mentioned later in this section.

RECOMMENDATION 6

HMIC recommends that forces give added impetus to the review of efficiency of shift systems and consider accentuating the role of resource managers and computer-assisted resource management systems to aid efficient deployment.

Absence Management

The level of absence through sickness is a matter of constant concern to individual forces. Whilst all forces have moved forward in this area, particularly in the domain of computerised absence management systems, absence management policies and occupational health and welfare provision, there is again variance between forces in the application of such systems.

In respect of overall absence, the question has been asked whether the police in Scotland are better or worse in overall terms when compared with other players in the public and private sector. The following statistics are of interest for benchmarking purposes.

The average number of days lost due to sickness in the Scottish Police Service in 2001-2002 was 10.7 days per officer. Despite the improvements in absence management procedures the figure of 10.7 days is higher than the 1996-97 figure of 10.2 days lost per officer per year, although lower than the 6-year high figure of 12.1 days per officer per year for 1998-99. The CBI Report 'Pulling Together: 2001 Absence and Labour Turnover Survey' indicates that the average number of working days lost for all employees of the public sector for 2000 was 10.2 days which compares unfavourably against 7.2 days lost in the private sector.

Whilst the figures for the police service are amongst the highest in both public and private sector there are mitigating factors, including the obvious fact that the particular nature of operational policing necessitates that officers with minor physical ailments cannot carry out their normal duties and in consequence many officers in this position undertake sick leave. Policies of encouraging officers back to work on a protected duties basis have a dual effect. Firstly, they reduce the overall absence figures for the force in question but secondly, and more importantly, if officers are

encouraged back to the work place to perform protected duties in what are sometimes basic administrative or clerical functions then the number of officers on protected duties are actually masking the overall absence figures from operational duty.

There appears to be no accurate data available on the extent to which this issue influences overall operational ability. Research in Merseyside Police and Greater Manchester Police suggests that the situation within England and Wales is similar, with no management information on this issue currently available. Within Scotland, the general position is that there are no integrated computerised absence management systems currently in place which link local command units and force headquarters. This makes prediction and analysis of absence management difficult at both a local and force level and impairs any meaningful wider comparisons between forces or with other organisations.

The wider area of occupational health has seen an increasing trend within Scottish forces towards outsourcing of this service. There are currently a number of forces who are in the process of implementing new occupational health arrangements on an outsourcing basis and it is at this stage too early to evaluate their effectiveness. However it is clear from HMIC Inspections that it is an area worthy of considerable attention.

The importance of effective occupational health provision cannot be overstated, particularly when dealing with longer term absence. According to the CBI report, occupational health provision was seen as a significant absence management tool.

HMIC also acknowledges emerging work on occupational health under the aegis of the Home Office, which will have a bearing on strategic developments in this area.

RECOMMENDATION 7

HMIC recommends that ACPOS addresses Occupational Health within a developing Human Resource strategy to ensure best practice and consistent management.

Case Study: NYPD

While from a completely different organisational and employment culture, the absence management situation in NYPD is also of interest. The Department has an 'unlimited' sick leave policy, but those on sick leave are effectively under 'house-arrest', being required to be contactable at all times at their home or other approved location.

There is a chronic sick programme for those sick more than four times per year or 45 days at any one time. The chronic sick are categorised into two types, the most pronounced being 'transferred' to a 'Special Medical District' – effectively a 'virtual' Division where the supervisors only monitor those on that category of sick-leave. Both categories are also monitored by the employee relations section. The average sickness is nine days per officer per year.

Court Attendance

The issue of abstraction through court attendance is a well documented problem. The inspection process revealed little progress on this issue with a notable exception of a pilot 'court' programming project at Aberdeen District and Stonehaven Sheriff Courts. This project involves a link to the force Computer Aided Resource Management System. A pilot based on similar principles has been established in Edinburgh.

The project involves planning rosters to coincide with witness duties to enable a more efficient use of resources. When a summary criminal case calls in the court and a plea of not guilty is tendered, the Clerk of the Court calls up the CARM Screen entering the numbers of the police witnesses in the case. This information is passed to the Clerk of Court by the Procurator Fiscal. The system then checks the roster database and produces a

selection of dates in which all police officers are available. Once a date has been selected and entered into trial date field, the system updates the CARM database and triggers an issue of citation letters to police officers. The police in Grampian accept these letters as equating to a citation. Although there are difficulties in developing this computerised system in Grampian the concept is promising and worthy of consideration by other forces.

Forces should continue to explore ways of more efficiently managing court down time. Ongoing reforms in the criminal justice process including both Solemn and Summary Procedure may enable further efficiencies ensuring effective use of officers assigned to court. HMIC considers that court attendance should be a key part of a force's resource management strategy.

Case Study: Netherlands

As well as resource management systems, there is potential for innovation in administration and processing within the Criminal Justice System to impact on operational availability, as the following example demonstrates.

During the Inspection, procedures in the Brabant Zuid Oost region of the Netherlands were examined. One area of notable good practice was the introduction of a system of joint working between the police, the local prosecutor, victim support and juvenile care, based within single premises. It was observed that there was full co-operation between all parties involved. Regular meetings are held between parties and decisions on whether or not to proceed with cases are taken on a daily basis. Any difficulties are communicated directly to officers involved, ensuring an efficient and appropriate response on the part of the police.

Since the introduction of this system, the administrative burden on the police in regard to submission of reports has decreased, as has the workload of the prosecutor's office. At the same time efficiency has increased, allowing more time to be freed up for operational duties. The concept of having all criminal justice-related agencies under one roof has been demonstrated to be achievable and has proved to reduce inter-agency misunderstandings.

A small police intelligence cell also operates from this office, tasked with identifying the most active criminals on a daily basis, with a view to informing the prosecutor timeously if they are arrested. This facilitates real time decision making in respect of these individuals and reduces delays in processing of their cases. All relevant cases are collated presenting the best case possible against the accused.

The juvenile care team also work in this office, providing a valuable link between the prosecutor and police when dealing with juvenile offenders. This is perhaps particularly relevant in the Scottish context given the current debate on juvenile crime. The joint approach towards juvenile offenders offers some potential to address the problems associated with the relatively small number of repeat offenders responsible for such a high proportion of volume crimes.

HMIC believes that the Dutch experience provides a useful reference point and is worthy of further examination in light of the current debate within Scotland on integration of the aims, objectives and targets of the principal agencies which make up the Criminal Justice System in Scotland.

Training

Training is obviously a major contributor to abstraction levels from operational policing and in many cases is mandatory, particularly in the case of probationary courses. Overall, annual abstraction levels for training vary between forces, with figures

obtained during the current inspection indicating an average abstraction level of between 8 and 13 days per year across forces (including probationers). HMIC notes the impact of training on frontline policing levels and believes that there is potential for improvements in programming training courses, particularly at force level. This programming would take account of peak demand times across the annual calendar within forces and would be designed to minimise abstractions at these times.

In addition, it is suggested that local delivery of training should be maximised through exploitation of technology already available in most forces. Whilst there has been some progress on this issue there is further scope for development of IT based training solutions. The demands placed on forces in the training arena recently, such as NEOTS (National Equal Opportunities Training) requiring comprehensive and intensive delivery to all personnel, serve to illustrate the importance of innovation in training delivery.

Conclusion

The context of 21st-century policing offers significant international and local challenges for resource deployment. At the same time identifiable external and internal factors have a substantial impact on the day-to-day availability of resources, for example through the demands of major events, or in responding to ongoing change. In addition, routine issues such as shift arrangements, absence management, court commitments and training requirements can have a negative effect on 'street strength' and the attendant capacity for proactive patrol. This is borne out by the sample activity analysis which tends to demonstrate practical limitations or 'Inhibitors' to meeting public expectations in terms of proactive patrol. It highlights the need to look at the statutory and core role of policing, minimise bureaucracy, strategically address recruitment and look for further efficiencies in resource management.

Visibility and reassurance

Introduction

Having examined public expectations and police resource issues, this chapter will assess current methods employed by forces in relation to visibility and reassurance. The survey perceptions outlined in Chapter 1 are also obviously relevant to this discussion.

Community Consultation

There are many existing examples of police community consultation processes being integrated into the Community Planning Consultation Process of Local Authorities. However, the legislative proposals for introducing a duty of community planning in the current Local Government Scotland Bill should provide a firm foundation for enhancing consultation mechanisms. This in turn, should assist in managing public expectations of service delivery from the police and focus awareness on where responsibilities lie, in particular, within local authorities.

NARROWING THE GAP



The People's Panel and Citizens' Juries

In its commitment to listening to people rather than imposing solutions, the Scottish Executive introduced 'The People's Panel', comprising a 5000-strong nationally representative group, to find out what people thought about public services. Following on from this were other local initiatives such as Citizen's Juries. This concept, derived from experience in America and Germany, consists of 12-16 members of the public brought together to consider a local issue posed by the commissioning body. The jury sits over 3/4 days and is assisted by 2 or 3 neutral facilitators. During this time they are given written information and hear evidence from expert witnesses. At the conclusion, recommendations are made which are normally advisory rather than binding.

South Lanarkshire Council was the first local authority in Scotland to introduce Citizen's Juries. At the first South Lanarkshire Jury police officers were called to give evidence and recommendations were made, supported by the council, on policing policy and deployment in a specific area. This was a process whereby the public were consulting the police as opposed to the police consulting the public. It is suggested, however, that the checks and balances built into this model assisted in achieving a realistic expectation level on the part of the public, and while demands were made on the police, recommendations were also made affecting other agencies, notably council departments. Partnerships were encouraged and evaluated as part of the process.

If properly constituted and managed, there are advantages for the police in becoming partners in such a process.

Current Methods of Engagement

In general, forces make use of public surveys as a means of gauging community opinions and while there are examples of this process extending into the wider public arena, the tendency is for this type of survey to focus on individuals who have had contact with the police.

In addition, forces make frequent use of public meetings at a local command area level as a means

of public consultation. However, the effectiveness of this medium obviously depends on levels of attendance and the range of representation present. Another method of assessing community concerns has been for forces to use experience from partnership arrangements to interpret public opinion. This approach can mean that direct views are not obtained in terms of service expectation.

Examples of Noteworthy Practice

There is no benchmark against which forces can be judged in respect of community consultation, and any position statement at present consists of identification of various areas of noteworthy practice which currently exist, including:

- In September 2001 Grampian Police established a Citizens' Panel in the Queen Street Command Area, the first of its kind to be conducted independently by a Scottish Police force. The panel is representative of the wider community in factors such as age, sex, employment status, geographical area and ethnicity.

