

Best Value Review of Police Training

Force: Bedfordshire

Date of Inspection: 8–9 September 2004



A Report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

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Context and Force performance

Context

Population served by the Force	565,900	
Number of police officers	1190 FTE	
Number of police staff	752 FTE	
Number of special constables	180	
Budget for training for the financial year:	Financial Value	Percentage of Overall Force budget
2003/04	not asked	1.43%
2004/05	£2,85,564 million	2.7%

Performance

A baseline assessment of the Force was undertaken between March and October 2004.

The findings of HMIC relating specifically to the HR area can be found at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/bedsbaseline1004.pdf

Further details of the Force performance can be found at www.bedfordshire.police.uk

For details of the rationale and methodology for the Best Value Reviews and inspection of police training please visit www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/training.htm

Findings

Area Examined	Findings
TRAINING STRATEGY	HM Inspector was pleased to see a well presented strategy that conforms to HOC 53/2003. However, there are significant areas where action is yet to be taken to implement the strategy.
QUALITY OF COSTED TRAINING PLAN	All Force training is not commonly amalgamated into one plan. HM Inspector was encouraged that each training area of the Force has been costed but only the Training Department have a CTP.
MONITORING COSTED TRAINING PLAN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR	The Training and Development Section (TADS) costed training plan is routinely monitored to identify the variation between planned and actual delivery. There is no evidence that the other costed training areas are monitored.
TRAINING NOT INCLUDED IN THE COSTED TRAINING PLAN	HM Inspector was concerned that driving, dogs, firearms and HOLMES are excluded from the CTP. These areas have their own budget arrangements and are not merged with TADS. However, there are plans to include these areas into one CTP for 2005/06.
CLIENT/CONTRACTOR ARRANGEMENTS	There is a clear understanding developing of the client and contractor relationship. The Divisional Training and Development Board (DTDB) identifies training at divisional level and the Training Prioritisation Steering Group (TPSG) concerns itself with the higher level prioritisation of all Force training. However, the TPSG is led by the Superintendent, Recruiting and Development and there appears to be little ACPO involvement in the prioritisation process, creating a perception that training is leading training. Some key training programmes are by-passing the TPSG, further reducing the effectiveness of the current structure.

