



HM INSPECTORATE OF
CONSTABULARY FOR SCOTLAND

An examination of how Fife Constabulary manages the very high priorities of the Scottish Strategic Assessment

For operational security reasons, small sections of this report have
been redacted. These are clearly indicated (*text redacted*)

December 2009

To monitor and improve the police service in Scotland



1. Executive summary

- 1.1 During the summer of 2009, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (HMICS) conducted a high-level review examining how the eight Scottish police forces manage the very high priority (VHP) risk areas identified by the 2007-08 Scottish Strategic Assessment (see Appendix for a further explanation of these terms). This report presents our findings for Fife Constabulary.
- 1.2 Overall, we found that Fife Constabulary is reasonably well placed to develop and deliver a robust control strategy to manage those risks that pose the greatest threats to communities.
- 1.3 In particular, we found that the force has good analytical capacity and capability and a strong strategic approach to partnership working.
- 1.4 We identified the following key areas for improvement:
 - the integration of the force policing plan with its control strategy;
 - (text redacted); and
 - the alignment of force training with the requirements of the control strategy.
- 1.5 We will be seeking assurance from the force that all the areas for improvement identified in section 10 are being addressed, and we request an update on progress by the end of March 2010.
- 1.6 As well as reviewing the six VHP areas, we also examined the force's progress against recommendations from recent HMICS thematic inspections and the output of its self-assessment in 2008. The findings of this additional work are summarised in sections 8 and 9 of this report.

2. Introduction

Background

- 2.1 During 2008 all Scottish forces completed an internal self-assessment exercise using the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model. The intention was that forces would be the primary users of the self-assessment outputs, while we would use the results to identify where further, more detailed, inspection work might be required.
- 2.2 Having reviewed the improvement action plans arising from each force's self-assessment, and how some of the evidence and related judgments were used in the process itself, we were able to identify some specific areas for further examination, particularly around how forces manage the most serious risks identified through the Scottish Strategic Assessment. This was an aspect that had not been covered in detail by the self-assessment tool, and we wanted assurance that these risks were being managed effectively.
- 2.3 The 2009/10 Scottish Strategic Assessment was published in April 2009. We therefore took the 2007/08 Scottish Strategic Assessment as the starting point for this high-level follow-up. Our aim was to focus on what the Assessment had identified as the six VHP



risk areas for Scottish policing – anti-social behaviour, terrorism, child protection, serious organised crime groups, drugs and violence – and within this to examine:

- how forces assess and prioritise risks;
- how forces prioritise and co-ordinate activity related to these very high risk areas, and how these activities are integrated into other force priorities; and
- the impact of forces' activities in these areas over the last two years, i.e. what difference they have made.

2.4 The VHP risk areas remained broadly unchanged in the 2009/10 Strategic Assessment, apart from child protection now being included in the wider area of public protection. However, many of the recommended prevention, intelligence and enforcement (PIE) activities had been updated.

2.5 In addition to reviewing these six risk areas we conducted a high-level assessment of forces' progress in implementing a) the recommendations from recent HMICS thematic inspection reports and b) the force-wide actions arising from their EFQM self-assessment.

Methodology

2.6 Data to inform our assessment was gathered through a combination of desktop research and interviews and focus groups in the force. Forces were not required to prepare any additional information for these exercises.

2.7 The initial desktop research was undertaken by specialist advisers seconded from the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) National Intelligence Model (NIM) team. The documents reviewed included forces' strategic assessments and control strategies, minutes from tasking and co-ordinating group meetings, intelligence requirements, policing plans and/or business plans and relevant performance information.

2.8 The purpose of this research phase was to examine how forces had addressed the priorities and recommendations in the 2007/08 Scottish Strategic Assessment, during 2008 and 2009. We also reviewed both the outputs of forces' self-assessment exercises and their progress in implementing the recommendations of recent HMICS thematic inspections. The findings of each of these three research elements informed our subsequent interview and focus group questions.

2.9 In order to examine the impact of forces' activities on the VHP risk areas, we had intended to look at the indicators of the Scottish Policing Performance Framework (SPPF). We found few direct links, though, between the SPPF indicators and the six VHP risks, and we were therefore unable to make our assessments. The integration of the Scottish Strategic Assessment into the Framework is one of the national areas for improvement that we have identified.

2.10 The main aim of our fieldwork visits was to get an up-to-date picture of how forces were managing the VHP risks. The limited scope of our fieldwork means that our findings are necessarily high-level. The aspects that we covered in each force varied according to the findings of our desktop research. This approach has also meant that we have sometimes identified areas for improvement in one force that may not have been covered in other forces and therefore may not be unique to that force.