An independent research company, George Street Consultants, based in Edinburgh, were commissioned by Grampian Police to recruit the panel. Sponsorship for the project was provided by the local City Centre Traders Association. The panel consists of 515 members who have agreed to be consulted on a quarterly basis over a 3-year period by a postal survey. The initial survey carried out in October 2001 attracted a response rate of 62%. Details of this panel are included on the force's website (www.grampian.police.uk).

One area of good practice arising out of this project is the creation of a Citizens' Panel Newsletter which included the police response to issues raised by the panel members. HMIC considers this method of community consultation to be worthy of consideration in other areas. It represents a good example of partnership working in this arena with the involvement of the Local Traders Association and the independent researchers.

- A need to consult with hard-to-reach groups has been emphasised. ACPOS has, following on

from the introduction of the ACPOS Racial Diversity Guidance Manual, established multi-agency alliances at all levels in an effort to address community problems. The Scottish Police and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Liaison Forum launched in February 2000 was formed through the efforts of Outright Scotland, which promotes LGBT issues in a Scottish context. Given the potential to assist in shaping and informing the ACPOS response to LGBT issues, the Association was supportive and provided representation. The initial successes of the forum have surpassed expectations and work completed so far includes the drafting of a standard Scottish police definition of a homophobic incident, the preparation of national guidelines regarding transgender people who come into police custody and the development of LGBT performance indicators due to come into effect in 2003.

- In Fife Constabulary a number of initiatives have taken place to improve consultation with hard-to-reach groups. Partnership working has assisted in this process. A survey called 'Homophobia Kills' is an example of the strength of commitment to partnership working in Fife and was conducted to gauge concerns regarding the type of crimes which affect LGBT groups. Following on from this survey a remote reporting facility was introduced for these groups. In addition a link has been established to the 'Fife Men Project' from the Fife Police website (www.fife.police.uk).
- Lothian and Borders Police 'partners' survey originated in 1998 and has evolved since then. It aims to ascertain opinions and experiences of the public, staff, local authority groups, businesses, educational bodies and community groups. It is a genuine attempt to identify policing priorities, customer expectations and areas of service failure.

In the most recent phase, between September and December 2001, a total of 21 focus groups were organised throughout the Lothian and

Borders area. This involved 1,100 members of the public, and a variety of community representatives being invited to the focus groups with 290 members attending. The main objective of the process was to identify public perceptions of crime and fear of crime levels within local communities to inform the wider survey. The feedback received during the focus groups assisted in the formulation of questions to be asked within the partners' survey itself.

The partners' survey in 2001-02 represented the largest most comprehensive part of the force's consultation process. A 35.1% response rate representing 2,950 respondents was achieved by the survey.

Effective Community Consultation

On many occasions the consultative process can provide significant advantages for operational policing. All forces use the community consultation process to inform their objective setting and annual strategic planning cycle. There is, however, a clear variation in the degree to which community consultation has been developed and incorporated into individual force strategies. To a greater or lesser degree this impacts on the level of influence which community opinion has on the strategic planning process.

The police service is far from unique in its need to gauge public perceptions and ascertain service needs. 'Out of the Ordinary – The Power of Ambition in an Uncertain World' (Scottish Council Foundation 2001) indicates, as part of the wider debate on government and governance, that:

'it is possible that the ways in which we engage communities in the policy process in Scotland could consciously and measurably increase social capital and hence the wellbeing of the populations involved'

This report goes on to indicate that if community is to be truly at the heart of policy making and engagement then it is imperative that the realities of the communities with whom the engagement is taking place are explored along with the reality of the people who live in them – not the assumed conception of how they 'must' or 'ought to be'.

The Scottish Council Foundation suggests that the key elements of public engagement are:

Passive engagement – Informing the public who are passive recipients.

Active engagement – Asking the public to tell decision makers their views.

Interactive engagement – Engaging in a dialogue with the public.

Participatory engagement – Involving people directly in decision making processes.

Independent engagement – Action taken outside decision making processes.

The existing mechanisms for engagement are outlined in the following table. Whilst these mechanisms are already well known and widely utilised it is suggested that there is a case for greater coherence and strategic direction in their use.

Mechanisms for Engagement

	PROS	CONS
Consultation documents	Ensure people can comment on policy proposals Widen the base of information considered in policy development Share ownership of policies	Timescales are often too short Language can be difficult to follow Lists of consultees can be too narrow No dialogue Assumption of equality of knowledge Vested interests can influence the process Agenda is set by policy makers
Public consultation	As above Initiates dialogue Broadens participation Confusion over language can be dealt with Can open the agenda to influence	As above Self-confidence of participants Pitch of the information Differing views/absent views Listening
Citizens Panels/surveys	Tap into a wide range of views Involve people in the policy process Get beyond the usual participants Provide additional information Influence decisions	Knowledge of the issues Representativeness of the participants Pitch of the information No dialogue (sometimes no feed back) Agenda set by the policy makers
Fora or area committees	Establish continuous involvement Break down barriers between the public, politicians and officers Inform decision making Provide opportunities for training/learning Create better understanding of decision making procedures	Representatives of participants Vested interests increase influence Change of organisational culture to respond Developmental support for all participants Overloading community members Incorporating activists Pitch of information
Citizens juries/ focus groups	Ensure dialogue Give people a chance to consider issues Develop informed involvement Provide good quality information Allow informed participation Influence policy Create better understanding of a wide range of issues	Listening Facilitated involvement, as opposed to directive Collection and provision of evidence, who controls it? Representativeness of participants Pitch of the information Responsiveness of policy makers
Partnership working	Level playing field Ensures dialogue between organisations and community participants Shared responsibility for decisions Sets agenda and priorities collaboratively Shared ownership of plans and policies Increased understanding of opportunities and blocks facing all participants Breakdown of organisational barriers	Equality of partners Language and dialogue Partners' willingness to develop common understanding Partners' commitment to the process Overloading community members Incorporating activists Listening Abrogating responsibility for decisions
Direct action	Informs policy makers about local issues Influences policy directly Sets agenda independently Breakdown of organisational barriers Increased awareness of decision making processes Involves people in the policy process Gets beyond the usual participants	Accountability of participants Impact on the local policy level if direct action fails Impact on the local policy level if direct action succeeds Representativeness of participants Power relations Outside manipulation of issues and processes

Towards a More Strategic Approach

Overall, across the spectrum of methods used by forces to consult with communities there is scope for wider consistency in application and more direct contacts to inform objective setting. Within the wider democratic process, HMIC would encourage well structured, widely-based surveys as a method of gauging public opinion.

Whilst there is undoubted evidence of meaningful dialogue with communities, there is a case for examining the need for **'an overall statement of strategic intent'** – what the service is aiming for in respect of consultation and participation with communities.

RECOMMENDATION 8

HMIC recommends that as part of the commitment to community consultation ACPOS and the Scottish Executive undertake a review of existing practices, with the aim of establishing relevant performance indicators particularly in respect of the effectiveness of problem-solving policing systems in addressing fear of crime. This would enable improved evidence based policy and allow performance benchmarking in this critical area.

The National Intelligence Model

The negative impact of international events, particularly post September 11 2001, and public perceptions regarding serious and organised crime also influence the reassurance levels of the general public. In Scotland, as elsewhere in the UK, the police reaction to serious and organised crime is focused through the National Intelligence Model (NIM).

The National Intelligence Model, pioneered by the National Criminal Intelligence Service, was introduced to the Scottish Police Service in February 2000. The Model, which introduced standardised processes and products, was quickly recognised as offering a blueprint, bringing together all of the best practices in intelligence and policing to aid the development of strategy and tactics. In this regard, the Model received early endorsement by the Association of Scottish Chief Police Officers (ACPOS) and in consequence a NIM Project Board was established to co-ordinate and direct implementation throughout the eight Scottish police forces and the Scottish Drug Enforcement Agency (SDEA).

The model has been designed to impact at three levels of business: local, cross border and serious and organised crime.

- Level 1 – Local issues – usually the crimes, criminals and other problems affecting a local command unit or small force area. The scope of the crimes will be wide ranging from low value thefts to crimes of great seriousness such as murder. The handling of volume crime will be a particular issue at this level.
- Level 2 – Cross Border issues – usually the actions of a criminal or other specific problems affecting more than one local command unit. Problems may affect a group of local command units, neighbouring forces or group of forces. Issues will be capable of resolution by forces, with support from the SDEA, National Crime Squad, HM Customs and Excise, the National Criminal Intelligence Service or other national resources. Key issues will be the identification of common problems, the exchange of appropriate data and the provision of resources for the common good.
- Level 3 – Serious and Organised Crime – usually operating on a national and international scale, requiring identification by proactive means and response primarily through targeting operations by dedicated units and a preventative response on a national basis.

Recently, work has continued to progress the development of the National Intelligence Model in Scotland, and to ensure a focused and co-ordinated approach to this. To examine and provide direction to Scottish forces on issues such as IS/IT implications, intelligence, 'Gap' analysis and implementation of two force pilot schemes, the Crime Standing Committee established an implementation team based at the Scottish Police College. This group has now concluded its work and throughout its tenure provided valuable advice and assistance to the pilot forces, Tayside Police and Grampian Police. Following the conclusion of the Implementation Team, the NIM Implementation Forum for Scotland was established as a means of ensuring that a clear Scottish perspective was maintained throughout the roll out of the system to all Scottish forces. In addition, this Forum provides an opportunity for NIM practitioners throughout the country to meet on a regular basis to identify and share best practice and to resolve any practical difficulties which arise.

