

Demanding Times

The front line and police visibility

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Correction: June 2011

Please note the chart on page 29 has been replaced since first publication (March 2011) to correct an error in the position of North Wales Police.

Executive summary

Forces must organise their resources so that the highest possible proportion of officers and other police staff are available to meet the needs of the public. At no time in the past has this been more important than now: in this age of austerity, the police will have to make hard choices about how they use their resources.

It is important that these are informed choices. In this report, HMIC therefore opens the books of policing, enabling both the police and the public to see how resource choices differ from force to force:

- Section 1, 'The police workforce and the "front line"', identifies and categorises the different police roles, quantifies each category and examines which roles might comprise the front line.
- Section 2, 'Where are the police?', outlines the proportion of police officers and police and community support officers (PCSOs) who are visible and available to the public at key times of the day.
- Section 3, 'Demands on the police', uses findings from three new case studies to illustrate the range of demands on the police, and the variety of resources needed to meet these demands.

1. THE POLICE WORKFORCE AND THE 'FRONT LINE'

The police workforce

In consultation with police sector representatives, HMIC has identified the different roles that make up policing (using data provided by forces¹), and grouped these into four categories:²

Role	Type of work carried out	% of total workforce (officers, PCSOs and staff) in these roles	% of officers and PCSOs in these roles
Visible	Responding to 999 calls, attending traffic accidents, patrolling neighbourhoods	41%	61%
Specialist	Investigating crime, bringing criminals to justice, crime scene examinations	19%	21%
Middle office	Managing or supporting those in visible and specialist roles, running police-specific processes (such as answering emergency calls from the public, holding prisoners in custody, processing intelligence)	24%	14%
Back office	Support services (such as finance, information technology, human resources)	15%	5%

¹ Force Annual Data Return (ADR) to the Home Office for 2009/10. The percentages in the table shown on this page are national estimates, based on the allocation of roles and functions to the workforce map which has been developed in consultation with police sector representatives.

² To note: percentages have been rounded up or down, and so may not add up to 100.

The 'front line'

The nature of policing is such that any officer in an office-based role might be reassigned to the street. Furthermore, effective policing on the street is dependent on there also being police working in supporting processes, who (for example) handle calls from the public, analyse intelligence and prepare cases for court. As a consequence, there has never been an agreed definition of the policing front line. To address this, in December 2010 HMIC was asked by the Minister of State for Policing and Criminal Justice to look for agreement on what constitutes the policing front line.³ HMIC therefore:

- carried out a small survey to find out what the public think constitutes the front line;
- consulted police representatives;⁴ and
- analysed police roles against two criteria – everyday contact with the public and direct delivery of policing service.

We found:

- Most of those consulted agreed that personnel in **visible** roles (e.g. those who respond to 999 calls or work in neighbourhood policing teams) and in **specialist** roles (e.g. those in criminal investigation departments) were front line. As shown in the table above, visible and specialist roles account for 61%⁵ of the total police workforce⁶ across England and Wales.
- Most agreed that those in **back office** roles (such as training and finance) were not front line.
- There was less certainty over what some describe as middle office roles, in which operational and support functions overlap (for instance, in answering calls from the public, holding prisoners in custody and processing intelligence). Our survey indicated:
 - A clear majority of the public saw call handlers as front line;
 - A small majority thought custody officers were front line; and
 - A minority saw intelligence-processing roles as front line.

Applying the views obtained from the public survey and the two criteria (everyday contact with the public and direct delivery of policing service) across the **middle office** adds around 7% of the workforce to the front line.

³ The Home Affairs Select Committee also urged the Home Office to produce a definition. See *Police Finances, Sixth Report of Session 2010-11*. HC 695, House of Commons, 23 February 2011.

⁴ Including the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Association of Police Authorities (APA). The Home Office were also consulted.

⁵ Officers, PCSOs and staff in visible roles (41.3% of the total) plus those in specialist roles (19.4% of the total) = 61%. NB total is rounded up.

⁶ 'Total police workforce' comprises police officers, PCSOs and staff.

Our analysis of these findings suggests a measure of agreement around the following definition of front line:

The police front line comprises those who are in everyday contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law.

While those engaged in these roles depend on others behind the scenes, the public are heavily reliant upon the front line and the decisions they make. There is therefore a clear public interest in understanding the resourcing of these front line roles:

- Their proximity to the public, on or off the streets, means that choices about the level of resourcing are much more likely to have a direct and visible impact on how a force can deal with emergencies, maintain order and control crime; and
- Those on the front line have to make sensitive decisions about people's liberty and safety, because of the kinds of issues they have to tackle. For instance, they have to decide which incidents are prioritised, which criminals/organisations are targeted, how much effort is put into investigations, and whether to give a warning or make an arrest.

We estimate that a total of around 68% of the total police workforce across England and Wales is front line: the 61%⁷ in visible and specialist roles, plus 7% in middle office roles. However, given the so-called 'middle office' proportion is an estimate, we think it is more accurate to say that **around two-thirds of the workforce is front line.**

It is clearly important that forces make the most of their resources, and this is more crucial than ever in a period of austerity. Our research suggests that there are variations between forces in the proportion of the workforce deployed in front-line roles (as defined above): from around 62% to 75%. Some forces have outsourced a range of support services, which might explain some of the variation – as may the quality of the data. However, the variation suggests that there may be opportunities for greater efficiency.

The proportion of the workforce on the front line provides an indication of the resources deployed for the public – but it has its limitations:

- It does not provide any indication of the quality or efficiency of the service provided by these individuals, which has a huge impact. For example: are they doing a good job? Have they been deployed in the right places? Are they hampered by over-complicated and bureaucratic processes?
- It does not provide any indication of the potential for improvement outside current arrangements. For example, some elements of specialist services may be better if done in collaboration with other police forces or the private sector.

- It does not account for any duties that take an individual away from the front line. For example, they may be training or off sick.

2. WHERE ARE THE POLICE?

Both previous research⁸ and the new analysis of the British Crime Survey contained within the body of this report indicate that visible policing is linked to public confidence in the police. If the public have confidence in the Service they are more willing to engage with both the police and the wider criminal justice system.

Police emergency services are required 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In order to ensure this round-the-clock service, it generally takes between five and six officers in total to cover a 24-hour period. This is true of any 24/7 service, and provides cover for workers on leave, sick or on other duties such as attending court. Forces have different ways of organising their resources to respond to the demands of a 24/7 service.

We surveyed the percentage of officers and PCSOs who were visible⁹ and available¹⁰ in the 43 English and Welsh forces at three points in time (Monday morning at 09:00am, Wednesday evening at 07:00 pm and 00:30am on Friday evening/Saturday morning).

