HMICS HM INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY FOR SCOTLAND

An examination of how Tayside Police 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, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (HMICS) conducted a high-level review examining how the eight Scottish police forces are managing 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 Tayside Police.

1.2 Overall, we found that Tayside Police 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 manages partnership involvement well, in terms of both divisional tasking and co-ordinating group meetings, and activity around the VHP risk areas.

1.4 We identified the following key areas for improvement:

- corporate ownership of the force control strategy and integration of the forces' planning processes;
- analytical support and leadership;
- the identification of training requirements driven by the control strategy; and
- monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the control strategy and PIE recommendations.

1.5 We will be seeking assurance from the force that the areas for improvement identified in section 10 of this report are being addressed, and we request an update on progress by the end of March 2010.

1.6 In addition to reviewing how forces are managing the VHP areas, we also assessed the force's progress against recommendations from recent HMICS thematic inspections and the output from the self-assessment process undertaken in 2008. Our findings from this 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, and that 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 is an aspect that the more generic self-assessment tool does not cover in detail, and we wanted assurance that those 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-assessments.

Methodology

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

2.7 The initial desktop research was undertaken by specialist advisers seconded from the 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.

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 We also reviewed both the outputs of the force's self-assessment exercise and its progress on implementing the recommendations of recent HMICS thematic inspections. The findings from each of these three research elements informed our subsequent interview and focus group questions.

2.11 The fieldwork element of the inspection involved HMICS staff visiting Tayside Police in May/June 2009. During this period we carried out interviews and focus groups with individuals from the force and partner organisations. Various meetings were observed,

including tasking and co-ordinating group meetings in each territorial division. This fieldwork was integrated with that being undertaken for the best value audit and inspection of the force.

2.12 The main aim of our visits was to obtain an up-to-date picture of how forces were currently 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. We further acknowledge that since the fieldwork there has been a change to the force executive following the retiral of Chief Constable Mathieson.

2.13 We would like to thank Tayside Police 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 In Tayside Police, responsibility for leading on the force strategic assessment and control strategy sits with the assistant chief constable. This differs from the majority of other forces where the chief constable takes responsibility. The assistant chief constable is in the process of developing this role and, at the time of our fieldwork, had not been involved in developing a force strategic assessment or subsequently setting priorities, although he did chair the force tactical tasking and co-ordinating group meetings.

3.2 Operational planning in the force was fragmented, with planning processes throughout the force operating as parallel but separate entities. Outputs from community planning, NIM processes and force strategic planning were not integrated into single, comprehensive force or divisional plans. This fragmentation makes it difficult to identify a coherent and linked set of priorities. Better integration of the force's planning processes would help clarify priorities and facilitate more comprehensive performance management and reporting.

3.3 There was limited corporate ownership of the force control strategy. Tayside police has not assigned responsibility for each of the VHPs to individual strategic leads. In other forces we have found that this approach helps to promote corporate understanding of, and commitment to, each priority. It also raises staff awareness, as each lead officer is responsible for driving activities in their own VHP area throughout the force. The force may wish to consider ways in which it might extend ownership of the control strategy among the leadership team.

3.4 There was limited knowledge amongst frontline staff and officers of the force control strategy priorities. Our focus groups revealed that local priorities changed frequently, and tended to be driven by the most recent divisional performance reports. 'Everything is a priority' was a recurring theme during discussions. This strong local crime focus has resulted in limited attention to those VHPs that require a force-wide response.

4. Assessment of risk

4.1 Tayside Police informs its force strategic assessment and control strategy through a systematic assessment of risk. The risk-assessment process used by the force for its 2009-10 strategic assessment was an improvement on the model it had previously used.

However, this is not the more robust model used in the most recent Scottish Strategic Assessment, and which most other forces have adopted. Tayside Police may wish to consider revising its approach.

4.2 The force uses information from the Scottish Intelligence Database (SID), the force crime system and a large number of external data sources to inform its strategic assessment. While partnership community analysts are consulted, there is limited use of data from partner organisations and no systematic approach to using public consultation. The force recognises the need to enhance police data by using more information from external sources.

4.3 (*text redacted*).The move in 2009 to a more systematic risk-assessment model has resulted in the force priorities encompassing all the national VHP areas, with violence now being included under public protection and safety. This new methodology places the force in a stronger position to identify and therefore manage risks effectively.

4.4 Analytical capacity and capability is limited by the lack of a principal analyst. Consequently, there is a gap in analytical strategy and leadership. A principal analyst could provide leadership and corporate direction to the other analysts working in the force and the force executive, as well as enhance the quality of work produced. The force acknowledges this and is actively trying to fill this post.

4.5 The force has no consistent approach to divisional strategic assessments. One division has a 2009-10 strategic assessment which was not developed in line with good practice. The remaining two divisions have not completed divisional strategic assessments. Until recently they adhered to the force strategic assessment, but are now involved in the production of partnership strategic assessments. This collaborative working has produced priorities similar to those identified in the force assessment but with relevant local variations, and has strengthened the force's position in managing local risks. The force needs to ensure that there is a clear rationale for these different divisional approaches, that they are implemented effectively and that local risks are assessed consistently and robustly.