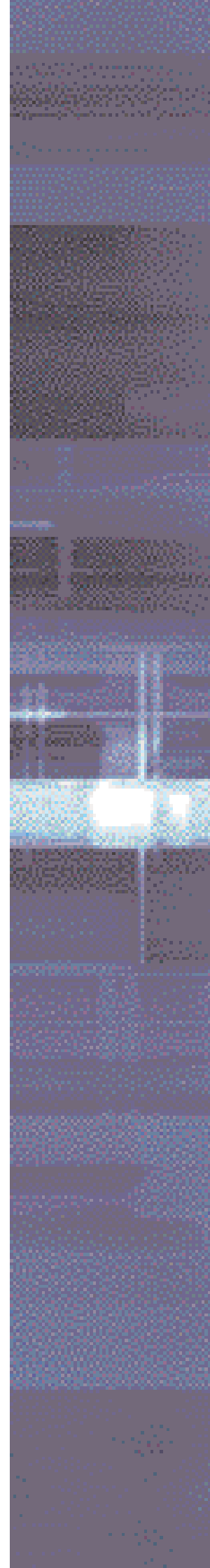
The Scottish Drug Enforcement Agency (SDEA), with the support of the ACPOS Crime Committee, has taken the lead in driving the introduction of the NIM to Scottish policing. This is perhaps exemplified by the fact that the Agency is responsible for the management of the Scottish NIM Implementation Project Team, that the Director and Crime Co-ordinator had, until recently, responsibility for chairing the Scottish Strategic and Tactical Tasking and Co-ordinating Group (now passed to the Chairman of the ACPOS Crime Standing Committee) and that the Director chairs the SID Project Board.

The commitment to a Scottish Intelligence Database (SID) is a significant step for the Scottish Police Service and the first in UK terms. When introduced, it will facilitate speedy access to criminal intelligence on a Scottish-wide basis; the adoption of common intelligence practices and procedures; a method to aid the introduction of NIM principles in Scotland, and will provide

Scottish police forces and the SDEA with the technological means to make an even greater impact on crime at a local, force and national level.

During the Thematic Inspection process it was observed that there are indeed various stages of implementation across the country in respect of the NIM. Encouragingly, the concept of Tactical Tasking and Co-ordinating, an integral aspect of the NIM, has developed separately across all forces and has become generally well established in advance of the NIM roll-out programme. Forces have utilised varying temporal frameworks in developing models for Tasking and Co-ordinating varying from 1 week to 5 week intervals. The development of Tactical Tasking and Co-ordinating has facilitated individual force approaches to Level 1 intelligence gathering. At this level there is now recognition that the two aspects of intelligence, namely crime based and community based, must be approached holistically via the Tactical Tasking and Co-ordinating process.

Community intelligence (the assessed product from sorting all of the information gleaned from communities which gives insight into policing issues) from a variety of sources provides the foundation for policing crime at a local level, but is viewed by the SDEA as a platform for the development of intelligence at the force, regional and national level. Whilst awareness of the importance of community intelligence is increasing there is a need for consistency of approach in respect of the methods used by forces to collate such intelligence and further, to dictate how it informs the Tactical Tasking and Co-ordinating process. There appears to be an uneven approach to process management in respect of community intelligence in forces across the country. However, the early stage of implementation of the National Intelligence Model meant that little firm evidence could be gleaned during the current inspection and HMIC will further report on this issue as part of the planned thematic inspection on crime management.



Recommendation 9

HMIC recommends that ACPOS as part of its commitment to achieving consistency of approach to mainstreaming the National Intelligence Model develop a project plan, with specific tasks, a timescale and evaluation criteria to support developments in this important area.

Recommendation 10

HMIC recommends that forces examine and develop the opportunities which exist to optimise community intelligence, firstly to provide a foundation for the higher level intelligence framework within NIM and secondly to act as a catalyst for meaningful problem-solving within Tactical Tasking and Co-ordinating.

Case Study: Central Scotland Policing Management Unit

As part of the force's commitment to the rollout of the National Intelligence Model which is still at an early stage, Central Scotland Police has developed a Policing Management Unit. This builds on the success of its three Area Crime Management Units formed in 1995 and is based on a model from Kent Constabulary. The Policing Management Unit (PMU) is a centralised unit based at force HQ in Stirling. It comprises 21 members of police and support staff drawn from Uniform Operations, CID and Road Policing. A number of Area Intelligence officer roles have been created within the three Area Command Units in the force which feed into the PMU, providing a local link. Primary aims of the PMU are to:

- Manage crimes and offences in conjunction with Area Commanders and Crime Managers, encapsulating investigation, quality of service and victim care issues.
- Research, develop and analyse information with a view to identifying trends and providing analytical direction to frontline officers and managers alike by turning local information into action
- Assist Area Commanders to carry out their policing business.

With its analytical capability and IT support, the PMU is regarded as the engine room of the force, providing strategic and local level managers with a range of intelligence-based products to inform decision making and assist deployment. The Chief Constable, in recognition of the impact of the PMU, has identified its continued development as one of the force priorities.

During the Inspection process the PMU was visited and its processes examined. HMIC found that one of the main strengths of the Unit was the quality and currency of intelligence and information produced. These include daily briefing reports for Area Command Units which in turn include information on persons liberated on bail from local courts with the bail conditions and recently issued warrants. Where possible, colour photographs are provided. The operational officers spoken to indicated an increasing level of satisfaction with PMU following on from a period of suspicion over the relatively high staffing level. Overall, the Central Scotland Policing Management Unit, with its synthesised approach to crime management and intelligence, appears an area of good practice particularly suited to a policing unit of that force's size.

Problem Solving Policing

Problem Solving Policing or Problem-Oriented Policing are terms which can currently be found in the operational policing vocabulary of most, if not all, Scottish police forces.

Problem Solving is a term used to describe the adoption of an evidence-based approach to reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour. In practice, this means:

- making use of data to establish the existence and extent of a problem, to analyse its nature and source, to plan intervention measures to reduce it, and to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the selected response (whether the interventions have worked, whether they have produced their effects in the expected way, and whether there have been any significant (positive or negative) side effects);
- drawing on findings from existing research to inform data analysis and choice of responses;
- applying informed lateral thought in developing innovative solutions; and
- using feedback in decisions to adjust, expand, abandon, and maintain initiatives.

The Problem Solving Policing approach has clear affinities with Intelligence-Led Policing and can be synthesised into the tasking and co-ordinating process without difficulty.

While some forces in Scotland have attempted to manage the implementation of a problem-solving approach by training groups of officers in the relevant techniques, there has been an inconsistent approach to this. This has resulted in a policy-practice gap in many instances in respect of problem solving. In a positive light, most forces who have adopted the approach are linking it into the Tactical Tasking and Co-ordinating process, using this medium for the initial identification and tasking and also for monitoring and feedback of problems identified as suitable for being addressed by this process. From a negative perspective there is a tendency not to involve relevant partners in the problem solving process and to focus on issues capable of being addressed by the police in isolation. Without doubt the partnership aspect of problem solving is crucial. There are several examples where forces have made excellent use of the problem solving process including the partnership aspect.

RECOMMENDATION 11

HMIC recommends that ACPOS encourage further enhancement of problem solving policing as a means of addressing local issues and consolidating the community-planning ethos.

Case Study: Q Division, Strathclyde

A Problem Solving Co-ordination Unit has been created at Hamilton Police Office in Q Division, Strathclyde Police, staffed by an inspector, sergeant and three shifts of three constables. They are supported by six part-time switchboard operators who will be responsible for screening incoming calls. The initial aim of this unit will be to reduce operational workloads and demands by screening out non-essential calls and also recording certain categories of crime report by telephone. Crime recording and attendance policy criteria have been established. By removing the switchboard from the operational

control room, controllers will be tasked with the organisation of resources to live incidents, thereby increasing overall efficiency. They will also direct resources to areas of recurring complaint as identified in the problem-solving process. It is anticipated that reductions in overall workload of patrol officers generated by call screening will be used for proactive patrol and problem solving. Staff within the problem-solving co-ordination unit will also perform an incident analysis function to identify recurring issues which in turn will drive operational activity.

Later this year, four additional analysts and

increased information technology will become available to the division as the NIM is rolled out forcewide. The problem solving co-ordination unit has been designed to accommodate the strategic analysts under the NIM and the local intelligence officer, thus providing a conduit to the divisional intelligence office and uniform shift briefing processes.

The problem-solving co-ordination unit will co-ordinate and drive both the national intelligence model implementation and problem solving in the division, initially utilising existing IT systems until the increased analytical capability comes on line.

At the time of the Inspection, the scheme was not operational. There had been, however, a significant amount of preparatory work done before the launch date of 1 September 2002, with a particular commitment to partnership working already in evidence. A presentation on the problem solving approach has been made to elected representatives and a training video explaining the concept of problem solving and enhanced partnership working has been created, with messages from both the Council Chief Executive and Police Commander.

Additionally, a video for public marketing has been produced to be used at community meetings. Joint training is underway for police personnel and council staff and around 400 council staff have been involved in this training process. These measures enhance an already robust partnership approach between the police and South Lanarkshire Council. The progress of the project will be monitored and evaluated throughout by independent assessors working in tandem with Strathclyde Police with a view to potential introduction of this policing model forcewide.

In tandem with the introduction of the problem-solving policing model, a model of geographic responsibility for inspectors within division has been introduced to assist in the problem identification process.

Case Study: Turning New York Around – Compstat; Myth and Reality

The reputation of New York has been completely re-engineered in the last decade, from bankruptcy and a horrendous reputation for crime to apparent prosperity and a claim to be 'the safest large City in America'. This success has been variously ascribed to demographic change, economic recovery, additional investment in policing, and an accountability and performance regime for its public services.

In policing terms, public accountability has taken the form of Compstat, a data-driven approach to performance review. However, this system is mirrored throughout New York's public services, known as the 'Citywide Accountability Programme, where statistical data for each public service are used to manage performance are made available to the public through the City's Internet Website (www.nyc.org) and is the means by which public bodies are held accountable for performance.

At its simplest, Compstat is a weekly meeting (held at 0700 hrs each Thursday) at which a small number of Borough and Precinct staff are held accountable for operational performance by the Force Executive. Compstat is, however, within NYPD a primary mechanism for linking effective tactics to control crime and the framework for business planning.

The policing philosophy on which Compstat is based is 'The Four Steps to Crime Reduction', which are:

- Accurate and timely intelligence;**
- Effective tactics;**
- Rapid deployment; and**
- Relentless follow-up and assessment.**

Each Monday managers are provided with a computer-generated report showing the crime, arrests and 'summons activity' for NYPD as a whole, each of the eight Boroughs and each of the 76 precincts. Page one lists the best and

worst performers as regards overall crime falls or rises over the last week, showing also the last 28 days and calendar year to date.

As regards crime the report highlights the eight crime types considered most important, namely murder, rape, robbery, felony, assault, burglary, grand larceny (i.e. theft from the person or valued over \$1,000) and grand larceny auto (i.e. car theft).