By combining the results of these surveys, we found that, on average, **12% of the total number of officers and PCSOs are visible and available across England and Wales**. However, this average disguises a significant variation between forces, ranging from 9% to 17%. This suggests that there may be real opportunities for greater efficiency in how some forces convert their workforce into visible and available resource.

Visibility is an important element of policing but it cannot, by itself, protect the public from all the threats they face. The variety of specialist officers required to deal with crimes ranging from child protection issues to murder and terrorism provides an insight into what else is needed. This also emerges from three snapshots of police demand captured by HMIC in February 2011, which are described in the next section.

⁸ Dalgleish and Myhill (2004), *Reassuring the Public a Review of International Policing Interventions*. Home Office RDS; Dalgleish and Myhill (2006), *Implementation of the National Reassurance Policing Programme*. Home Office RDS.

⁹ 'Visible' refers to staff who wear uniform and mainly work in public.

¹⁰ 'Available' refers to police officers and PCSOs who are actually ready for duty (i.e. deployable in their substantive role as opposed to being on a training course, attending court, off shift, on leave or sick, etc.)

3. DEMANDS ON THE POLICE

Our case studies of three local policing areas over a 24-hour period illustrate the demands faced by the police. We found that the police were called upon to carry out a diverse range of interventions: from preventing disorder in town and city centres, to protecting vulnerable people and property, responding to crises, stopping crime and anti-social behaviour as it happens, and bringing offenders to justice.

The case studies illustrate how police have to tailor their response according to the circumstances of individuals, the need to prevent crime and, to a degree, to the variation in the volume at different times of the day. In addition, there is also variation in the types of serious crimes presented to the police, which often consume considerable resources. It should be borne in mind that police have to be prepared to deal with all these eventualities at any time if they are to serve the public well.

Examples of demands on the police from the case studies

- Officers entering the home of an arrested shoplifter to look for evidence found her 3-year-old child left alone. Officers worked with Social Services to arrange care for the child. This incident involved three police officers, and one scene of crime officer, and took 14 hours to resolve.
- Officers were called to a flat where a trail of blood led to the door. A crime scene was established and a search conducted. The flat owner reported that he had cut his hand after a fight with his girlfriend. Officers checked on the safety of the girlfriend. This incident involved four police officers and one member of police staff, and took 2.5 hours to resolve.

Looking at the case studies and other evidence, it can reasonably be argued that the police front line can be found in many different places: on the high street on patrol, dealing with crime in people's homes, or on the internet to prevent abuse of children and terrorism. It could also be claimed that more demanding environments tend to require a greater proportion of specialists in a workforce. HMIC's case studies demonstrate why it is important for the police to be as efficient as possible in using resources from both the front and back of policing.

Conclusion

We have been asked to find common ground for a definition of the front line in policing. We propose a working definition that comprises those who are in contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law.

We have been able to find a measure of agreement on which roles are front line. There is not, however, complete consensus. This is unsurprising, given that there has been no standard operating model showing where police resources are, nor a debate as to how best they should be arranged to serve the public. We have therefore now identified police roles and categorised them

as visible, specialist, middle office or back office, allowing the issue to be debated locally, and on a more informed basis.

Based on our consultation work, there is a fair degree of agreement that visible and specialist members of the police workforce (61% of the total police workforce) are front line, and that those in back office roles are not. But there is less certainty about where middle office roles fit (ie those in which operational and support functions overlap).

Taking into account all the elements we examined, we conclude that around two-thirds of the workforce is on the front line. This provides an indication of the resources deployed for the public – but not about the quality of the service provided, or how it might be transformed in the future.

Our snapshot surveys show that there is a demand from the public to respond to or proactively prevent a diverse range of incidents. Meeting this demand necessarily requires a wide range of expertise, which is provided by those in specialist policing roles.

Our analysis found a significant degree of variation between forces in the proportion of their workforce that was visible and available to the public at key times. This indicates that there is real scope for some forces to improve the efficiency with which they make officers available to the public at times when demand is highest.

Next steps

Police authorities and forces should use the comparative data in this report to consider whether variations arise through need and informed choice, or if they indicate room for improvement. In particular, they should consider:

- The proportion of the workforce allocated to the front line.
- The proportion of officers and PCSOs allocated to visible roles.
- The proportion in visible roles who are available to the public at key times – and in particular, whether shift patterns are effectively matching resources to demand.
- The proportion of officer and PCSO time spent on unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape.¹¹

¹¹ HMIC's report into potential reductions in the bureaucracy surrounding crime recording, *Cutting the Blue Tape*, is due for publication in May 2011.

Introduction

About this report

HMIC inspects police in the public interest and aims to incentivise improvement in policing through the provision of comparative information for the public. In the current economic environment, HMIC is particularly interested in shining a light for the public on the extent to which forces represent value for money. This means linking inputs to outputs and outcomes. This report aims to provide comparative information and analysis on:

- the workforce, as the most significant **input** to policing is the c.80% of budgets that is spent on pay; and
- the link between the size of the workforce and one policing **output** – police visibility, which we know is linked to public confidence in the police.

Scope

Research¹² indicates that one of the most successful means of increasing perceived police effectiveness is to improve the visibility of and familiarity with the police through foot patrols and problem solving within the community. To investigate the link between the size of the workforce and confidence we have therefore looked at the proportion of police officers in each of the 43 forces who are visible and available to the public.¹³

It should be noted that this report does **not** examine:

- The link between the size of the workforce and other policing outcomes (such as reductions in crime, reductions in anti-social behaviour or the delivery of justice), since these are substantial topics in their own right.
- The link between what the workforce does and the outcomes achieved: HMIC has published some data on this in its Value for Money profiles (available from www.hmic.gov.uk).

¹² Dalgleish and Myhill (2004), *Reassuring the Public a Review of International Policing Interventions*. Home Office RDS; Dalgleish and Myhill (2006), *Implementation of the National Reassurance Policing Programme*. Home Office RDS.

¹³ This builds on the sample of availability in four forces we published in July 2010. HMIC (2010) *Valuing the Police*. Available to download from www.hmic.gov.uk

POLICE ROLES AND THE 'FRONT LINE'

Police roles

Introduction

Police forces carry out a range of functions. In order to make meaningful comparisons between forces, it is helpful to break down the workforce into categories, which enables:

- an assessment of the choices forces and authorities have made over the allocation of resources in comparison with other forces; and
- the public to track over time not just the size of the workforce but also how different roles within forces have been prioritised by their leadership.

Because there has been no generally accepted map of police roles that would allow this, HMIC has worked with representatives of the service to bridge the gap by defining and categorising the roles.

Police roles

The process used to map police roles is set out at Annex A; the results are shown in the table below.