- 2.11 The fieldwork component of the inspection involved HMICS staff visiting Fife Constabulary in August 2009. During this period we carried out interviews and focus groups with individuals from the force and its partner organisations.
- 2.12 At the time of our visit Fife Constabulary was about to be restructured into a single territorial division made up of seven local policing areas, reflecting its local community planning areas. This would also entail bringing all the force's analysts within one department. These changes were due to be implemented from September 2009. Our findings and areas for improvement in this report need to be viewed in this context.
- 2.13 We would like to thank Fife Constabulary for the help and support we received when undertaking this work, and members of the ACPOS NIM team for their contribution to the desktop research.

3. Leadership of the strategic assessment and control strategy

- 3.1 The leadership provided by the chief constable and her senior management team is focused on the force's policing plan rather than the control strategy. Although the chief constable chairs the force strategic tasking and co-ordination group meeting, where the force strategic assessment is considered and agreed, the primary focus of the force's subsequent activity is on delivering the force policing plan.
- 3.2 There is a lack of integration in the force's planning activities. Traditionally, the force's policing plan, and its strategic assessment and control strategy, were developed separately. Recognising the need for greater consistency in its approach to planning, the force's 2009/10 policing plan was informed by its draft strategic assessment. However, there are still differences between the control strategy and the plan. Specifically, terrorism and serious organised crime groups are included in the control strategy but not the policing plan. Given the force's focus on delivering the policing plan, there is a risk that these priorities will not receive the same attention as the other priority areas. The force recognises that further work is required to integrate its planning process fully and to produce one clear set of priorities.
- 3.3 There was limited corporate ownership of the control strategy. The force has not identified lead officers or 'champions' for each of the VHP areas, although there is an element of ownership at senior level in respect of drugs work for which the detective superintendent has policy responsibility. We have found the use of lead officers to work well in other forces, in terms of encouraging a force-wide commitment to control strategy priorities and building senior staff awareness of how these are being managed. Fife Constabulary may wish to consider ways in which it can extend ownership across the leadership team.
- 3.4 There was a high level of staff awareness of the VHP risks included in the policing plan, but not of those VHP areas only appearing in the control strategy. Unlike the policing plan, the force's control strategy had not been widely publicised in the force.
- 3.5 There may be scope for the force to review its arrangements for governance and decision-making at senior management level. For example, there are a number of senior groups, including the force corporate management group, the force operational group and the force performance group, which all meet on different cycles.



4. Assessment of risk

- 4.1 The force uses a robust and systematic risk matrix model to assess risk, the same used in the production of the Scottish Strategic Assessment. In assessing risk, it uses information from the Scottish Intelligence Database (SID), the force crime system and open source reporting. The force's strategic assessment is also informed by a number of partnership documents and data. The resulting strategic assessment contains recommendations for particular activities that are clearly linked to specific data or information. This approach ensures that a clear rationale for each activity is provided.
- 4.2 The force undertakes extensive consultation with local communities, the results of which are combined with other information and evidence in order to inform its strategic priorities. Partners and elected members attend a development day at which these matters are considered, giving them the opportunity to influence the policing plan, however it is not clear how effectively the force uses the information gathered to inform its strategic assessment. Examples of consultation include that carried out through Local Area Community Safety Co-ordinating Groups and surveys such as the Fife People Panel and the Big Shout.
- 4.3 The force did not produce divisional strategic assessments. Instead, both its territorial and headquarters divisions took their strategic guidance from the policing plan. With the re-structuring to a single division, the force may wish to consider whether the resulting seven local areas should adopt a more robust risk-assessment methodology for identifying local priorities.
- 4.4 The control strategy arising from the force's 2009/10 strategic assessment contains all six of the VHP risks identified in the Scottish Strategic Assessment. Drugs and serious organised crime are combined into a single VHP, but have different PIEs.
- 4.5 Overall we found the risk assessment process to be robust. The force has good analytical capacity and capability, both at divisional and force level. The analysts themselves were clear on their roles and responsibilities in developing the force's strategic assessment, divisional tactical assessments and other analytical products.