Compstat usually focuses on crime related issues on a borough and precinct level, but on occasions precincts throughout the city with emerging problems of a similar nature will be called up together for a 'thematic' review. In the words of one member of the Force Executive:-

'Compstat is not a meeting you prepare for, it is a way of doing business'

(Dep. Commissioner Garry McCarthy)

In considering what lessons can be learned in a Scottish context, HMIC felt that previous discussions in the UK in relation to Compstat have founded mostly on the accountability aspects of the weekly meeting rather than its underlying philosophy. It is important to recognise that the NIM and the Tasking and Co-ordinating processes developing in Scottish forces effectively mirror the 'four steps to crime reduction' on which Compstat is based, with a more holistic Community Intelligence/Crime Intelligence-based risk assessment process supplementing the data driven model in use in New York.

NOTE: It is worthy of note in this context that the much publicised successes of the New York Police Department, whilst achieved in a climate of social, environmental and political change, involved an increase in funding to a level which allowed deployment of 5,000 extra officers equating to a 12% increase in the notional establishment of the merged City Police Department.

In a Scottish context a similar increase would approximate to an extra 1800 officers at an annual cost of £45 million, necessitating an increase on the



£753 million GAE allocation for 2001-2002 of 6%. This increase in staffing would be greater than the individual force strengths of six of the eight current Scottish police forces.

Police Visibility – Patrol

In terms of frontline service delivery, the main vehicle for engagement between the police service and the public is patrol. This was evidenced in the findings of the market research study carried out as part of the inspection.

The research also identified that patrolling officers are considered to provide reassurance stemming directly from a belief that they have a significant deterrent effect. Confidence also was found to be increased by patrol instilling in the public the perception that officers are at hand in the community should they be required and from an enhanced visual confirmation that the police are active.

This section of the report addresses **deployment strategies** which can be used to optimise the level of visibility and reassurance achieved from patrol. Patrol is a tactical option available to forces but in general terms the strategic and tactical use and control of patrol is limited. Frequently this arises as a direct result of a need to meet other more immediate demands placed upon the service. Accordingly, officers can often only be deployed on proactive patrol once all other responsibilities are completed.

In simple terms patrol can be delivered in two ways – either by foot patrol or by mobile patrol. Due to general limitations on availability of resources for the patrol function and the need to provide a quick response capability, mobile patrols are in the main the first-line resource deployed as emergency and non-emergency response to calls for assistance from the public. Foot patrol is, in general, less evident than mobile patrol, with recent activity analysis indicating that of the 21% of an officer's time spent on patrol 4% is devoted to foot patrol. Foot patrol is mostly undertaken by community police officers who, generally speaking, may have a limited non-urgent response role but whose primary purpose is proactive community engagement and longer-term problem solving. There is a wide variance between the community policing models employed by forces. This undoubtedly influences the effectiveness and purpose of much of the foot patrols which are undertaken across the country. It can be said that the area of patrol, particularly foot patrol, is one where there is a significant gap between public expectation and service provision.

Market Research UK findings indicate that too few officers on the beat is perceived as a factor in influencing the opinion that crime levels are increasing. But whilst the public have a desire for more officers on the beat they are also convinced that the police are slow to respond. They believe that increased police visibility and engagement could prevent crime and disorder and 68% of those surveyed indicated that it was most important to see more officers on foot in housing estates in the evening, with 33% believing presence at local known hotspots at crucial times to be important.

In managing patrol, the **perceptions** and **demands** of the public must be married with the need for police activity which is identified through an Intelligence-Led Approach and effective community consultation. The patrol model, to be successful, must address actual problems whilst at the same time it must seek to raise the reassurance levels of certain sectors of the

community through commitment of resources to areas of public concern.

Given this dilemma it is vital that proportionate resources are committed to the patrol function. This is essential to assist proactive visibility and to maximise engagement on matters of public concern. There are a number of recurring themes in any discussion on this topic:

- **Use of Overtime** – This has been the traditional method employed by police forces to augment patrol, particularly in the area of foot patrol. With the advent of Intelligence Led Policing initiatives there has been a more focussed use of this valuable medium. The recent PNB agreement to reduce overtime by 15% and the impact of the European Working Time Directive will together have an impact on the management of overtime to increase visible patrols in the future.

Case Study: RAC

Research carried out during the inspection process found good practice in the use of overtime in the private sector. The use of Demand-Led Rostering by the RAC had the objective of improving the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the roadside operation. One of the key elements of this was a contracting on an annual basis of the number of hours which employees would work on an annual basis in addition to their rostered hours. These hours, called 'reserve hours', are to be worked subject to agreed periods of notice and are reassessed every 3 months. Additional reserve hours will be offered if necessary. Whilst there are clearly regulatory implications for the police if changes to procedure were to be considered, this type of rostering may be found to be mutually beneficial to both the organisation and the individual.

- **Single Crewed Patrols** – In any debate on visibility and public reassurance it has become inevitable that the subject of single crewed patrols is raised. It has been claimed that up to 60% of encounters between police and public

are initiated by members of the public so by splitting up patrols the number of encounters could be doubled. Evidence from research carried out by the Superintendents' Association in England and Wales suggests that police officers are more likely to engage with the public when patrolling alone rather than in pairs. Forces generally claim that there is a commitment to single officer deployment and that this is risk assessed. It is difficult to evidence this risk assessment and indeed, 'Open All Hours' indicated that in respect of single crewing **'Claims of a risk assessed approach do not bear careful scrutiny. The inspection team found only one example where any science lay behind the assessment process. The majority of decisions reflect the judgement and preferences of first line supervisors'**. The Home Office Bureaucracy Taskforce reflected on the importance of the supervisor in assigning officers to patrol and strongly advocated single crewing as the default option while advising that this matter be kept under review taking account of the current intelligence assessment. In Scotland whilst there is already a commitment to single crewing it may be an appropriate time to examine the scope for implementation of a default position of single crewing where the backdrop of officer safety permits this on a risk assessed basis. Cognisance would obviously have to be taken of the particular requirements under Scots Law for corroboration.

- **Flexible Working Practices** – The full background to Flexible Working Practices in the Police Service is contained in the Police Research Series Paper 147 published in 2001. This report, by Rachel Tuffin, identifies that the main flexible working options for police officers are part time and jobshare. Importantly it is claimed that **'the reality of part-time work in the police service does not follow practices in other organisations. Outside the service, posts are often identified as**

suitable for part-time work and staff are recruited to them accordingly. In the police service, common practice is for staff to reduce their hours in a post which they previously occupied full-time'.

This accords with the findings of the current Inspection, which ascertained that whilst all forces are using part time working there is scope for extension of the manner in which part time workers are used. There is scope in particular, with agreement from all parties, to remove part time workers from their core groups where many of them remain deployed, and to utilise them in a way which addresses force priorities, including the opportunity to enhance the patrol capability at key times. This type of change requires management commitment at all levels. Tuffin agrees with this conclusion stating that **'Career Development, Personnel Staff and line managers need to provide proactive encouragement for staff in part time roles to move post, and access specialisms and promotion. . . . Chief officers, Heads of central force departments, police authorities and BCU Commanders need to agree to support the introduction of Flexible Working Practices'**.

Case Study: Differentiating the Patrol Function in Holland

Frequently the main inhibitor to the delivery of targeted patrol is the requirement for officers to patrol whilst continually remaining available to be deployed immediately in response to other tasks. To conduct patrol effectively it is vital that patrolling officers are able to engage with the public. This does not mean that they provide no response capability but instead means that whilst deployed on the patrol function efforts are made to direct urgent calls to other non patrol units.

The degree to which the undertaking of proactive or community patrol is ring fenced is a matter for individual forces. In the south east of

Holland a system of differentiating response policing from proactive community work known as Direct Police Aid has been implemented. This was observed during the Inspection Process. Direct Police Aid involves the demarcation of the patrol function and results in about 25% of available resources being allocated to this area. This percentage allows response officers to meet the immediate demands for response on the vast majority of occasions. This demarcation has provided a number of opportunities.

1. The limited number of response vehicles has allowed the fleet to be appropriately equipped affordably. Equipment fitted as standard to these vehicles includes; satellite navigation system, mobile data terminals, mobile office equipment, automatic vehicle location system and emergency response equipment.
2. Only experienced officers are deployed within the response units and the nature of the work has served to raise the status of these officers, assisting motivation and encouraging aspiration from younger officers.
3. Officers in non response roles are able to engage more in problem solving policing
4. Response units are double crewed and the converse side to this is that the safety implications of single crewing non response units are reduced.
5. The use of Automatic Vehicle Location System (AVLS) along with advanced geographical location systems enables control rooms to deploy resources more efficiently.

6. Response units have no geographical affinity and are deployed using the technology mentioned above.

The use of a response policing model has been demonstrated to be most effective in urban and semi urban environments. In rural areas it may not be appropriate. The inspection process has revealed that in most Scottish Forces there are demarcations between response policing and community policing. There are, however, wide variations in the nature and use of community policing officers, from dedicated units with independent supervisory structures to the situation in one force where due to the unique geographical and demographic situation all officers on uniform duties are deemed to be both response and community officers. It is suggested that a more differentiated response model may be worthy of consideration, particularly in light of the increased commitment to a problem solving methodology in all forces.

Overall, the inspection revealed that the status of both patrol and community officers is capable of enhancement and the suggestion that response patrol and community policing be more distinct entities may promote new perceptions regarding status. Generally, it is clear that whilst delivery of patrol cannot be considered in isolation from the other responsibilities of the service, and forces are acutely aware of the issue, there remains a need for forces to direct and monitor patrol performance as a distinct entity.

RECOMMENDATION 12

HMIC recommends that forces accord due status to patrol and community policing as distinctive elements of service delivery.

INITIATIVES

Over the past decade more conventional approaches to patrol have been augmented by focused, usually short-term initiatives to address priorities. There is anecdotal evidence that some of these have captured the public and media imagination at local and national levels.

These include 'Operation Blade' to recover knives in Strathclyde, 'Operation Foil' a sustained anti drugs exercise in Lothian and Borders, and 'Beacon' a prolonged community safety exercise in Tayside based in Dundee. Other forces have similar examples. In addition force wide exercises such as 'The Spotlight Initiative' in Strathclyde, the

'Safeguard Initiative' in Dumfries and Galloway and 'Safer Central' in Central Scotland have demonstrated the visible impact of high profile targeted policing on specific priorities.

At a national level, the concept of 'Safer Scotland', apart from providing a brand image, has also been the vehicle for well publicised simultaneous cross force action on drugs, violence and disorder.