PUBLIC FACING			SUPPORTING PROCESSES	
Visible	Specialist	Middle Office		Back Office
		Process Management	Process Support	
Response Neighbourhood Community Safety/relations Probationers (Student Officers) Traffic Dogs Firearms (tactical) Mounted	Air Firearms (specialist) Marine / Underwater Surveillance Unit Ports / Special Branch / Protection / Immigration / Nationality Child / Sex/ Domestic /Missing Persons Fingerprints / Photographic Scenes of Crime Technical Support Unit (80%)* Asset Confiscation (80%)* Burglary (80%)* CID (70%)* CID – Specialist Crime Unit (70%)* Drugs (80%)* Fraud (80%)* Hate Crime (80%)* Vehicle Crime (60%)* Intelligence (40%)* Vice (70%)*	Custody Enquiry/Station Counters Coroners Officers Operational Planning Local Commanders Chief Police Officers HOLMES (murder) Unit (30%)* Control Room/Call Handling (60%)* Crime & Incident Management (60%)* Police Standards Unit (50%)* Criminal Justice (30%)*	Intelligence (60%)* Control Room/Call Handling (40%)* Criminal Justice (70%)* Criminal Records Office CID (30%)* CID Specialist Crime Unit (30%)* Vehicle Crime (40%)* HOLMES (murder) Unit (70%)* Hate Crime (20%)* Fraud (20%)* Burglary (20%)* Asset Confiscation (20%)* Technical Support Unit (20%)* Police Standards Unit (50%)* Crime & Incident Management (40%)* Drugs (20%)* Vice (30%)*	IT/Audio/Comms Corp Development Finance Personnel/HR Press and PR Property Staff Associations Buildings Drivers Staff Officers Catering Stores Supplies Training Other Admin/Clerical Vehicle Workshop/Fleet Occ Health / Welfare

Please note: In some cases roles cut across more than one category, and where this is the case the percentage split is shown. These weightings (indicated by a * in the table) are based on a pragmatic approach using professional judgement; they are meant to represent the national picture, and may therefore vary from force to force. See Annex A for more details.

The **visible** category includes those roles that involve an officer or PCSO undertaking work that is likely to be seen by the public: for instance, patrolling or responding to 999 calls.

The **specialists** category comprises those roles that may involve direct contact with the public, but whose work is not in general visible to the public. Many officers in this category – such as those working in Criminal Investigation Departments (CID) – will not wear uniforms, and some roles (for instance, collecting forensic evidence) may be carried out by staff rather than officers.

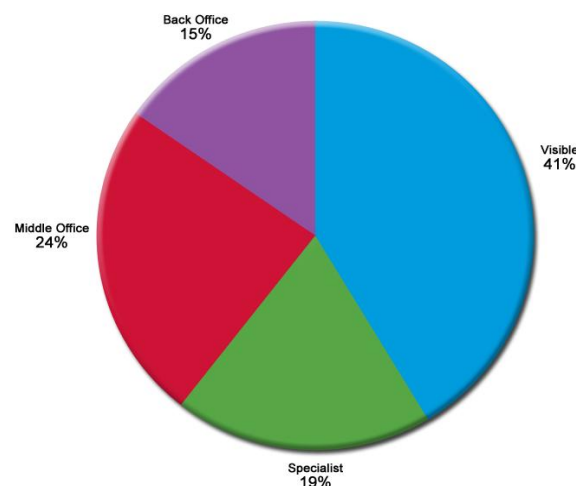
The **middle office** is where operational and support functions overlap in carrying out police-specific processes. Its work comprises: *Process management* – these roles involve decision-making and tasking work; and *Process support* – these roles involve processing information in support of police decision-making.

The final category is the **back office**, which comprises those roles that are necessary to the running of organisations as large as a police force, such as finance, information technology and human resources.

How many people work in each category?

Using a combination of this workforce map and information from police forces' annual return to the Home Office,¹⁴ we can construct the following chart.

Estimated distribution of the total police workforce (officers, PCSOs and staff) nationally¹⁵



¹⁴ The Annual Data Return (ADR) for 2009/10.

¹⁵ For national distribution of police officers and PCSOs only (ie excluding police staff), see p.25.

Data limitations

Some forces have outsourced services or collaborate with others to share resources; this means their workforce numbers will be comparatively lower than those in other forces. This predominantly relates to police staff roles in back office, but some middle office roles may also be affected. The number of people working in outsourced functions is not included in the above data and the effect of this will be an under-estimation of the relative proportion of people working in back and middle office functions.

The distribution of the workforce shown in Chart 1 has been calculated using the latest Annual Data Return (ADR) information available (2009/10). It is anticipated that changes will have occurred since this data was gathered.

The proportions shown for the visible and back office categories are taken from the ADR information. However, the proportion shown for the specialist and middle office categories are based on a combination of ADR data plus a professional judgement as to how certain ADR categories should be split between specialist and middle office categories. For example, the roles in CID have been split 70% specialist and 30% middle office. These judgements introduce a degree of subjectivity regarding the precise location of the boundary between specialist functions and the middle office. The methodology is explained in more detail at Annex A.

Defining the police ‘front line’

Introduction

In a written parliamentary question, the Home Secretary was asked what definition her Department uses for back office, middle office and front-line police roles. The Minister for Policing and Criminal Justice replied¹⁶:

There is no formally agreed definition of front-line, middle office and back office services, although these are terms in relatively common use across the police service. Consideration is being given, with the police service, to the establishment of a common definition. Although no fixed definition exists, front-line officers and staff are generally involved in the public crime-fighting face of the force. This includes neighbourhood policing, response policing and criminal investigation. Middle office services include a variety of functions which provide direct support to the front line, such as police training and criminal justice administration. Back office services are those which keep police forces running smoothly such as finance and HR.

And the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee concluded:¹⁷

The current confusion about what constitutes the front line in the police service is unhelpful, especially given the frequency with which this term is used by those involved in the debate about the service’s future. Police forces are being asked to prioritise the front line; it is only reasonable to expect that the Home Office specifies what it means by this term. We urge the Home Office to work with the police service to produce an agreed definition of front-line, middle office and back office police roles as soon as possible.

On 09 December 2010, HMIC was asked by the Minister for Policing and Criminal Justice to facilitate agreement on a definition.

Different perspectives on the front line

In considering a definition for the front line HMIC has:

- Consulted police representatives and considered definitions used by other sectors;
- Carried out a small survey to find out what the public think constitutes the front line; and
- Analysed police roles against two criteria – everyday contact with the public and direct delivery of policing service.