5. Resources to support the control strategy

- 5.1 At the time of the inspection, the force did not have a systematic approach to identifying the resources required to implement its control strategy. At a senior level the force tactical tasking and co-ordination group (FTTCG), chaired by the assistant chief constable, was the primary forum for discussions about resources for operational policing. At a divisional level, sharing or bidding for resources took place informally between divisional commanders. The force should formalise this arrangement, taking the opportunity of the restructuring exercise to build it into the divisional tasking and co-ordinating process.
- 5.2 Although the CID has undertaken some training needs analysis, the force as a whole has not identified all the training required to deliver the control strategy. In common with other forces some training linked to the VHP areas has been carried out, for example around child protection and briefings on counter-terrorism. While frontline officers felt that they were well trained, the force's overall approach was described at various levels as being 'ad hoc'. Fife Constabulary recognises the need to improve its strategic management in this area, and has recently established a training oversight group. The



force should make sure that this group considers the training requirements of the control strategy.

- 5.3 The force has limited understanding of the detailed costs associated with particular PIE activities. This is important if the force is to be able to draw conclusions about the relative cost-effectiveness of the different activities it undertakes. The new financial coding regime that forces across Scotland are planning to introduce from April 2010 should assist in this area. The force should ensure that this regime provides information that will help it to understand the costs related to delivering its control strategy.
- 5.4 There was evidence that the force had put resources into managing the VHP areas. *(text redacted)*
- 5.5 The force demonstrated a clear commitment to working with partners to enhance its capacity to deliver the control strategy. This was evident from the most senior level, through to divisions and local communities. For example:
- the local area community safety co-ordinating groups for each of the new local area committees;
 - there are two NHS analysts who, by providing drugs intelligence and injury surveillance work, contribute to partnership action against drugs and violence; and
 - a further four community analysts are about to be employed, to augment the analytical skills available to partnerships.

6. Activities related to the VHP areas

- 6.1 In our desktop research we found limited overlap between the PIE recommendations in the 2007/08 Scottish Strategic Assessment and subsequent force strategic assessments or control strategies. The force should ensure that when it develops PIE activities, it gives due consideration to their potential effectiveness. This is of particular importance when it is diverging from the recommendations in the Scottish Strategic Assessment.
- 6.2 *(text redacted)*
- 6.3 Collaborative working was found to be effective across the force. Examples included joint muster, briefing and patrolling, particularly with police and community safety wardens, and some good examples of co-location. The existing local area community safety co-ordinating group in Kirkcaldy uses a joint tasking and co-ordinating approach that is proving effective. The focus of this group to date has been on anti-social behaviour. There is interest, backed up by intelligence and analysis, in extending this remit to drugs and violence, and potentially to all the VHP areas.
- 6.4 Currently, partners do not routinely attend police strategic or tactical tasking and co-ordinating groups. Whilst we appreciate that there is linkage through the local community safety co-ordinating groups, the force may wish to review this situation, as such an approach could boost both its capacity to gather relevant information and the resources available to it to undertake targeted activities across all of its risk areas. There are good links between local community safety co-ordinating groups, attended by partner organisations, and the force tactical tasking and co-ordinating group framework.
- 6.5 The following paragraphs give a brief overview of some of the activities undertaken by the force in managing the VHP risks of the Scottish Strategic Assessment.



- 6.6 Anti-social behaviour** – a significant amount of partnership work is taking place, particularly at divisional level, to address anti-social behaviour. Divisional tactical assessments contain analyses of anti-social behaviour and relevant actions flowing from these. Examples of initiatives include the safer neighbourhoods team, the junior wardens scheme, Operation Lifeline and the youth offender management scheme. Some of these initiatives have attracted local authority and central government funding.
- 6.7 Terrorism** – *(text redacted)*
- 6.8 Child protection** – frontline officers feel well supported in this specialist area of work. They regularly receive briefings on registered sex offenders and are well aware of the procedures that apply to child protection and what is expected of them. Unusually in Scotland, Fife Constabulary also monitors unregistered sex offenders whom it has identified as posing significant potential risks to the community. Although this activity is resource-intensive, the force believes that the use of validated risk-assessment tools provides a consistent set of criteria for intervention that reduces risk to local communities.
- 6.9** The recent HMLe joint inspection of services to protect children and young people in Fife (2009) was positive about the force's contributions in this high risk area, including the effectiveness of the help given to children in need, promoting public awareness and more generally the leadership shown by the force.
- 6.10 Serious organised crime groups** – *(text redacted)*
- 6.11 Drugs** – the force carries out a great deal of work around drugs. This includes partnership working, through drug and alcohol action teams and the Fife Community Safety Partnership, enforcement (often in partnership with other forces and the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency) and intelligence, with a focus on SOCGs. *(text redacted)*
- 6.12 Violence** – police officers in Fife Constabulary feel that they are well briefed on domestic abuse. More generally, the force is also confident that it has a good understanding of violent crime. Analysis of injury surveillance data from NHS Fife indicates that about 70% of violent injuries are reported to police. While this means that about 30% of violent crime may go unreported, in comparison with other forces this is a lower than expected rate of unreported incidents and the actual numbers involved are relatively small.
- 7. Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the control strategy**
- 7.1** The force does not have a systematic approach to assessing progress against the control strategy. It has developed a revised performance reporting framework that is based on the Scottish Policing Performance Framework (SPPF). *(text redacted)*
- 7.2** The force's 2009/10 strategic assessment also identifies a number of performance indicators directly linked to its PIE recommendations in each VHP risk area (including SPPF and SOA indicators where these are relevant). There is little consistency between the indicators included in the strategic assessment and those in its new performance framework. The force could benefit from a more holistic approach to measuring performance, which covers all the risk areas identified in its control strategy.