Area Examined	Findings
<p>MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>There is no Head of all training within the Force, and the Head of TADS (chief inspector) has no professional management over the operational training aspects outside of the Training Department. He reports to the Superintendent Recruiting and Development, (who also has many other responsibilities outside training), who in turn reports to ACC.</p> <p>HM Inspector was concerned that there does not appear to be any specific strategic voice for the Head of Training, and no evidence of training managers directly interacting at the strategic level. The Head of TADS is no longer approached regarding Force training issues as these issues are referred to the superintendent.</p> <p>Within the TADS management team an inspector post has been removed. This has meant that the Head of TADS has had to become more tactical to ensure provision is maintained and so limiting the management effectiveness in the training department. This is significantly impacting on the developments that could otherwise have been made internally. HM Inspector acknowledges that an inspector post has been reintroduced within TADS since April 2004. Although, an inspector has been selected but the post remains vacant.</p> <p>The opportunity for staff to receive development training on the BCUs is inconsistent and dependent on local practice.</p>
<p>IMPLEMENTATION OF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Learning • Training Matters • Diversity Matters • Foundations for Change 	<p>Many of the features of <i>Managing Learning</i> appear to have been implemented. <i>Training Matters</i>, <i>Diversity Matters</i> and the FfC each have action plans, which are being implemented. The <i>Diversity Matters</i> action plan is updated every three months.</p>
<p>CURRENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>The BVR IP is mostly completed. There is no other IP for the training function that reflects current or future development, but HM Inspector acknowledges at the time of inspection a revised IP is being developed. Several action plans are in place in the Force that affects the Training Department, including for the retention of liP. Amalgamation of these into one IP has been acknowledged as an improvement that would ease monitoring and provide clarity.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
MONITORING THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN	ACPO and the PA routinely monitor the BVR improvement plan by exception reporting. This is conducted every three to four months.
QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES	HM Inspector was very concerned to find there is no QA framework or associated policy for the Force training function.
EVALUATION OF TRAINING	<p>There is no Force Evaluator, but HM Inspector acknowledges there is a strategy to support an evaluation process. Evaluation claimed in the training strategy is not being practiced.</p> <p>There is consistent Level 1 activity by means of reaction sheets, although there is no audit trail available.</p> <p>Level 2 is achieved by forms being signed by students accepting that the aims and objectives have been met. The form is then used to facilitate level 3 evaluation from line managers who explore in PDR interviews if there has been transference to the workplace. However, this is a new system, and there is no clear evidence to indicate how this is working.</p> <p>There is no Level 4 taking place.</p>
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TRAINING	HM Inspector was pleased to see there are plans to engage the existing IAG with training issues and events and that a training consultation panel is planned. However, there are specific examples of liaison taking place with community groups through probationer training events. PCSO training is also taking place within a local college and community placements are undertaken by probationers.
COLLABORATION – OTHER EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	<p>There are good collaborative events with Social Services and the CPS. The PCSOs are trained in local colleges.</p> <p>Aviation law training is provided for Monarch Airlines at Luton and in return the Force obtains the use of their training facilities for Bedfordshire courses.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
COLLABORATION – OTHER POLICE ORGANISATIONS	<p>There is collaboration with surrounding Forces for inspector training and firearms training as well as a regional dog training partnership.</p> <p>The Force is a member of the regional crime training partnership and the Eastern Region Strategic Training Group. There is participation in regional (annual) PSU exercises.</p> <p>The Head of TADS is the regional training manager representative on the Eastern Region Evaluation of Learning Group, which is developing regional training evaluation.</p>
ADOPTION OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE	<p>There is knowledge of <i>Models for Learning and Development</i> but little implementation because of a lack of staff resourcing, but there are some aspirational TNA and design ideas.</p>
MAIN AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FORCE	<p>To implement the evaluation strategy.</p> <p>Training Department involvement in major projects at an early stage, (although there have been significant improvements in this area over the last 12 months).</p> <p>Improve identification of individual training needs.</p> <p>To develop a training design capability in the Training Department.</p> <p>To improve the capacity/capability to deliver training by alternative methods (ie e-learning).</p>
APPLICATION OF THE 4Cs SINCE THE REVIEW	<p>There is little evidence of challenge or comparison being effectively pursued but there are aspects of collaboration and consultation in place that are promising.</p>
INTEGRATION OF THE INTEGRATED COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to see the Force has fully implemented the national PDR framework and all staff have an ICF role profile. All internal selection processes utilise competency-based selection against the ICF. Promotion portfolios for sergeants have been converted to ICF, and the Force is piloting the work based assessment for promotion.</p> <p>HM Inspector was encouraged that some elements of training (specifically management) have been mapped across to NOS and new training incorporates NOS as the baseline for design.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>MONITORING PROCESS AND COMPLETION OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS FOR POLICE OFFICERS AND POLICE STAFF</p>	<p>PDR completion rates are centrally monitored. In addition each department and division has local responsibility for monitoring completion and quality. Compliance rates are high.</p>
<p>BUSINESS PLANNING FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING</p>	<p>The business planning cycle for training complies with HOC 53/2003, has clear timelines and integrates with the corporate planning cycle. However, it does not inform the budget setting process, which is fixed in isolation of training/performance needs.</p>
<p>PRIORITISATION MODEL FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>A prioritisation model is being developed by the Head of TADS that will apply a risk measure to all identified training. But there is concern that not all training will be exposed to this prioritisation process or that ACPO will be sufficiently engaged to make it effective.</p>

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a costed training plan that is aligned to the guidance given in relevant Home Office Circulars, that properly informs the business planning cycle, and that indicates the entire costed training needs of the Force