¹⁶ *Police Finances, Sixth Report of Session 2010-11*. HC 695, House of Commons, 23 February 2011.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Military and NHS perspectives

The term 'front line' originates from the military sphere, as indicated by the dictionary definitions:¹⁸ 1. the most advanced military units in a battle, of, relating to, or suitable for the military front line. 2. close to a hostile country or scene of armed conflict. The Army currently classify their units as:

- Combat: 'those who close with, assault and defeat the enemy' (including infantry, armoured, and army air corps);
- Combat Support: 'those regiments and corps who give support to the Combat arm' (e.g. artillery, intelligence, signals, and engineers); and
- Combat Services: those who 'provide the support required to ensure the Combat and Combat Support arms are capable of fulfilling their role on operations' (such as chaplains, logistics, and army musicians).¹⁹

But the term front line isn't just used in the military sense. One of the definitions used by the Department for Health is: 'For NHS and Social Care, the front line represents those staff who are directly involved in patient care',²⁰ i.e. health workers and social workers.

Other organisations we contacted in a small survey did not have a formal definition of front line.

Force perspectives

Twenty-two forces responded to an Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) consultation on the definition of front line. The results showed that:

- Forces define their front line as a collective of main job functions or specialisms.
- The front line includes both uniformed officers and non-uniformed support staff.
- The front line includes specialist teams (such as serious and organised crime units).
- Contact with the public might be a defining criteria of front-line policing if interpreted widely, i.e. to include face-to-face contact, telephone contact and contact with victims, witnesses and suspects.
- Some considered those who work in telephone call-handling centres as front line.

¹⁸ Collins Concise Dictionary.

¹⁹ http://www.hmforces.co.uk/Join_The_Forces/articles/86-regiments-and-corps-of-the-british-army

²⁰ Email from DH Workforce Capacity and Funding Unit to HMIC, March 2011.

Independent Review of Police Officer and Staff Remuneration and Conditions²¹

This 2011 review did not explicitly define the front line or other police roles. However, the methodology²² includes response and neighbourhood policing in the front line, while the general findings²³ suggest that specialist, middle and back office roles are not front line.

Public perspectives

In order to add to the views of police stakeholders, HMIC wanted to understand the public's perspective, and therefore commissioned a small survey²⁴ of public opinion.

First, we asked the public how important they thought it was for the police to retain current numbers of front line police officers: 89% said it was essential or very important. This suggests that there is value in being able to at least quantify the number of officers in front-line roles.²⁵

In the survey, the public were given information about certain roles and asked if they thought these roles were 'front line' or 'not front line'. The results are reproduced at Annex B and summarised below.

Public opinion of what was clearly on the front line:

- The officer who comes to the scene of a serious road traffic accident (90% agreement)
- The officer who arrives at your house following your 999 call about a burglary (88%)
- The detective who identifies and interviews suspects (83%)
- The neighbourhood officer who patrols your local high street (72%)
- The person who takes the call when you dial 999 (65%)
- The person who comes to your house the next day to take fingerprints (64%)
- The officer who comes to your house the next day to take your statement (64%)

Public opinion of what was on the front line, but less strongly so:

- The senior officer who oversees the case as a whole, and decides who should be working on it and for how long (56%)
- The sergeant in charge of the cell block at the police station where the burglar is held (53%)

²¹ <http://review.police.uk/documents/police-remun-and-conditions/first-report?view=Binary>

²² Ibid., p.297, para 6.

²³ Ibid., p.17, para 16.

²⁴ Conducted on behalf of HMIC by Ipsos MORI, with a sample size of just over 1,000.

²⁵ Note we did not specifically ask the public about police staff, although our definition of the front line does include a small proportion of such staff.

Public opinion of what was clearly not on the front line:

- The finance director who decides a police force's policy on claiming overtime (12%)
- The person who files your statement in the police station (27%)
- The person who rings to let you know that someone has been charged (32%)

Public opinion of what was not on the front line but less clearly so:

- The person who analyses data from your case together with other burglaries in the area to identify trends (40%)

This indicates:

- Of the roles that we tested with the public, those within the 'visible' and 'specialist' categories in our workforce map (see above p.12) were clearly considered to be front line.
- We only tested one back office role with the public, and there was a clear view that this was not on the front line.
- Views about the middle office were less clear:
 - There was less consensus over whether the three roles we tested in the process management category were front line, although more than 50% of consultees agreed that they were (call-handling 65%, custody 53% and local commanders 56%).
 - Most people did not think that the roles we tested in the middle office process support category were front line (intelligence 40% and filing statements and letting you know a person has been charged 27% and 32% respectively).

A new definition of the front line

These results suggest that **the police front line comprises those who are in everyday contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law.**

Applying this definition, we have reproduced our map of police roles below, with those roles that are on the front line highlighted.

Please note: In some cases roles cut across more than one category, and where this is the case the percentage split is shown. These weightings (indicated by a * in the table) are based on a pragmatic approach using professional judgement; they are meant to represent the national picture, and may therefore vary from force to force. See Annex A for more details.

KEY:



Public view as 'front line'



Public do not view as 'front line'



Mixed views among the public as to whether front line



Front line, where there was clear agreement



Front line, but less agreement

PUBLIC FACING			SUPPORTING PROCESSES	
Visible	Specialist	Middle Office		Back Office
		Process Management	Process Support	
Response Neighbourhood Community Safety/relations Probationers (Student Officers) Traffic Dogs Firearms (tactical) Mounted	Air Firearms (specialist) Marine / Underwater Surveillance Unit Ports / Special Branch / Protection / Immigration / Nationality Child / Sex/ Domestic /Missing Persons Fingerprints / Photographic Scenes of Crime Technical Support Unit (80%)* Asset Confiscation (80%)* Burglary (80%)* CID (70%)* CID – Specialist Crime Unit (70%)* Drugs (80%)* Fraud (80%)* Hate Crime (80%)* Vehicle Crime (60%)* Intelligence (40%)* Vice (70%)*	Coroners Officers Operational Planning Chief Police Officers HOLMES (murder) Unit (30%)* Crime & Inc Mgt (60%)* Criminal Justice (30%)*	Intelligence (60%)* Control Room / Call Handling (40%)* Criminal Justice (70%)* Criminal Records Office CID (30%)* CID Specialist Crime Unit (30%)* Vehicle Crime (40%)* HOLMES (murder) Unit (70%)* Hate Crime (20%)* Fraud (20%)* Burglary (20%)* Asset Confiscation (20%)* Tech Support Unit (20%)* Police Standards Unit (50%)* Crime & Incident Management (40%)* Drugs (20%)* Vice (30%)*	IT/Audio/Comms Corp Development Finance Personnel / Human Resources Press and Public Relations Property Staff Associations Buildings Drivers Staff Officers Catering Stores Supplies Training Other Admin/Clerical Vehicle Workshop/Fleet Occupational Health / Welfare

In considering the position of chief police officers and other leaders, we concluded that although they were involved in the direct delivery of policing services, their frequency of exposure to the public was not, in general, sufficient to warrant a front-line categorisation.