However, initiatives in themselves are not a strategy. Factoring high profile activity logistically is resource intensive and in the short term can deplete patrol and community policing staffing to

the detriment of what may seem to be more immediate local problems. Also any initiative must be properly evaluated so as to inform the development of future plans.

Nevertheless, HMIC considers the potential exists for priorities to be more consistently addressed simultaneously across forces within a coherent operational and communications strategy in ways which intelligently enforce, visibly reassure and effectively address major nationwide problems of the day.

RECOMMENDATION 13

HMIC recommends that ACPOS further draws on the lessons of the Safer Scotland concept to assess the scope for more consistently addressing priorities across forces in ways which heighten the effective profile of policing while remaining sensitive to local needs.

Special Constables

'These officers make a significant contribution, especially in the smaller communities, to an efficient policing service. Police effectiveness would be challenged if they did not turn out for duty. Positive action is required now to halt the decline, where it exists, and attract new recruits to the Special Constabulary. It is a very worthwhile goal for forces.' (HMCIC Annual Report 2000/2001).

Within Scottish forces generally, there is a trend towards decreasing numbers of special constables. This is in part due to inconsistencies in the overall recruitment process and in part due to high wastage figures caused by a substantial number of special constables moving on to the regular service and people resigning for work or study reasons, although in reality many of these did not regularly turn out for duty. These two factors accounted for 19% and 22% respectively of resignations from the Special Constabulary in England and Wales according to research commissioned by the Home Office in 2000. (Attracting and Keeping Special Constables).

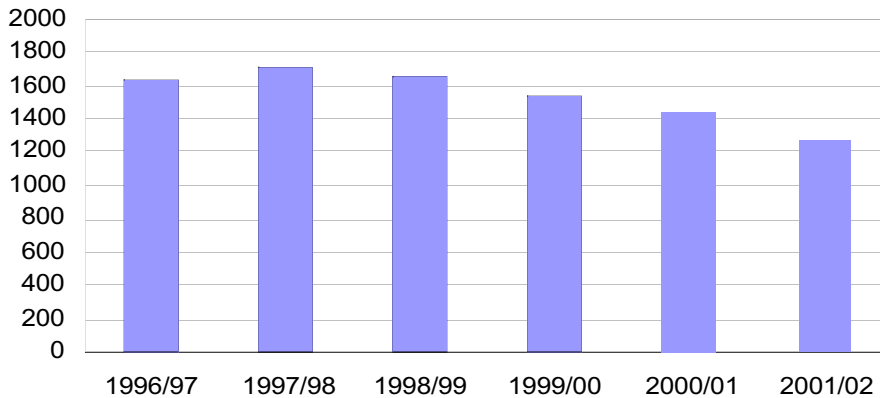


There were 1,271 special constables as at 31 March 2002 on the strength of the eight Scottish police forces (of which 1,119 were registered as available for duty). The overall total has steadily declined from 1,717 in 1997 to their

current level. Within this it is significant that the pattern of involvement to meet needs within the remote areas of Northern Constabulary does not match conventional approaches to training and

deployment, although in the force context this arrangement ensures invaluable links with members of rural communities willing to assist the police.

Figure 8: Special Constable Strength in Scotland, 1997/98 – 2001/02



The research carried out for the current thematic inspection has shown that there has been little corporacy attached either at a national level or at individual force levels to the issues surrounding the recruitment, retention, deployment and training of special constables in recent years.

For some time there has been debate nationwide regarding payment of special constables. This topic has once again resurfaced in the Government White Paper 'Policing a New Century' which states that the Home Office is exploring the case for paying (special constables) an allowance in recognition of their public service. It has been reported that under these proposals some special constables could earn £2,500 a year. If a sum this size was paid to specials in Scotland it would cost around £3 million per annum. Research indicates that it is not clear if the issue of payment alone would be effective in increasing numbers. Whilst recent evidence suggests that there is no groundswell of opposition from chief officers in Scotland to the issue of payment it should be considered not in isolation but as part of a wider debate on the whole spectrum of issues surrounding special constables.

There has already been work carried out in this area and a report by the Working Group to

Review and Ratify the Role and Use of the Special Constabulary was accepted by ACPOS in February 1998 and led to 61 recommendations. Since 1999 a Special Constabulary Monitoring Group has met with the following remit;

- Progress and monitor the implementation of the recommendations contained in the working group report.
- Consider and address any national issues which arise in relation to the Special Constabulary.
- Encourage the development of common policy throughout Scotland in relation to the Special Constabulary.
- Report and make recommendations to the General Policing sub committee when appropriate.

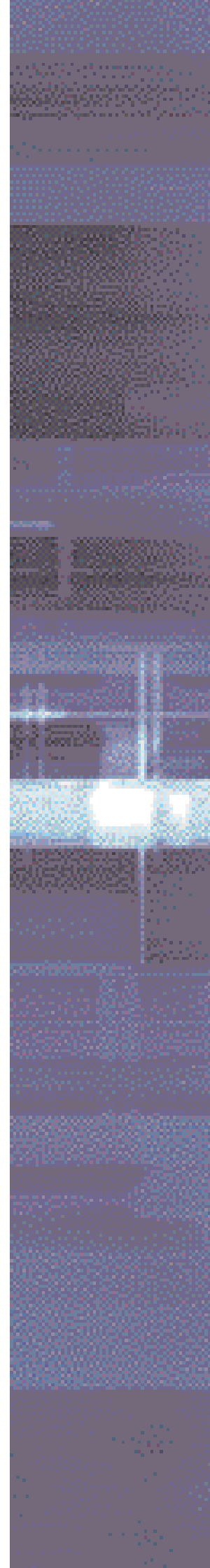
Several issues have been addressed but a large number are still awaiting progress.

Given the demands which continue to be made on frontline policing in the face of the abstraction levels outlined, and acknowledging high public expectations regarding proactive service, the effective and efficient use of a proficient Special Constabulary is a valid option. Research reveals several issues worthy of consideration:

- The payment of a 'Bounty' in similar terms to the Territorial Army. This could be made as a one off payment annually or could be in the form of a lump sum which augments a level of hourly payment dependant on attendance. Another analogy which can be drawn here is that of part time retained firefighters who are offered fees for training and attending operational incidents and an annual retaining fee of £1980. Payment is, however, only one issue.
- Recruitment is another area which requires to be addressed. Whilst there is recent evidence of an increased thrust in this area in some Scottish forces, there is little sign that there is any targeting of specific groups or attempts to encourage employers to participate in the recruitment process. There is evidence from Avon and Somerset Constabulary of a Special Constable, who by his own volition, obtained a day per week from his employer in order to serve as a special constable. This appears to be a unique situation but is one worthy of further development and exploration. This issue is particularly relevant given the potential restrictions on deployment of special constables due to the provisions of the European Working Time Directive. The Railway Company Connex has become the first major employer in the country to sponsor staff to become special constables. Connex is giving these special constables time off work to assist police on BTP's London South Area and a bonus payment of £1000 in recognition of their commitment.
- Retention also requires attention. Research referred to earlier reveals that reasons given on resignation by special constables include 'poor supervision', 'training issues', 'uninteresting duties' and 'not being deployed in a worthwhile manner'. There is a need for a national overview to be taken of these issues as there is wide divergence in the training, deployment and supervision of special constables. This includes variations in the approach to driving police vehicles, operating IT systems or preparing elementary police reports.

These factors often contribute to a feeling of resentment on the part of regular officers who regard special constables simply as providers of corroboration. In today's sophisticated policing environment there has to be an optimisation of skill levels in all personnel including special constables, many of whom have skills which are transferable from their fulltime careers to the police service.

- In respect of deployment there are good news stories. In Dumfries and Galloway for example, there is the example of special constables patrolling together in rural villages on foot where otherwise this would not be an option. In Grampian, special constables played a prominent part in a major incident exercise 'Lairig Ghuru'.
- There are several issues associated with the management of special constables. In Scotland the rank structure within the Special Constabulary was disregarded some years ago. If there is to be a renewed impetus in respect of special constables the issue of allocating managerial responsibility within the Special Constabulary may be worthy of examination. Several forces in England and Wales have retained a rank structure within the Special Constabulary which anecdotal evidence indicates is working well. In the HMIC (England and Wales) 1998 Thematic Inspection 'A Special Relationship' comment was made that HMI was 'consistently struck by the amount of experience and talent which exists within the Special Constabulary. Many Special Constables hold management positions in commerce, industry and the public sector, and they have alternative perspectives to bring to the management of policing'. In addition, the strategic management of the Special Constabulary at force level has to be looked at with a view to one chief officer taking the role of 'Champion' to give authority, direction and credibility to the concept.



In Sussex the force operates a Special Constabulary which utilises its own rank structure. A Commandant assisted by a Deputy Commandant and three Assistants, administer the Special Constabulary. This is seen as a positive measure which is of assistance particularly in establishing availability of Special Constables and when dealing with minor matters. This structure is supported by a proper training programme and a meaningful deployment model.

- In the survey carried out as part of this inspection, when asked, young people had no awareness of the concept of special constables and many expressed surprise that people would wish to perform this role on a voluntary and unpaid basis. It is suggested that whilst there may just be a difficulty in recognition due to the similarity in appearance of special and regular constables there may also be a key marketing issue for the service in identifying

and targeting young people in recruiting campaigns for the Special Constabulary. It is of note that the issue of non payment was a surprise to young people. The Home Office research into retention of special constables indicates that it is with younger specials that the issue of payment becomes an issue.

- There may be scope for debate on the nomenclature to be used. It could be argued that the title 'special constable' does not have a positive association inside the service in many instances and externally is not presenting an attractive enough image to encourage people to join.

Aside from the issues surrounding special constables, consideration has to be given to alternative means of augmenting existing resource levels and enhancing efficiency.

RECOMMENDATION 14

HMIC recommends that within existing arrangements forces set targets to increase the number of active special constables.

RECOMMENDATION 15

HMIC recommends that ACPOS explore novel ways of engaging civic interest and skills in voluntary assistance to the police within the community.

RECOMMENDATION 16

HMIC recommends that the Police Advisory Board for Scotland oversee a wide ranging review of the Special Constabulary in the medium term.

Community Wardens

Within the Police Reform agenda in England and Wales proposals have been made to introduce community wardens.

As previously mentioned, the public survey commissioned by HMIC revealed some

reservations regarding this concept and it would appear that any such development would require effective consultation and communication allied to coherent evaluation.