5. Resources to support the control strategy

5.1 The force has limited understanding of the staff required to deliver its control strategy. It has no workforce planning strategy or training strategy to enable it to match skills and staffing to its control strategy. Despite this, and in common with other forces, there has been staff training and development carried out in relevant VHP areas, notably counter-terrorism and child protection. The force should ensure that its HR policy and training are designed to support control strategy priorities.

5.2 There is no support and little leadership and direction for analysts, who are deployed in similar numbers across divisions irrespective of demand or need. This results in the ineffective and inefficient use of this valuable resource. Furthermore, the difficulty of securing and co-ordinating essential training experienced by the force, is a problem that several Scottish forces have encountered.

5.3 In common with other forces in Scotland, Tayside Police has limited awareness of detailed costs associated with specific PIE activities. Without this understanding, the force cannot draw conclusions about the relative cost-effectiveness of the different activities it undertakes. The new financial coding regime currently planned for introduction across Scotland from April 2010 should assist in this area. The force should

ensure that this regime provides information that can help it to understand the costs related to delivering its control strategy.

5.4   The creation of the Force Information and Intelligence Division (FIID) has the potential to enhance the force's effectiveness in developing and delivering its control strategy. Established in 2008, the FIID brings together specialist resources in the fields of intelligence and information with the remit of maximising the use of information and intelligence. Its centralised structure is still evolving, but there is already evidence that it is driving divisions to focus on control strategy priorities.

5.5   The reorganisation of the force's headquarters in 2008 had the unintended consequence of removing a formally identified head of profession for the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). This has resulted in limited professional oversight in this specialist area and no formal process for ensuring that sufficient numbers of divisional staff are trained in specialist CID posts, e.g. family liaison officers, crime scene managers and interview advisors. The force has already recognised this risk and is working to address it.

5.6   The force has also recently established divisional public protection units in order to better manage this area, and ensure relevant information-sharing on domestic abuse and the management of sex offenders. The majority of functions are co-located with partners to facilitate this joint working.

5.7   The force works closely and effectively with partners across its three territorial divisions. This reflects its commitment to joint working and enhances its capacity to deliver the control strategy. There is strong police representation not just on the community safety groups but throughout the community planning themed partnerships. Partners report that the force is also innovative in developing joint solutions to resolve community problems. They are also complimentary about the effective leadership skills of police representatives who have sufficient authority to make decisions and commit staff resources. The force and its partners can point to many examples of joint working and the successful outcomes of these, which have been effective in addressing many problems linked to the VHP areas.

6.   Activity related to the VHP risks

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 to consideration to their potential effectiveness. This is of particular importance when it is diverging from the recommendations in the Scottish Strategic Assessment.

6.2   The approach to daily tasking and co-ordinating group meetings to implement the control strategy varied across divisions. These meetings should be forward-looking and anticipatory, and while this approach was evident in one division it was less apparent in others. The effectiveness of divisional activities would be strengthened by adopting a more consistent forward-looking methodology across the force.

6.3   Partner organisation involvement in tasking and co-ordinating group meetings is strong. Local authority partners are involved in divisional fortnightly meetings and feel that they are able to add value at these. The sharing of restricted information is well managed, and the format allows partnership resources to be tasked. The force is currently pursuing opportunities to share information with the Scottish Prison Service and NHS.

6.4   The following paragraphs provide a brief overview of some of the activities undertaken by the force in managing the VHP risks.

6.5   **Anti-social behaviour** - Tayside police has a well developed partnership approach to managing activity associated with anti-social behaviour. In addition to local authority partners it has engaged private sector businesses involved in promoting alcohol awareness messages over the 2008 festive campaign. Longer-term strategies include an increase in community officers, the 'Friday Nite Project' and partnership activities under the force's 'focus on alcohol'. Initiatives regularly take place across the force in areas with a busy night-time economy, typically around high visibility policing. Enforcement activity is supported by fixed penalty notices for breaches of the peace and vandalism. This VHP is closely linked with single outcome agreements and is well managed at a local level.

6.6   **Terrorism** – (*text redacted*)

6.7   **Child protection** – the force executive provides a strong strategic lead in child protection across all three council areas. Divisional commanders ensure that all staff clearly understand their individual and collective responsibilities for the safety and welfare of children. In 2009, joint inspections of services to protect children and young people were carried out in the local authorities in the force area. In Perth and Kinross and Angus the reports were positive, while weaknesses in the strategic leadership of the child protection partnership in Dundee were found. These are now being dealt with through the further development of partnership working arrangements.