Quantifying the front line

Now that we have a working definition of the front line we can produce an estimate of the proportion of the workforce that is on the front line:

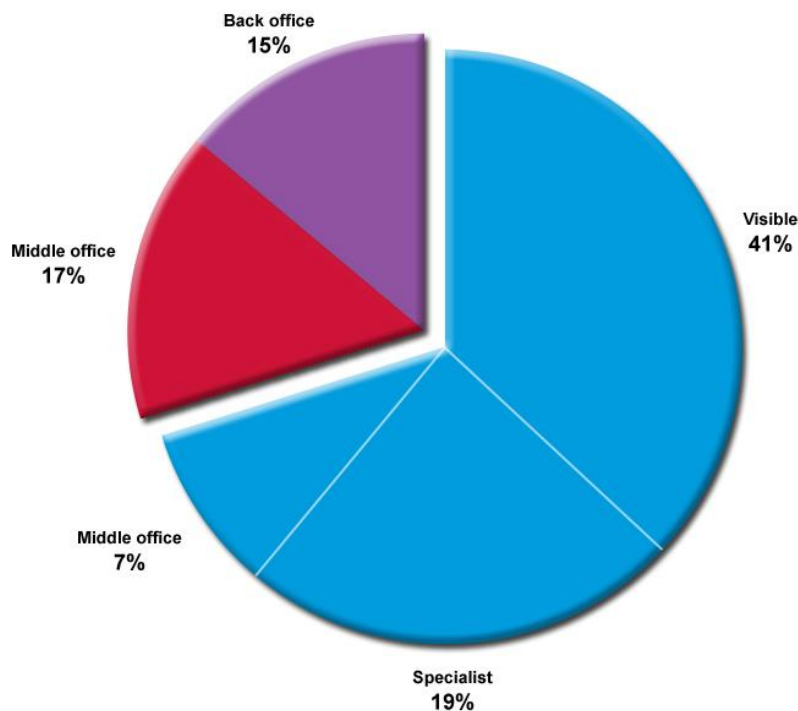
- Visible roles (41.3%) and specialists (19.4%) account for around 61% of the total police workforce.
- Applying the views obtained from the public survey (as shown on the previous page) and the two criteria (everyday contact with the public and direct delivery of policing service) adds a further 7% of the workforce to the front line.

We therefore estimate that around 68% of the total police workforce is front line. However, because this is based on an estimate, we think it is more accurate to say that **around two-thirds of the workforce is front line**.

Percentage of total workforce on the front line²⁶

Key

■ Front line



Our analysis indicates that the proportion of the workforce that is front line varies from force to force: from approximately 62% to 75%. However, interpretation of this variation needs to be approached with caution, as it could be due to limitations in the data.

²⁶ NB: The figures do not add to 100% due to rounding.

Data limitations

Unlike most other forms of employment, police officers are never totally off duty as they are obliged to tackle any criminal activity that they see in their daily life regardless of whether or not they are on duty.

Comparisons of this front line figure over time or between forces need to be interpreted carefully:

- We have already discussed (see p.13 above) that there is some uncertainty over the boundary between middle office and specialist categories, which has been formed by splitting categories of ADR data. For example, the roles in CID have been split 70% specialist and 30% middle office. Although we believe these are reasonable judgements to make at the national level, they may not be valid for individual forces – especially when applied to just police officers and PCSOs (i.e. when staff are excluded).
- The proportion of officers, PCSOs and staff on the front line does not provide an indication of the quality of the service.
- These figures only provide a proportion of the roles that are on the front line. They do not make any allowance for duties that make take the individuals in these roles away from the front line (such as training, sickness or form filling).
- Forces that outsource some of their support functions have fewer people in the back and middle office, and as a consequence they will appear to have a larger front line.

WHERE ARE THE POLICE? OFFICER AND PCSO AVAILABILITY

Officer and PCSO availability: the national picture

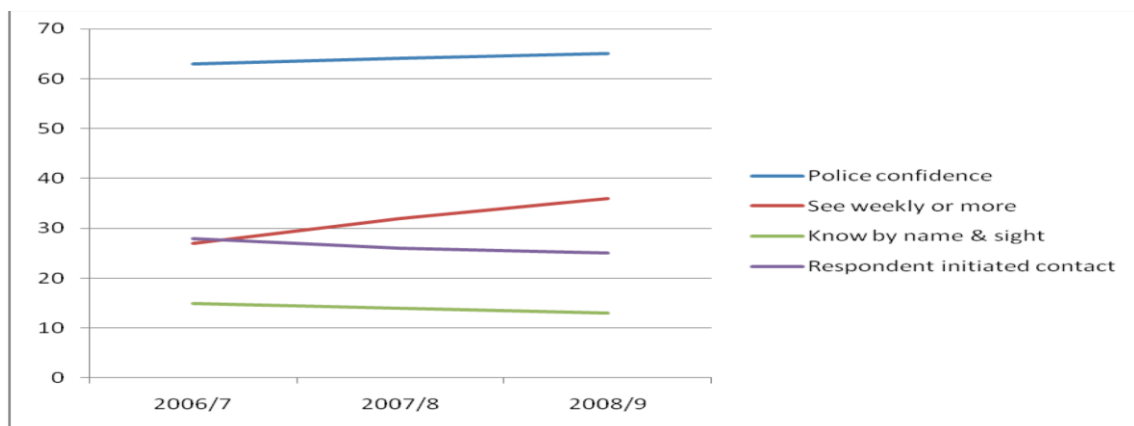
Introduction

Previous research²⁷ indicates that one of the most successful ways of increasing perceived police effectiveness is by improving the visibility of (and so familiarity with) the police through foot patrols and problem-solving in with the community.

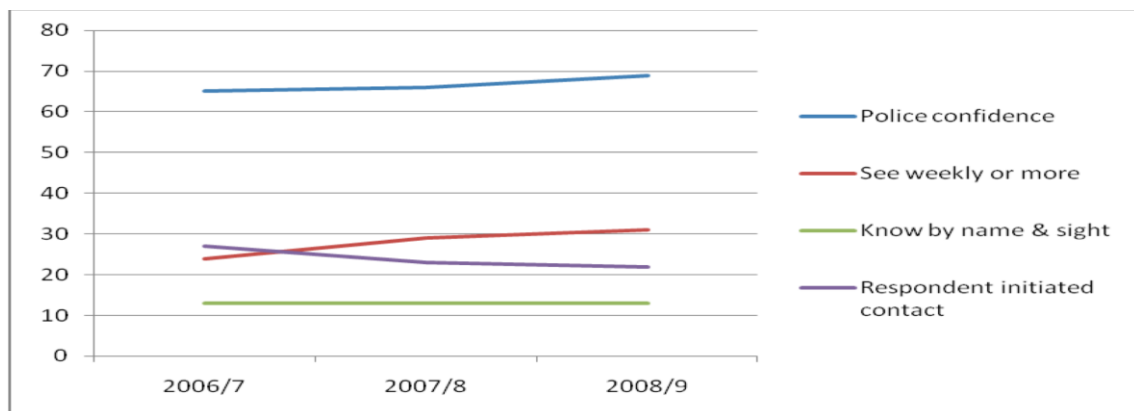
Analysis of the British Crime Survey conducted for this report in March 2011 by the Universities' Police Science Institute at Cardiff indicates that there is a relationship between police visibility and confidence, that visibility is more important than familiarity, and that the percentage of people contacting the police has gone down slightly, as the following graphs show.