The following case studies illustrate some current developments in Scotland.

Case Study: Grampian Police – Developments in the utilisation of traffic wardens.

During the last three years, Grampian Police have taken the opportunity to develop the role of their Traffic wardens to better support frontline policing. Developments in this area can be summarised as follows.

- Uniforms have been changed to blend more with traditional police uniform and high visibility yellow jackets were issued. Pay and conditions were reviewed resulting in salary enhancement.
- Intelligence briefings are given to traffic wardens and a current criminal intelligence board is maintained by a senior traffic warden.
- Some 250 abandoned vehicle enquiries are generated each month in Aberdeen City. Traffic Wardens now follow each of these enquiries to its conclusion.
- Traffic Wardens are used to support crime prevention initiatives in high crime areas, including checking parked vehicles for property left in view. In such cases registration numbers are noted and owners are lettered.
- Several traffic wardens have been trained in the use of hand held speed detection devices and have also been used to carry out speed management surveys.

Probably the most significant development has been eight staff being trained to take over the role of escorting abnormal loads in and around Aberdeen. This has involved significant training. Evaluation surveys indicate that the transition to non police escorts has been successful. This initiative is believed to be a first in the UK.

There are proposals for future developments involving traffic wardens in Aberdeen, including a potential transition to a community warden system following on the proposed decriminalisation of parking.

Case Study: Comparison between approaches in Renfrewshire and North Lanarkshire.

In two divisions in Strathclyde Police different approaches have been employed to meet community needs in specific areas. In 'K' Division, the Renfrewshire Neighbourhood Warden Scheme has been introduced with an overall aim of contributing to the regeneration of the target areas, and to develop social inclusion by reducing crime and fear of crime and disorder, and anti social behaviour. In 'N' Division, the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund has been established for two areas. Here, the overall aim is to reduce the fear of crime by increasing policing activity within the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund areas by focusing on the concerns of the community.

Whilst the overarching aims are broadly similar there are differences with regard to staffing. The scheme in Renfrewshire, whilst also funded by The Scottish Executive Better Neighbourhood Services Fund, will involve the deployment of one senior warden and three wardens in each of four target areas, providing a service in the form of roving concierges employed by the housing department. They will not have any special powers nor be responsible for the enforcement of any fixed penalties. The wardens will be intelligence gatherers, and will be able to provide evidence in legal actions against anti social tenants, and by their presence will deter crime and anti social behaviour. They will endeavour to engage local youth and involve themselves in diversionary activity but this must not dilute their primary function which is to be a visible presence on patrol. This approach contrasts markedly with that in 'N' Division in North Lanarkshire where over a three year period the funding provided will be used to equip and support a total of 10 police constables and two sergeants carrying out dedicated policing in the respective areas.

Interestingly, when one examines the underlying aims of this project it can be seen that there is clearly a movement towards community based activity, including 'to act as streetworkers as part of the Youths Causing Annoyance Scheme Team' and 'to liaise with the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit to improve residents quality of life'. Whilst one initiative is clearly police based and the other is using the new concept of wardens it may be observed that there is a convergence of purpose visible with some 'quasi police' functions being allocated to wardens and some responsibilities falling on police which in normal circumstances would not be part of their core role. When costs are scrutinised for salaries, differences between police and wardens are evident but not significant overall. A warden in Renfrewshire can expect a salary of £20,216 per annum including allowances. The salary for a trained recruit (ie who has completed the 2 year probationary period) is £21,645 based on figures at the time of inspection. While there are obviously variances in employer on costs etc, the two employee costs are quite similar.

Both schemes are embryonic and it will be interesting to examine the evaluation of the effectiveness of both in terms of the effects of presence, engagement and visibility of contrasting styles in the respective project areas. Indeed there may be an underlying Best Value issue in terms of investment in police officers and expenditure on civic wardens.

The outcome of such evaluation and the experience of extended involvement by wardens should be incorporated in the response to HMIC Recommendation 5.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion outlines what may be described as a range of 'enablers' which if developed could enhance policing capabilities in addressing public expectations. These embrace improved methods of engagement, exploiting intelligence, enhancing problem-solving policing, and reviewing deployment strategies in relation to patrol and community policing. In addition, it is suggested that there is scope for imaginative use of the special constabulary and an opportunity to explore the possibilities of the use of wardens based on emerging experience.

Public Reassurance

On the basis of evidence presented during the inspection process and including the public survey results it is suggested that there are two areas which could be constructively addressed in further improving public relations. These are communications and access.

Clearly community consultation is an important element of communication and this aspect is addressed in Chapter 3. In the wider sense community consultation can be linked to media and marketing activity.

The management of expectations in this context can be separated into 3 identifiable compartments.

- media relations;
- public relations; and
- marketing.

For ease of discussion, media relations is considered to relate to: that area of activity designed to service the day to day needs of the media generally; public relations; the overall interaction with communities and extended partners; marketing, the corporate identity and all means of promoting that identity including branding, franchising and differentiating between the needs of user groups.

NARROWING THE GAP



Media Relations

Of these three compartments media relations continues to be the most influential. Force co-ordination is normally delivered through an appointed press officer. Although circumstances often dictate that a reactive approach has to be adopted, whenever possible proactive engagement is attempted. Growing professionalism within media units, assisted by strong local media relationships, has cemented this position. Also, there is a welcome awareness across forces of responsibility for promoting a positive message resting with staff at all levels. Many of the reassurance measures entered into by forces have benefited to a marked extent from direct senior and chief officer involvement.

Certainly, much has been done in recent times to counter an apparent cultural inhibition to interact with the media. Improved confidence has been achieved in part by increased training and awareness. Secondments of operational personnel

to media units have also assisted. As a result the ability to inform, advise and if appropriate warn the public has been enhanced

Although forces have become more proficient in managing media relations, reacting to issues arising from high profile coverage of certain stories can generate demands for local communication. Such coverage can have a high impact on public opinion, the immediacy of which can challenge the pace of normal police/public communication and consultation in addressing concerns on fear of crime.

The potential impact of such coverage on the public agenda and local issues should not be underestimated. In responding to this dynamic the police service has to balance the requirements of established long term community safety programmes with the influence of emergent high profile events and at the same time manage perceptions on the fear of crime.

RECOMMENDATION 17

HMIC recommends that Forces consider their local media arrangements specifically to better balance the perception whereby the fear of crime is disproportionate to the risk of crime, and within which the established needs of communities are emphasised as well as fluctuating trends in crime.

Public Relations

The extent to which forces relate to and become involved with their communities, particularly through press coverage, can broadly be referred to as public relations. Although this permits further promulgation of force strategies, objectives and initiatives this type of involvement also encompasses a broad spectrum ranging from participation in civic events, charity work, to open days when offices can be visited and certain aspects of police work viewed.

There is considerable anecdotal evidence that points to the extreme value these forms of engagement offer. The area of public relations also extends to the attitudes and professionalism of all

officers and how they interact with communities. The wider aspect of community consultation is addressed in Chapter 3.

Marketing

Marketing is a strategic activity which goes beyond simply promoting or publicising. It includes the viewing of services on offer from the perspective of consumers and differentiating between the needs of different user groups.

The current efforts of forces reveal varying approaches to marketing. Some for instance have embarked on 'branding' to the point where the marketing has become synonymous with the force itself. Examples of this include the 'Spotlight Initiative' in Strathclyde or 'Safer Central' in Central

Scotland Police. There are, however, issues of geographic identity when it comes to marketing reassurance and dealing with fear of crime. The cross-force 'footprint' of sections of the media transcends force boundaries. This can confuse the public regarding the territorial extent of particular initiatives.

In campaigns under the auspices of 'Safer Scotland' this issue has been helpfully addressed.

Formal performance measures relating to media and marketing are currently being examined by

the ACPOS Media Sub Committee and will undoubtedly serve to assist in this respect.

The evidence from the inspection, however, indicates that not all forces possess corporate media strategies to facilitate marketing, and there remains a professional debate regarding the role of marketing in relation to the police service. However, it seems sensible to HMIC that there is merit in considering a nationally coherent approach on major policing issues within a proactive media strategy.

RECOMMENDATION 18

HMIC recommends that ACPOS develops a national media/marketing strategy for the Scottish Police Service to improve public reassurance by providing a better understanding of major policing issues and the service response.

Access

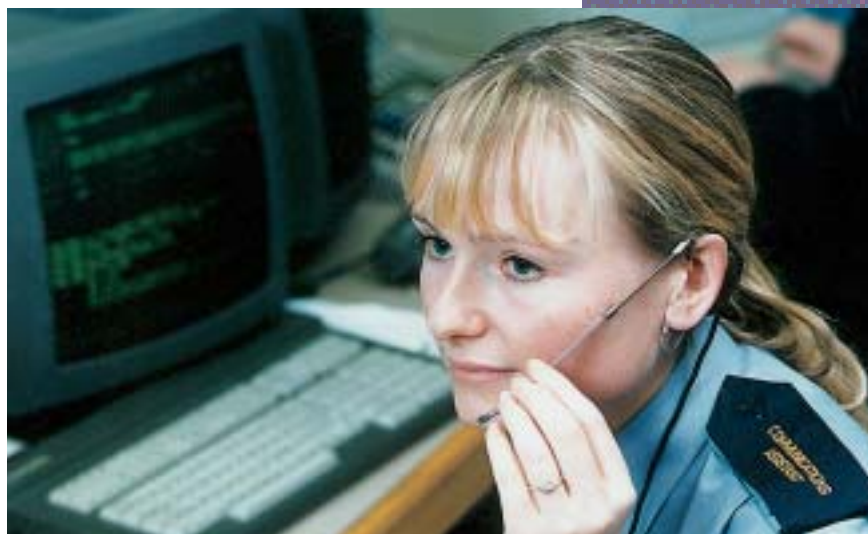
The ability to access the police service easily and effectively is of considerable importance to the public at large. Perceptions are invariably influenced and shaped by the very first contact. The obvious means of accessing service include telephone, e-technology, by visiting police offices or through alternative means of public contact, including engagement with officers on patrol. This section will concentrate on call and information handling, incorporating methods of contact and improvements to accessibility currently being developed by forces.

Call Taking and Call Management

In recent years the increased ownership of telephones, especially mobile telephones, has produced a dramatic growth in the demand for service. Add to this, raised public expectations arising partly out of call centre cultures in the commercial sector and it is perhaps not difficult to appreciate why changes in approaches to receiving and handling calls have been identified as necessary.