- 7.3 In addition, many of the measures in its performance framework concern operational activity, i.e. *numbers* of visits, reports, searches etc, rather than the outcomes that these activities are intended to achieve. While these are useful in tracking whether operational practices are changing, it is often difficult to assess whether an increase or decrease in the numbers reflects good or bad performance. And few of the indicators can assist the force in assessing whether it is achieving better outcomes. While we accept that it can be challenging for some of the VHP risk areas, the force would benefit from developing clearer links between activity levels and outcomes in its performance management of the control strategy.
- 7.4 The force has a more systematic approach to undertaking results analysis than most other forces in Scotland. It has carried out a number of evaluations and results analysis of policing operations and initiatives, and this is to be welcomed. The force should ensure that the learning outcomes identified in the evaluations continue to be acted upon and feed into future recommendations for prevention, intelligence and enforcement activities.
- 7.5 A number of these evaluations highlight the challenges that all forces face in gaining a robust understanding of the extent to which particular policing activities or initiatives contribute to changes in outcomes. Without this information, forces cannot be sure that they are using their resources to best effect in tackling VHP risks.
- 7.6 Linking outcomes to PIE activities remains a challenging area for all forces. While the strategic assessment covers emerging trends in the VHP risk areas, these are not linked to specific force activities. Ensuring results analyses are used effectively would provide more opportunities for the force to evaluate the effectiveness of its control strategy.

8. Progress against recommendations in recent HMICS thematics

- 8.1 HMICS thematic inspections focus on particular themes affecting policing. Topics are identified following consultation between HMICS and ACPOS, the Scottish Government, police authorities and other stakeholders. They can also arise from forces' self-assessments, or reflect particular public or national concerns. Over the past two years we have carried out eleven thematic inspections, the recommendations of which are intended to support continuous improvement in the police service in Scotland.
- 8.2 As part of this inspection we took the opportunity to review the force's progress against outstanding recommendations. This was not a significant element of our fieldwork, and was not a comprehensive review of all outstanding recommendations.
- 8.3 In addition a number of recommendations are being taken forward nationally through various ACPOS working groups, such as the National Custody Forum. We are currently in discussion with ACPOS about arrangements to monitor progress in such instances and for this reason have excluded those recommendations from this review. Nor did we examine what progress the force has made on the recommendations of our two thematic inspections *CONTEST: Prevent* and *The Police Use of Firearms*, as these will be followed up separately.
- 8.4 The force has a clear process for ensuring that thematic inspection recommendations are dealt with and monitored. A lead officer, assigned to each thematic inspection, is responsible for ensuring that the relevant action plans are carried out. The Force Operational Group, Strategic Development Department and Corporate Management Department then monitor progress against the action plan.



- 8.5 The Fife Police Fire and Safety Committee has also adopted a systematic and proactive approach to scrutinising the force's progress on implementing agreed actions relating to thematic recommendations. The Committee has established a cross-party scrutiny group that requests the force to risk-assess and prioritise recommendations from recent thematic inspections and provide regular updates on progress.
- 8.6 Overall, the force has made good progress in implementing the recommendations categorised as being of high risk. For example, the force has:
- undertaken a major review of custody facilities, established a custody forum and custody users group and appointed a force custody manager. This has led to the refurbishment of some facilities, revised standard operating procedures for custody care and improvements in the training given to custody sergeants;
 - updated its protocol with social services in relation to the assessment of risk for detained children, and developed a multi-agency protocol with Fife Council, NHS Fife and the Procurator Fiscal and Scottish Court Service for the treatment of people with mental disorders who are in police custody; and
 - revised how domestic abuse incidents are recorded, with all callcards and CrimeFiles relating to domestic abuse now being reviewed by Family Protection Unit staff. Staff in the Family Protection Unit have also updated their local training to ensure a common and consistent approach.
- 8.7 The force has decided not to implement the recommendation from the *Care of detained children* report, which said that the decision to detain a child in custody should be authorised by a superintendent or higher ranking officer. It is the force's view that it is sufficient for responsibility to lie with an officer of inspector rank.
- 8.8 The force is currently working with partners towards the introduction of a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferencing (MARAC) model for use in domestic abuse incidents. There is potential for this work to be carried out more quickly.
- 8.9 While the force has made good progress in implementing many of the relevant recommendations from thematic inspections, it has still to put in place arrangements for assessing whether the changes introduced are achieving the desired outcomes.