Recommendation 2

HM Inspector recommends that the Force and the Police Authority establish a formal mechanism to monitor the costed training plan on an ongoing basis. This should include the development of performance measures in relation to the delivery of the plan

Recommendation 3

HM Inspector recommends that the Force costed training plan is developed to ensure it captures ALL training in the Force irrespective of where or by whom it is provided

Recommendation 4

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a mechanism to ensure that accountability for standards, costs and planning for all training rests with a single source, irrespective of where in the Force or by whom it is provided. Specifically, the Head of Training should professionally manage ALL training staff within the Force

Recommendation 5

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a single improvement plan, which captures all locally identified improvement actions as well as those which result from this or previous HMIC Training reports. The improvement plan should also capture any improvement actions which have resulted from other relevant sources having an impact on training, and that it is regularly monitored through to completion

Recommendation 6

HM Inspector recommends that the new improvement plan devised is owned and managed at strategic level, ensuring it is the business of all aspects of the Force

Recommendation 7

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a comprehensive Quality Assurance and Staff Development process for all training, irrespective of where or by whom it is provided. Such processes should be regularly monitored, and effectively resourced

Recommendation 8

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a prioritisation mechanism for training which is objectively linked to organisational outcomes, and which is chaired at strategic level. This group should make all training prioritisation decisions

Recommendation 9

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a divisional training function across the Force, professionally managed by TADS, with appropriate service level agreements, to assist the central training function and meet Force demands

Recommendation 10

HM Inspector recommends that the Force ensures that there is equity with regard to current divisional training resources so that all staff have development opportunities. Furthermore, such resources should operate under the professional direction of the Head of the training function. This will ensure a consistency and introduce the flexibility required to meet changing demands across the Basic Command Units

Judgements

Judgement 1:

The training function is under resourced and is widely perceived not to be valued by the Force. Previous resourcing decisions have adversely impacted on the Quality Assurance and evaluation capability, and staff moves have created a managerial vacuum, which is presenting risks to the Training Department. The Head of Training has no strategic voice in his own right. The Strategic Prioritisation Board is not as effective as it could be due to a lack of engagement with the ACPO level and not all key training projects being captured. Training is fragmented across the Force, with no overall professional management of the training function.

HM Inspector concludes therefore that the quality of the service is **'poor'**

Judgement 2:

The Force has revised their improvement plan to bring together all the areas for improvement into one plan. Furthermore, ACPO have now taken the strategic lead for the TPSG and reintroduced the post of Director HR with direct strategic lead for HR and Training. Consequently, there is clear direction and prioritisation for future improvement together with a realisation of the resourcing requirement. Quality Assurance and evaluation areas have been identified as priority areas. ACPO and the Police Authority through their support and ownership of the improvement plan objectives are demonstrating the necessary commitment.

HM Inspector concludes therefore that the prospects for improvement are **'promising'**

For further information on the judgement criteria refer to Appendix H/Annex A of the below document.

BEST VALUE AND PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR POLICE AUTHORITIES AND FORCES

Adult Learning Inspectorate

Summary of Findings

The Adult Learning Inspectorate undertook an assessment of several training sessions alongside the HMIC (P&T) inspection. A summary of their findings is shown below:

Achievement and Standards

- Where courses were designed to meet national occupational standards or legislative requirements on the Force, learners' progress against these standards was carefully monitored. There was informal assessment of learners' attainment in most of the training observed, but little formal assessment. In the best sessions learners were able to demonstrate good understandings of course content, aims and objectives, and could often apply knowledge gained from previous training courses.