6.8   **Serious organised crime groups** –(*text redacted*)

6.9   **Drugs** – the force is committed to enforcement activity, such as Operation Waterloo. The force is moving towards a partnership 'focus on drugs' strategy, similar to that currently in place for alcohol (see 6.6). This will provide a corporate template for partnership working throughout the force.

6.10   **Violence** – at a strategic and operational level, staff have a good awareness of the problems relating to domestic abuse. Investigative and liaison resources are integrated in the newly formed divisional public protection units, where the importance of information-sharing is recognised. The force has a lead officer for domestic abuse at detective chief inspector level, and has been instrumental in developing partnership domestic abuse strategies. Various initiatives have been undertaken involving extra high visibility patrols throughout Tayside to try to reduce the alcohol-related violence associated with the weekend night-time economy.

7.   Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the control strategy

7.1   Tayside Police has no systematic process for monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of its control strategy. While its tasking and co-ordinating processes run well, the meetings focus on activities identified on a monthly basis and as such there is no focus on the control strategy PIE recommendations.

7.2   The force performance profile report information is not directly linked to the control strategy either. The force's focus has been on driving activity linked to key performance measures contained in these reports, with limited commitment to national or force priorities not related to these. There is also no system for monitoring the

implementation or impact of any of the PIE recommendations in its control strategy. The force has recognised this weakness and intends to look for ways in which it can overcome these gaps.

7.3   Linking outcomes to PIE activities remains a challenge for all forces. Greater use of results analyses would give the force more opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of its control strategy.

7.4   There is virtually no formal results analysis going on in the force, and an underlying lack of understanding as to what it is and the benefits it would bring. The situation is to some extent compounded by the currently limited capacity and capability of the analyst function. Better use of this key resource would help to improve managers' understanding of the effectiveness of analytical methods in assessing the impact of force activities. We found the lack of results analysis to be a common shortcoming in Scottish forces, and it is one that we intend to highlight at a national level.

8.   Progress against the recommendations of recent HMICS thematic inspections

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 we have therefore not undertaken a comprehensive review of all 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 these 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   Tayside police has a clear system in place to ensure that thematic recommendations are dealt with and monitored, which is overseen by the force's business change manager. Action plans are monitored through the force business change programme board, progress against which is also reported to Tayside Joint Police Board.

8.5   In a small number of cases the force has risk-assessed a recommendation and decided against pursuing it, being careful to document the reasoning behind its decisions. It has, however, made progress on implementing the majority of our recommendations. One particular area of significant change has been the care of detained and arrested children. The force has a custody user group, which is responsible for assessing the impact and benefits of proposed activity. So far, this group has carried out the following:

- communicated new procedures on child custody to all staff; and

- developed clear procedures to record discussions and decisions when releasing children from custody to social work care.

8.6 The force has no formal approach to assessing the impact of recommendations once these have been implemented.

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 is conducted through a quality improvement framework that uses the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model. Police forces and services are now using this self-assessment process to inform their planning and performance regimes. In this way, these organisations are able to decide themselves what their priorities for improvement and action should be.

9.2 This was a new approach for both HMICS and forces. One early learning point to emerge was the finding that our question set required participants to focus on forces' 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 separate improvement actions 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 For the purpose of the exercise, Tayside Police divided itself into ten separate units, comprising its three territorial divisions and seven other departments. The result was ten separate divisional/departmental and one force-wide action plan. The force plan covers five action areas containing a number of improvement actions.

9.5 All actions have specified owners, timescales and progress review dates. As with recommendations from thematic reports, action plans are monitored through the force business change programme board, progress against which is also reported to Tayside Joint Police Board.

9.6 The force has made progress in a number of areas, including:
- improving internal communication by developing new systems as well as the production of a DVD by the chief constable;
- establishing an environmental working group to consider activities such as recycling and transport-sharing;
- reviewing its staff appraisal and bonus payments schemes; and
- introducing divisional multi-agency community advisory groups.

9.7 For now the force's improvement action plans do not specify how it intends to assess the impact of its improvement activities. Nevertheless, each area of activity has a section outlining its anticipated benefits to the force.

9.8 We had already had some discussions with forces about the 2008 self-assessment process prior to this inspection. These discussions, along with the findings of this review, have informed the development of the 2009 process which we asked forces to complete in October/November of this year.

10. Areas for improvement

No	Areas for improvement	Report reference
1.	Integration of the force's planning processes and outputs.	3.2
2.	Corporate ownership of the force control strategy across the leadership team.	3.3
3.	Communication of the force control strategy priorities to all staff.	3.4
4.	The gap in analytical support and leadership caused by the absence of a principal analyst.	4.4, 5.2
5.	Corporate oversight of the implementation of partnership strategic assessments.	4.5
6.	Alignment of HR policy and training delivery to support the force control strategy.	5.1
7.	The monitoring and reviewing of the control strategy prevention, intelligence and enforcement recommendations.	7.1
8.	The linkage between performance management and the control strategy.	7.2
9.	The use of results analysis to ensure that PIE activities are effective.	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.