A proposal to introduce a single non emergency number for the Scottish police service is included

in the current ACPOS Information Management Action Plan and a feasibility study has been undertaken as part of a UK wide exercise. ACPOS has recently accepted the recommendation of its Information Management Standing Committee that a single non-emergency number be adopted in Scotland and, if necessary, arrangements for call handling be designed specifically to meet Scottish policing and legal requirements. The benefits of a single number lie in economies of scope and scale. However, it has to be recognised that the development path in Scotland may be substantially different in direction and phasing than that in the rest of the UK.



Already there is evidence from Best Value Reviews in Scottish Police forces of difficulties with the call handling function and moves have been made towards implementation of solutions which create an opportunity for provision and integration of an effective and cost efficient service through joint development. The feasibility report prepared for ACPOS indicates that there is a threat of missed opportunity should such development take place on an individual force basis.

The imminent introduction of the secure national digital trunk radio system 'Airwave' has provided yet a further stimulus to ensure that call handling and management are compatible with incoming modern technology. At the same time resource deployment in response to public calls must be developed in ways which exploit the potential of new technology as an element of increased efficiency.

Encouragingly forces have been actively reviewing and restructuring their present call management arrangements to take account of these factors. Some forces are at a more advanced stage of planning and preparation than others. In Lothian and Borders, for example, there is a long established Public Assistant Desk and call management facility. However, a broad model of professional competence for call management has been agreed and is being progressed by forces. This will embrace a minimum standard and should address issues such as the need for:

- a high quality service where performance measurement does not concentrate solely on speed of answer and response but also takes account of whether the service delivered was courteous, knowledgeable and professional.
- a sufficiency of staff trained in customer relationship management and confident in dealing effectively with all callers, a career structure for staff and meaningful communication structures.
- systems which facilitate identification of peaks and troughs in demand and flexible working

arrangements enabling staff deployment in the most effective way to respond to these patterns.

- auto attendant systems which provide initial information to callers, along with automated call distribution systems and procedures.

Communications centres have a key role to play in determining the efficiency of operational deployment. The past practice of communication centre staff passing calls to attending officers reflected an inefficient distribution of effort. The model to be introduced by forces should address this situation. Whenever the deployment of officers is considered appropriate, call grading will further assist in consistent resource allocation. This will mean that non urgent calls can be dealt with routinely or at pre-set times. As a result, officers will be better able to schedule their activities whilst callers can be provided with a more accurate anticipated time of attendance. As a vital component of this framework call handlers require to be assisted by expert systems which enhance their ability and serve as a reference point for dealing with specific enquiries.

As well as improving service quality and resource deployment, call centres will provide attending officers with comprehensive background information. This will include not only 'real time' information concerning the call but also any relevant historical data retrieved via links with the intelligence system. In addition, rationalisation of control rooms, augmented by increased support staff roles, has the potential to release locally significant numbers of police officers for other duties.

A Single Non-Emergency Number

The prospect of a single non emergency number is an appropriate springboard for developing a wider debate on the future of call handling in the Scottish police service. HMIC notes that the IM Standing Committee has indicated that before a single number is adopted, forces must ensure that their underlying infrastructure is ready for the level

of integration required. This infrastructure includes a Tier 2 call handling structure supported by a strategy whose principles include:

'an ability to transfer calls including transfer of voice or data between forces depending on the nature of the call'. The use of a robust and effective Tier 2 non emergency call handling facility with the ability to transfer voice and data between forces leads the debate onto a further level: why are the eight Scottish forces developing separate dedicated force level call handling systems? Is there

at this point room for discussion on how the combined capacity of forces' call centres relates to actual demand for service? The NHS24 model of regional call centres is an option, possibly worthy of examination. In the case of NHS24, there is a 'virtual' aspect to the model whereby calls can be transferred between centres when demand dictates. It is believed that the technology intended for use in the Scottish Police Call centres is capable of meeting the challenge of regional, supra force call centres if supported by robust process management.

RECOMMENDATION 19

HMIC fully endorses this approach by ACPOS towards the establishment of a single non emergency number and recommends the continued development of this project, coherently linked to future developments in information technology.

RECOMMENDATION 20

Within the compass of the ongoing Common Police Services Review, HMIC recommends that ACPOS, along with relevant stakeholders, initiate a Best Value review of call centres and control rooms to ensure optimum integration of use across/between forces and other emergency services, and that ACPOS ensure a robust, consistent strategy to provide guidance on call grading and call management.

As widely discussed in this report, public perceptions of the competence of the police service are influenced by the quality of every contact made. The extent to which the service is viewed as being competent and approachable significantly affects the ability to maintain public

confidence, engender trust and develop community relationships. Accordingly the service must ensure that all staff coming into contact with the public are appropriately skilled, trained and motivated. This is critical if forces are to maximise the mutual benefit from each public contact.

RECOMMENDATION 21

HMIC recommends that forces increase the provision of Customer Service training to personnel involved in public interface situations and link this where possible to qualitative performance monitoring.

Case Study: NHS 24

Call Management System

Research carried out by the British Medical Association shows that the average person visits their GP three times a year. Twenty-five per cent of attendances are for cuts and bruises and 32%

for bronchial complaints – all of which could be dealt with by a pharmacy. Potentially, only 43% of people attending their doctor need to be there. Final analysis indicates that only 10% require physical examination by a doctor.

Accordingly the purpose of NHS24 is to reduce the demands placed upon doctors who are in limited supply and whose time is valuable.

Key Learning points from NHS24

- A similar environment no doubt exists for the police service in respect of the low percentage of people who actually need to see a policeman in respect of their problem.
- NHS24 was funded by new money.
- NHS24 was developed by four partner agencies – NHS24 who operate the systems and employ the staff, CAPGemini (strategic consultancy), BT Consultancy (System consultancy and provision), and AXA (supplier of triage software systems, i.e. priority management). The point here is that the development of complex systems requires outsourcing of expertise.
- The system was first piloted in Aberdeen, enabling prediction of overall demand.
- Three grades of staff are employed: Call Handlers, Nurses and Health Information Advisers (HIA's). The call handlers optimise the work time of nurses and HIA's. Staff operate in teams of twelve: 3 call handlers, 8 nurses and 1 HIA.
- Overflow agreements with partner organisations and automatic call switching enhance resilience.
- A networking tool constantly monitors calls and uses data on average staff call turnover to predict where best to place calls to ensure a speedy response.
- Expert systems triage and assisted scripting (produced by AXA) enhance the skills of staff. This does not replace staff but assists them.
- Customer satisfaction data indicate an overall improvement.

In the case of NHS 24 the object is to deal properly with the needs of communities while

reducing the need for patient visits to Doctor's Surgeries. A recent study undertaken by consultants to inform the introduction of a national non-emergency number on a UK wide basis, identified that the provision of such a system might increase the number of calls received by the police rather than reduce them. There are, however, learning points in relation to how call management is approached by NHS 24, such as using a system of 'triage' underpinned by a computerised reference database and having a bank of 'Frequently Asked Questions' to assist professional staff to make clinical assessment.

Case study: Geographic Information Systems – Holland

As a further means of managing the speed and effectiveness of deployment, systems are presently available that display the location of mobile response units in conjunction with Geographical Information Systems (GIS). This system was observed in operation during an inspection visit to Holland. When utilised, it facilitates the tactical deployment of response vehicles. Used in conjunction with intelligent GIS software, pre-programmed with road speed and congestion data, it identifies the unit best positioned to respond rapidly to each call. In addition, all patrol vehicles are fitted with Global Positioning Systems which automatically guide responding officers to the location of an incident. This technology, which is not new, remains at an early stage of development in Scotland and there is clear scope to extend the fitting of AVLS to police vehicles as an aid to more efficient deployment.

e-Policing

The advent of e-policing with internet access has also been recognised and forces without exception, have responded by establishing websites. The ACPOS e-Policing Working Group is currently preparing the Scottish Police Service to participate actively with the new PITO (Police Information Technology Organisation) portal which intends to increase the potential for

accessibility to police services through one national portal.

Good examples of interactive and well managed sites can be found in several forces, with others moving in this direction. A sub-group of the ACPOS e-Policing Working Group has been established to examine the current state of individual force websites and to comment on how these can be best developed in the interests of the public. The sub-group will examine options for the way forward, taking into account the Government's demand for all services to be made available on-line by 2005.

As an example of how forces are approaching the provision of customer contact services delivered on line the following areas are being included on progressive sites:

- Latest news
- Witness/Public appeals
- Contact information
- Organisational information
- Road safety/Drugs/Crime Prevention information
- Details of current campaigns
- Links to Crimestoppers and other related web sites

With the onset of online reporting with partner organisations, forces are endeavouring to ensure that front end software is e-mail compatible. Once fully functional these systems will allow incoming e-mails to be afforded the same status as an incoming telephone contact.

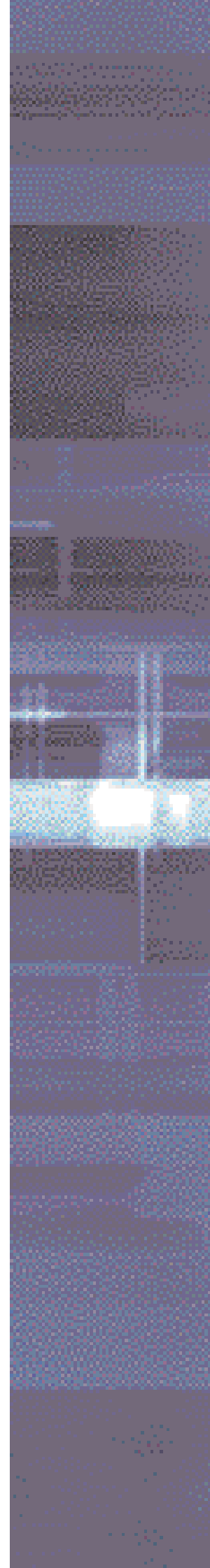
Across the country, increasing use is being made of internet websites to publish reassurance activity and information intended to balance fear of crime. Forces are also seeking to advance the potential of the internet even further by configuring specific pages to elicit views and comments from the public. As a means of increasing community consultation in the setting of priorities, online interactive questionnaires are particularly relevant and meaningful.