Quality of Education and Training

- Training quality is high, with 71 per cent of sessions graded good or very good. The best sessions were highly effective, with engaged and involved learners and highly committed trainers. There were many examples of trainers building upon learners' prior knowledge and skills. In diversity training, learners were led through a series of interesting and inventive activities that challenged stereotypes and developed a good understanding of diversity and its importance in police work. Good interpersonal and community liaison skills were developed. Practical work with probationary officers made very good use of experiential learning, and gave learners a sound preparation for their operational activities. The observed probationer training was also highly successful in developing officers' skills in planning, carrying out and evaluating operations, and effectively developed individual and team working skills.
- Satisfactory sessions had strengths in the clear trainer enthusiasm, good subject knowledge and expertise, but there was scope for increased involvement of learners in the class activity. Too much time was trainer-focused, and there was insufficient checking of learner understanding and progress.
- Resources for teaching and learning are good, and are better than those found in many forces. Training accommodation at the Force headquarters is well organised to meet training needs, and there are sufficient rooms and training areas available. Rooms are spacious and well equipped, with modern audio-visual and ICT teaching resources. IT training rooms are well equipped, but are only designed to house small numbers of learners. Trainers make good use of the available teaching and learning resources and develop good quality handouts and learning materials for their groups of learners. Trainers in the Training and Development Services section are well qualified and all have attended the Centrex Trainers' Development Programme.

- There is poor succession planning from senior managers, and there is a shortage of experienced trainers. Staffing levels in the Training Department are low. In addition, a large number of trainers are also about to leave the Training Department, following success in promotion boards. A selection process is in place to replace or compensate for the loss of these staff. Training staff and managers are currently working under pressure to maintain the quality of training, with little time for preparation and continuing professional development. Training managers do not currently have sufficient resources to meet the training needs of the Force effectively.
- There is a lack of formalised training quality evaluation. There is no Force evaluator, there are no uniform processes for gathering and analysing learner feedback at level one, and there is no evaluation undertaken beyond level one. The Force has no trainer evaluation or teaching observation scheme in operation, though some trainers have spent time in informal peer evaluation to share good practice.
- Informal assessment takes place in most theory and practical sessions. Trainers use questioning successfully to assess learners' understanding and to measure progress. In probationer training learners were questioned about their decision-making processes and were able to engage in some sophisticated self-assessment and evaluation. Diversity training sessions involved regular questioning to provide refreshment of knowledge gained and allow checking of understanding. Trainers also used questioning successfully to challenge views and develop learner's awareness of diversity issues.
- Initial assessment of learner needs, or assessment of prior knowledge, experience and understanding, is not regularly undertaken. Learners are selected for most courses, and in some cases, are given places on high-demand courses for which they do not have a clear operational need.
- The Force offers a wide range of courses to learners, but selection procedures are poorly understood. Most courses are adapted from Centrex or other standard programmes. In the past, trainers have developed courses to meet specific Force needs as they arise. However, this level of responsiveness is no longer available, as there has been no replacement of the re-deployed member of the training team who held national qualifications in course design. The Force currently collaborates with neighbouring forces for the delivery of dog and firearms training.
- Training staff provide good levels of support for learners, and even on short courses, make efforts to understand their learners' various approaches to learning and learning needs. In PNC training, staff make efforts to work with learners at a pace that suits their familiarity with software programmes, and questions and queries are dealt with in detail with clear and effective explanations given about procedures and processes. Probationary officers are given very good levels of support by trainers, and differing levels of confidence and operational experience are taken into account when planning training activities. PCSOs receive a good induction and trainers are effective providing support and guidance for all new officers.

- There is insufficient central control of training, and too many courses and training events take place beyond the supervision of the Head of Training. Courses initiated within the Training Department have clear links to Force priorities and are articulated in an effective Force training strategy. However, many courses originate outside the Training Department and draw resources away from the training strategy.
- Senior managers are not sufficiently involved in training, and amongst officers and staff, there is a perception that training has a very low priority. No senior managers are represented on the Divisional Training Development Boards or on the Training Priorities Group. Many decisions about resources for training, and about large-scale intermittent training activities have been taken without seeking views from training staff and training managers. There is considerable uncertainty amongst learners, staff and managers who were spoken to about the future of training in the Force

