

Avon and Somerset Constabulary has made significant progress in how it tackles anti-social behaviour, but does not always identify repeat and vulnerable callers as soon as they contact the police.

In Spring 2010, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carried out a review to find out how the police can best tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB). The national findings were published alongside individual reports that outlined how successfully each force was dealing with the problem.

The results of a follow-up inspection published today found that Avon and Somerset Constabulary has made significant progress since 2010 in the way it understands and deals with ASB problems in Avon and Somerset. It has refreshed its 'ASB Gold Standard' for the way it tackles the issue (and put in place extra training to bring staff up to speed), and provides a quality service to victims.

In May 2011, the constabulary introduced a new protocol and IT software system to help identify more consistently if someone contacting them to report ASB is vulnerable (for instance, disabled) or has called before. Local police officers then contact all ASB victims within 24 hours to carry out further assessment of whether the caller is particularly at risk, and so in need of extra support. However, HMIC found that despite these improvements repeat and vulnerable callers are still not always identified at the first point of contact (although the force is working hard to correct this).

HM Inspector of Constabulary for the Western Region, Dru Sharpling, said:

"Anti-social behaviour is a blight that can wreck lives and communities. Our review shows that Avon and Somerset Constabulary has made significant progress in how it tackles the problem, and that victim satisfaction is in line with the national figures for England and Wales. The force should be commended for this – especially as it comes against the backdrop of significant budget cuts across the Service."

"However, there is no room for complacency. In particular, Avon and Somerset Constabulary should continue to work on ensuring repeat and vulnerable callers are identified at the first point of contact. This progress is an important step in delivering a much better service to victims."

The full report for Avon and Somerset Constabulary, along with the national thematic review 'A Step in the Right Direction', can be found at www.hmic.gov.uk

Notes to editors

1. The full thematic report 'A Step in the Right Direction' and supporting material can be found at www.hmic.gov.uk
2. The review 'Stop the Rot' published in September 2010 and the accompanying force reports can be found at www.hmic.gov.uk

3. For further information, or to request an interview, HMIC's press office can be contacted during office hours from 8:30am – 5:30pm Monday – Friday on 0203 513 0600.
4. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest, and rigorously examines the effectiveness of police forces and authorities to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. HMIC inspects and regulates all 43 police forces in England and Wales together with other major policing bodies such as the Serious Organised Crime Agency, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the British Transport Police and HMRC.
5. HMIC's out-of-hours press office line for urgent media enquiries is 07836 217 729.