% of the public who 1. have confidence in their local police; 2. see the police at least every week (visibility); 3. know any police officers or PCSOs (familiarity); and 4. have contacted the police in the last 12 months (contact)

Men:



Women:



²⁷ Dalglish and Myhill (2004), *Reassuring the Public a Review of International Policing Interventions*. Home Office RDS; Dalglish and Myhill (2006), *Implementation of the National Reassurance Policing Programme*. Home Office RDS.

For both men and women, public confidence in local police is at a much higher baseline level than indicators of visibility, familiarity and contact. Over the three-year period, the percentage of both men and women who have seen the police at least every week (i.e. the visibility indicator) has risen (more markedly for men). In contrast, the percentage who have initiated contact with the police has gone down slightly, which may be attributable to reductions in crime.

Given this link between public confidence in the police and police visibility, we have therefore collected more information from police forces about the proportion of their officers who are visible and available to the public.

Defining ‘visibility’ and ‘availability’

Visible: staff who wear uniform and mainly work in public.

Available: police officers and PCSOs who are actually ready for duty (i.e. deployable in their substantive role as opposed to being on a training course, attending court, off shift, on leave or sick, etc).

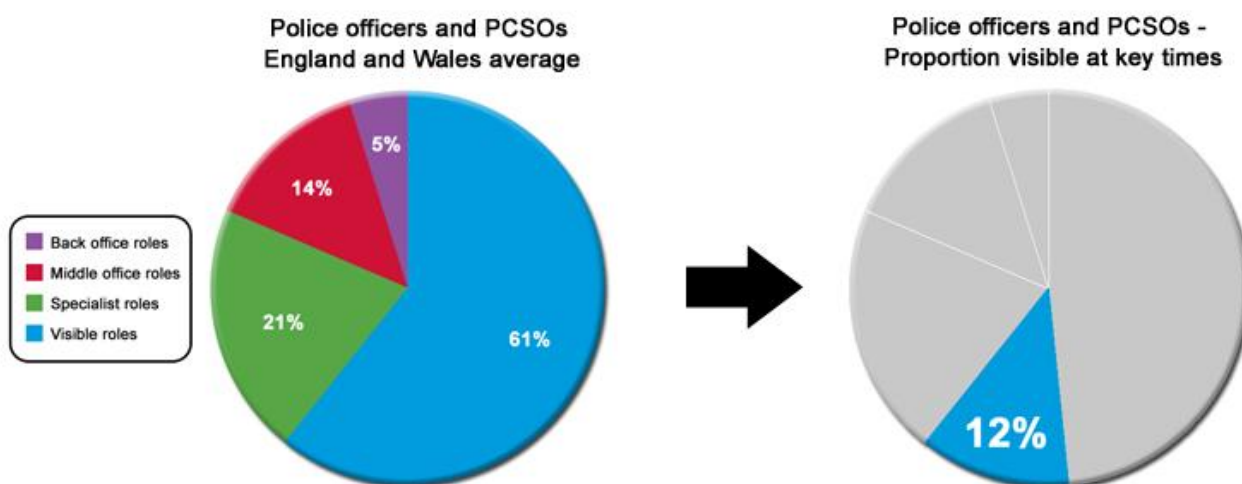
The distinction is that staff may be allocated to a visible role (e.g. as a response officer) but may not be readily available. The public are therefore likely to ‘see’ those who are both in visible roles and available to the public.

The proportion of officers and PCSOs visible and available

The Annual Data Return from forces does not contain information on the proportion of officers and PCSOs who are available to the public. HMIC therefore conducted its own survey of forces, taking a sample in December 2010 at three key times of the week: Monday morning at 09:00am, Wednesday evening at 07:00pm and Friday night / Saturday morning at 00:30am. The results of this survey indicated that, on average across England and Wales, 12% of officers and PCSOs were visible and available at key times. Further information on the methodology used is provided at Annex C.

The chart on the next page shows the average proportion of officers (excludes police staff) and PCSOs across England and Wales in each category of the workforce map.

National distribution of police officers and PCSOs only²⁸



The majority of officers and PCSOs in visible roles who are not available will be off shift. Some will be appearing in court (to give evidence or act as court liaison officers), others will be on holiday and a few will be off sick.

These charts also show that 19% of police officers and PCSOs are in the middle and back offices combined. It is to be expected that there will be some police officers in these categories, as they include roles such as managing and processing intelligence, criminal justice, specialist investigative support functions and crime management. They will also be working in roles that benefit from operational insight, such as business transformation projects. Equally, the back office category includes training roles: and forces rely on the brightest and the best from the front line being able to pass on their skills and knowledge. Nevertheless, authorities and forces, taking account of their local circumstances, would benefit from assuring themselves of the need for police officer skills in these two categories.

Comparison with July 2010 availability figures

In July 2010, HMIC published a figure for the proportion of officers and PCSOs who were visible and available to the public which was derived from a sample of four forces. This sample counted response, neighbourhood teams and community safety teams as visible.

As a result of preparing the workforce map (in consultation with police representatives), we have added to the visible category officers on traffic duties, dog handlers, mounted officers and those who carry firearms. This means that the July 2010 figures are not directly comparable with those shown in the charts above. Therefore HMIC also compiled separate figures for these four forces

²⁸ For national distribution of total workforce (ie including police staff), see page 20.

that could be used on a comparable basis; and these indicate that the average figure for officers and PCSOs visible and available has changed from 11% to 12% over this time period. HMIC does not consider this change to be significant.

The 24/7 service: police efficiency and shift patterns

Any critical service that has to provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week – whether health service intensive care units or police emergency response – requires between five and six individuals to keep one in the field at any time. The reason for this is that four officers working 40 hours a week provide 160 hours of cover. But there are 168 hours in a week and, over the course of a year, officers will take annual leave, have rest days, appear in court and attend training, and some will be off sick. Taking these factors into account, HMIC estimate that between five and six officers are needed in order to provide one on duty 24/7.