Police Premises

For many people the traditional police office serves both as an access point for service and reassurance of a police presence in the community. Police estate management does not always best serve either of these needs, or the changing operational requirements of the service. However, a great deal of work is underway to improve accessibility, including physical access to police stations, access to shared accommodation and general signage and routing. Before proceeding to discuss these aspects in turn it is worth mentioning that each is often linked to the individual corporate identity of forces.

Dealing firstly then with physical access by the public to police offices. This is usually afforded through the existence of front counter areas. Forces are concentrating attention on the availability of reception staff at all times during opening hours. Accepting this perhaps as a given, it is also considered prudent to have systems in place to cover absences without recourse to other staff, especially operational officers. The design, décor and standardisation of counter areas are being reviewed by most forces to provide a more welcoming and less intimidating environment for callers. The availability of useful information in the form of leaflets, posters or other literature is also receiving attention. Lastly, it has been recognised that in certain cases front counter areas should incorporate a layout which specifically permits conversations to take place in private.

Forces have embarked on a drive to ensure that a high degree of corporacy is maintained in the provision of front counter services. Several forces have progressed an audit of their existing arrangements and as a consequence a portfolio of possible applications, each designed to improve accessibility and image, has been developed. For instance, this includes the following possibilities depending on the message to be conveyed and position and profile of the site:



Lighting Around Police Offices

Neon or fluorescent lighting around the tops of high-rise police buildings in urban areas to make them clearly identifiable at night.

Police Station Signs

At and in close proximity to stations. Several forces have developed individual signs linked to their corporate identity and HMIC recognises work being done by Fife Constabulary to propose a standardised approach to signs signalling the way to police offices.



Directional Road Signs

Signage which is incorporated into the routing infrastructure, ideally linked to the system of police station signs referred to above.

External Posters

Positioned either immediately outwith police premises or at other identified external sites where maximum levels of exposure can be attained. Reassurance material clearly is of prime consideration.

Confidential Signs/Posters

A graphic indication and reminder to visitors/callers that if sensitive or confidential, their reason for visiting can be discussed in private.

Mission Banner

Illustration of the Force vision, mission and core values displayed in prominent positions.

Ad Trailers

An effective method of advertising in areas of high pedestrian density or adjacent to main arterial routes for high visibility.

Big Screens

Screen advertising on significant or important public/civic buildings.

Promotional Material

The availability of leaflets, stickers etc

It is accepted that a policing service should be accessible to the public at all times and in locations that meet public needs. The trend towards closure of police offices in mainly rural locations over the past twenty years or so has mitigated against service enhancement in these areas. More recently, however, forces, in response to increased public demand, have been innovative in improving accessibility of service through a variety of alternative options for engagement. During the inspection evidence was found of police sharing facilities mainly on a part-time basis with partner organisations and local authorities in areas where police offices currently do not exist.

In Grampian plans have been approved for a multi agency shared building in Torry where Community Beat officers, doctors, health workers and Local Authority services will be brought together under one roof. Also in Aberdeenshire police make use of shared facilities in Inch Community Centre and in the newly constructed school at Oldmeldrum.

In Dumfries and Galloway 'One Stop Shop' facilities have been introduced at Gatehouse of Fleet and Thornhill. In contrast to the Grampian examples these make use of existing police stations which have been refurbished to house both police and partner agencies.

Fife are exploring the feasibility of Fife Victim Support working from a base in one of the main police offices in either Levenmouth or Kirkcaldy. Fife also utilise council offices for surgeries in areas where no dedicated police facility exists.

Strathclyde Police and Grampian Police have both located Police offices in busy city hospitals; Glasgow Royal Infirmary and Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. Evaluation of the Aberdeen model has shown an 11% reduction in crime in the environs

of the hospital and has attracted favourable comment.

Lothian and Borders Police have experimented with computerised access points using interactive systems within selected disused police boxes monitored by CCTV. Strathclyde Police are currently developing help points again supported by CCTV within selected City Centre locations in Glasgow. These will enhance access to assistance by the public particularly in urgent situations.

Several Forces utilise mobile police offices as a favoured method of reaching rural communities . In Hamilton, in Strathclyde this concept has been extended into a more urban environment with the introduction of a Purpose Built Mobile Office, paid for from Social Inclusion Partnership funding at a cost of £53,000. This unit is used as a mobile base

for the community police operating within the Social Inclusion Partnership Area which consists mainly of local authority housing schemes with a high level of policing need.

The service is also currently responding to the realisation that it cannot always be easily found. Significant improvements to estate, signage and routing are being vigorously progressed. Fife Constabulary, Tayside Police and Strathclyde Police have all carried out extensive work in this arena. As already indicated signage and lighting surrounding police offices, linking into force identities, are being treated as priorities. Signage and routing on the way to police offices presents a slightly different problem and notwithstanding 'corporate branding' for individual forces there is a strong case to standardise and implement a strategy of road signage to police premises (similar to the red H for hospital).

RECOMMENDATION 22

HMIC recommends that a national strategy of road signage to Police Stations be developed and introduced.

Conclusion

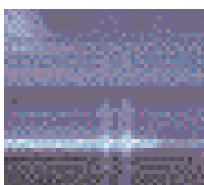
It is suggested that a more coherent approach to communication could have significant benefits for public reassurance. Firstly through a more strategic approach to the media and marketing, and secondly through developments in call handling, call management and deployment. In addition, more readily identifiable access to police stations is suggested as a benefit for public service.



Conclusion

Organisational Balance

The response of the police service to what the public want is influenced by a multiplicity of factors, both negative and positive, external and internal to the organisation. In ensuring that this balance between what the public want and what the police can or should provide is an acceptable one, cognisance has to be taken of key issues. Within organisational management, there is a need to look much more analytically at the stresses of resource deployment and abstractions, reviewing current shift deployment models to ensure the best address to operational, welfare and health needs and the Working Time Regulations 1998.



This requires extended leadership and management development to ensure that supervisors and managers are adequately prepared for their responsibilities in the modern policing era. This process needs to ensure sufficient continuing training and development of staff throughout their service to develop and preserve skills. HMIC is encouraged to note, under the aegis of the Police Advisory Board for Scotland (PABS) the establishment of a Working Group on Leadership and Development

To complement this, there needs to be a mechanism for ensuring the identification and dissemination of good practice in areas of crime and operations, an area in which HMIC obviously has an important role.

In the context of these main themes there is also a need to recognise different frames of service delivery. These span intelligence led policing, with enhanced capacity for proactive targeting through the developing National Intelligence Model, and extend to patrol capability – a modern specialism in its own right where reactive demands and proactive potential require to be reconciled. In addition longer term outcomes require to be assimilated as part of an enhanced community policing orientation which in turn has to acknowledge the diversity and competition of views across differing communities. In this respect the modern day community is a changing kaleidoscope of demands, tensions and aspirations within which consensus for change has to be achieved. Within this there are challenges to enlist local neighbourhoods and engage in a managed response which meets long-term local needs and addresses short-term fluctuations in crime.

Optimising Supply And Managing Demand

Given the current level of resourcing it is unrealistic to expect the police service in Scotland to do all that is expected of it by the public, far less embrace any further extension of its role introduced by new legislation without an impact on service. With little prospect of a significant

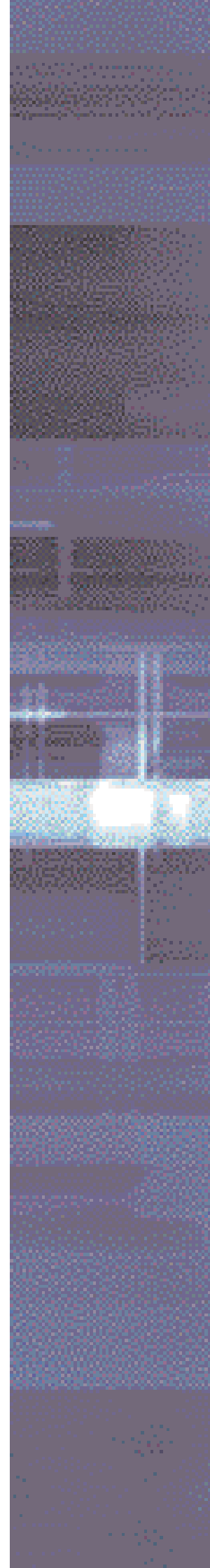
increase in real overall funding, it is increasingly essential that the police service continues to make the most effective and efficient use of existing resources. This position renders progressive partnership working, accurate assessment of crime intelligence and community information allied to optimum resource deployment, absolutely vital. These critical aims will remain unfulfilled unless they are complemented by more effective consultative processes which succeed in informing the public of the competing priorities facing the service. Even if successful, these achievements must be coupled with a reassessment of the statutory role of the police and assigned core responsibilities.

HMIC has suggested in this report that setting policing priorities inevitably involves searching for a compromise. After all, deploying resources predominantly to satisfy the general public's demand for 'a reassuring visible police presence' could be at the expense of upsetting the balance of other operational priorities. The net effect might be a more reassured public but one which is more at risk.

Achieving a proper balance may be more about engaging in debate with a better informed public and gaining their understanding of, and involvement in, the setting of priorities. As further efficiencies in the utilisation of available resources will arguably only have a marginal effect on the ability to increase visible deployment, the best opportunity of narrowing the gap between expectation and reality lies in a multi-layered approach. Such an approach should bring about improvements in consultation and marketing processes together with robust and dynamic engagement between the public and the police. If this can be accomplished it may assist in allowing forces to use their resources to tackle problems in an agreed order of priority, which more clearly matches public expectations.

A Model for Policing

The strategic issues raised by the HMIC inspection on Visibility and Reassurance provide a practical template for future action. It is emphasised that



the recommendations do not provide a simple panacea which would close the gap between perception and the capacity to respond.

Nevertheless, on the basis of the evidence presented, HMIC suggests that an approach to policing based on the following principles is more likely to narrow the gap between expectations/demands and actual policing delivery:

- Consultative, evidence based, sustained policing policies
 - Policing strategies which have a wide national resonance but which remain locally sensitive
 - The clear articulation of these policies through coherent communication
 - Easier access to service, exploiting information and communications technology
- More consistent management of the grading of calls and the police response
 - Development of community intelligence as a proactive aid to local problem solving
 - Personnel strategies which ensure healthy recruitment, retention and efficient resource deployment

This template is subsumed within the span of the recommendations presented.

RELATED FUTURE STUDIES

This study highlights the need for a detailed examination of a number of areas, notably, Crime Management and Community Policing, and thematic inspections in these areas are programmed for 2003.

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