9. Progress against EFQM self-assessment action plans

- 9.1 In 2008 we changed our inspection methodology to a system of annual self-assessment. This was conducted through a quality improvement framework that used the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model. Police forces and services used this self-assessment process to inform their planning and performance regimes. In this way, these organisations were able to decide themselves what their priorities for improvement should be.
- 9.2 This was a new approach for both HMICS and forces. One early learning point to emerge was the finding that the question set required participants to focus on force processes and internal communication rather than operational activities or outcomes.
- 9.3 The self-assessment exercise was to be carried out by individual divisions and departments, in order to identify improvement actions separately at these levels. Forces were also encouraged to draw up a force-wide action plan to capture any common areas



for improvement. It is progress against the force plan that forms the primary basis of our comments here.

- 9.4 The self-assessment was completed by individual divisions and departments and in Fife Constabulary this meant that three territorial and three HQ areas completed it. The outcome was a 14-point force-wide action plan, covering most of the criteria of the EFQM model. There were no divisional action plans, given the force's preparations for moving to one division in 2009.
- 9.5 Progress on the action plan is monitored by the Corporate Management Department and will be reported to the Fife Police Fire and Safety Committee later this year.
- 9.6 The force is generally making good progress in implementing the action plan, for example:
- as reported elsewhere in this report, knowledge of the policing plan is widespread throughout the force as a result of comprehensive briefings. The force is also about to introduce a new staff suggestion scheme to support innovation and generate new ideas for service improvement;
 - the recently-appointed business improvement manager has been involved in delivering a series of workshops with divisional and departmental management teams to enhance their awareness of continuous improvement and embed it in the organisational culture of the force; and
 - recognising the need to raise awareness of business continuity, the force is planning a table-top exercise to test its business continuity plans in March 2010. Through meetings of the force Business Continuity Co-ordinators Group to assess and plan for the potential impact of the flu pandemic, the force has been able to test existing arrangements.
- 9.7 Less progress has been made on introducing a staff survey and finalising the force communication strategy. The force would also benefit from putting measures in place to assess the impact of the changes it has introduced.
- 9.8 We had already had some discussions with forces about the 2008 self-assessment process prior to this work. These discussions, along with the findings from this review, have informed the development of the 2009 process, which we asked forces to complete during October and November.



10. Areas for improvement

No	Area for Improvement	Report Reference
1.	Consistency between the force's strategic assessment, control strategy and policing plan.	3.2
2.	A review of senior management decision-making arrangements.	3.5
3.	Staff awareness and corporate ownership of all of the VHP areas in the control strategy.	3.3/3.4
4.	Robustness of the local approach to risk-assessment.	4.3
5.	Understanding of the resources required to implement the control strategy.	5.1./ 5.3
6.	Skills required to implement the control strategy.	5.2
7.	(text redacted)	
8.	Coverage of the control strategy and associated outcome measures in the performance management framework.	7.2 / 7.3
9.	Application of the findings of results analysis and evaluations to inform future planning and risk assessment.	7.4



Appendix

The National Intelligence Model

The National Intelligence Model (NIM) is an intelligence-led business model used by the police to manage risk, identify operational priorities and allocate resources.

The **strategic assessment** is a key component of NIM and provides an overview of long-term issues that involve criminality or have community safety implications. Strategic assessments are produced at national, force and divisional levels.

The **control strategy** is derived from the strategic assessment and sets out the long-term priorities to be tackled.

Those priorities that are deemed to be of greatest risk are known as '**very high priority**' risk areas (VHPs). The national VHPs are currently anti-social behaviour, terrorism, public protection, serious organised crime groups, drugs and violence.

The control strategy also identifies **prevention, intelligence and enforcement** recommendations (PIEs) that outline activity to tackle the VHPs.