Our survey indicates that police are using, on average, five²⁹ officers and PCSOs to provide one on duty at key times. This suggests that, overall, the police are operating at the upper end of the efficiency range.

All officers are contracted to work the same number of hours over the year. However, some forces operate 8-hour shifts, some 10-hour and others 12-hour. Different shift patterns enable forces to alter the proportion of officers available at any one time; but longer shifts mean that officers accrue their contracted hours in a smaller number of days. Our survey indicates that the number of days that an officer is at work varies between 161 and 228.

	Days at work	Days away
Highest	228	137
Lowest	161	204

Longer shifts:

- Reduce operational flexibility (in terms of the skills that can be drawn upon) and increase training costs.
- Increase the need for overtime.
- Make it harder for the public to contact individual officers.

A growing number of authorities and forces are showing evidence of considering the efficiency and effectiveness of shift systems for both police and staff. We encourage all to do this.

²⁹ Five officers is calculated as 61% (see chart on page 25).

Data limitations

Our December 2010 survey provides a snapshot of police availability in the 43 forces in England and Wales at three different times of day and week. As with any snapshot survey it is always possible that the data for a particular force was influenced by an unusual circumstance or event. We asked forces if this was the case in their area, and where it was we have made corrections in order to ensure data is comparable.

The measure of availability we have used counts those individuals that were on duty. We have not made any deductions for periods when these officers were not on patrol because, for example, they spent a proportion of their time in the police station rather than on the streets.

Officer and PCSO availability: the local picture

Introduction

In the previous chapter we looked at the proportion of officers and PCSOs who are visible and available to the public at key times across England and Wales. In this chapter we look at how this proportion varies from force to force.

Local variations in availability

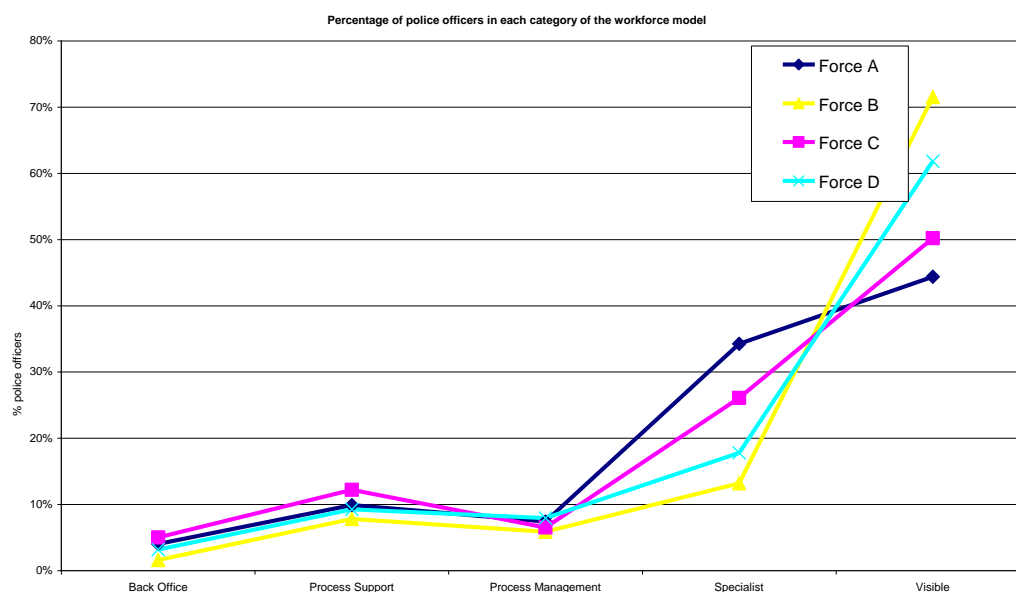
The proportion of officers and PCSOs available to the public depends upon:

- The decisions forces make over the proportion of officers and PCSOs allocated to visible roles (compared with those in specialist, middle office and back office roles).
- Their ability to convert officers in visible roles into officers who are available to the public.
- The extent to which officers visible and available match demand from the public.

The first two points are discussed in more detail below; the third (on the match with demand) is the topic of the next section.

1. Force decisions over the proportion of officers and PCSOs allocated to visible roles

Our analysis indicates a wide variation between forces in the proportion of officers and PCSOs in visible roles: from 51% to 75%.³⁰ The chart below provides an indication of the impact of different decisions in different forces.



³⁰ Although, as we have discussed previously, some of this variation may be due to data limitations: see pp. 21 and 27.

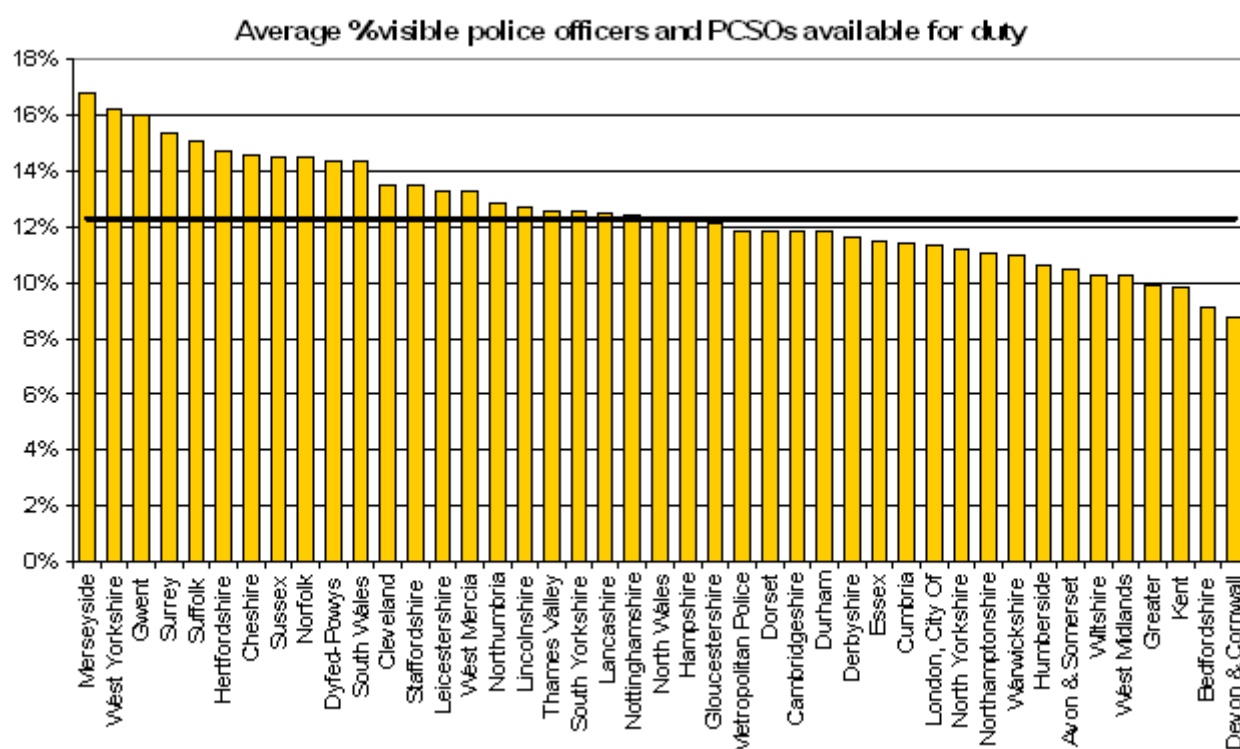
This chart shows the proportion of officers and PCSOs in different functions in four forces. It illustrates that:

- The variation between officers and PCSOs allocated to back office and the two middle office sub-categories (process support and process management) is relatively small compared to specialist and visible roles.
- The proportion of officers and PCSOs allocated to visible roles is principally determined by the proportion of officers allocated to specialist roles (when one is high the other is low, and vice versa).³¹

Forces and authorities should look at how they allocate officers and PCSOs in their force. There may be good reasons for variations (for instance, because of different operating environments): but the questions do need to be asked.

2. Converting officers in visible roles into officers available for the public

As set out earlier in this report, our survey of forces at three key times of day suggested that, on average, the proportion of officers and PCSOs visible and available to the public was 12%. However, this average figure hides significant variation between forces, as the chart below shows.



This chart shows that the proportion of officers and PCSOs who are visible and available ranges from 9% to 17%.

³¹ In this chart we have used continuous lines to indicate how a low proportion in one category relates to a high proportion in another category. These continuous lines are not intended to indicate the presence of a continuous data set.

Police efficiency in converting officers and PCSOs in visible roles into officers available at key times is determined by:

- The shift patterns used – although this does not affect the average level of availability, it affects availability at key times.
- The level of sickness absence.
- The amount of time spent attending court hearings and training.

Our analysis suggests that shift patterns have the largest influence on a force's ability to convert officers in visible roles into officers available for the public at key times.

Looking at those forces that have the highest levels of officers and PCSOs visible and available, we found that they have the following factors in common:

- Professionally trained resource managers.
- Central co-ordination and oversight of working patterns.
- Senior management ownership and performance data to track progress.

In this chapter we have looked at local variations in availability. We have found these to be considerable, which indicates room for improvement. It should be noted that we have **not** looked at:

- The link between the size of the workforce and other policing outcomes for example reductions in crime, reductions in ASB or the delivery of justice.
- The link between what the workforce does and the outcomes achieved: HMIC has published some data on this in its Value for Money profiles (available from www.hmic.gov.uk).

INPUTS AND OUTPUTS: MATCHING POLICE RESOURCE TO POLICE DEMAND

What are the demands on the police?

Snapshot surveys

In order to illustrate the demands on the police, HMIC conducted case studies in three forces over a 24 hour period. The results are set out below.

Findings

These snapshots illustrate the diverse nature of the demand on the police. The public expect that the police will:

- Prevent bad behaviour on the street – whether nuisance, anti-social behaviour (ASB) or crime.
- Protect people and property.
- Impose order and control.
- Stop crime and ASB in progress.
- Catch perpetrators and bring them to justice.

The snapshots also illustrate:

- The bespoke nature of the response needed in each case. In some cases an enquiry from the public was dealt with quickly over the phone, while in other cases considerable resources had to be deployed.
- How different elements of the workforce are brought into play.
- That the number of calls from the public is not necessarily a good indicator of workload, because:
 - Some calls require considerably more resource than others: for instance, the call that came in to report blood in a stairwell in Norwich City Centre (see p.34) took about 2.5 hours to resolve, even though it turned out that no crime had been committed; while what seemed to be a simple shoplifting incident in Manchester Metropolitan Division (see p.33) actually took about 14 hours.
 - The police undertake a good deal of planned preventative work that is not generated from public phone calls.

It should be noted that the following graphics do not represent all the work taking place in these three districts.

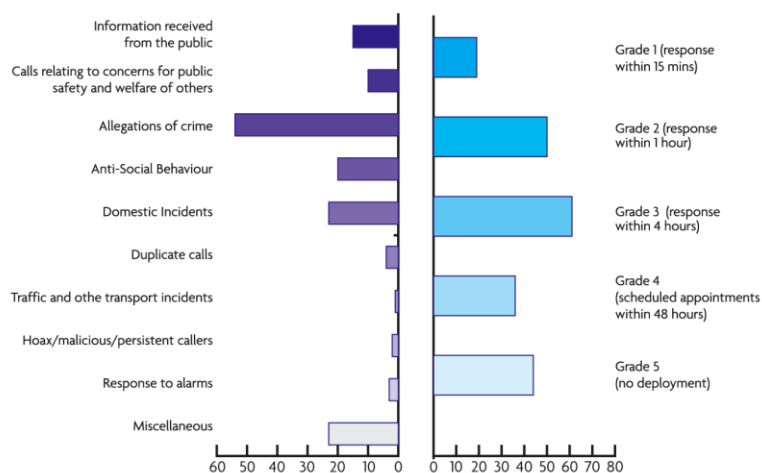
24 hour snapshot of demand:

Manchester Metropolitan Division, Greater Manchester Police

In order to illustrate the demands on the police, HMIC conducted case studies in three forces over a 24-hour period. These are the results for Manchester Metropolitan Division.



Calls from public (by type) 1-5 grade deployment



345

public enquiries received at Longsight, Greenhayes and Gorton police station front counters

23

crimes committed, and 14 passed on for further investigation

21

crime scenes investigated to gather fingerprints and other forensic evidence

Child protection



A woman is arrested for shoplifting from a supermarket, and taken to the police station. Officers searching her house found her 3-year-old child (who is on the Child Protection Register) left alone. Forensics examined/photographed the house and the child is taken into police protection. A meeting with social services takes place; as a result, a Police Protection Order is issued and the child is placed with a relative. The mother is charged with neglect, shoplifting and possession of cannabis.

3 police officers + 1 scene of crime officer

Operation Rollo



Early morning arrest phase following a 6-month covert operation against 45 prolific suspects involved in drug-dealing and handling stolen goods in the division. As a result, 17 suspects were arrested and stolen property, electrical goods and Class A drugs were seized. 200 community members (including local politicians and school children) were invited to witness the Operation, and 17,000 emails about Operation Rollo were sent to community contacts.

241 police officers (49 from the Division, the rest from force-wide resources)

Cannabis factory



7 officers attended premises following information that people were trying to break into the property. On arrival, suspects had fled the scene – but a cannabis factory was discovered. 2 officers remained to take witness statements, make house-to-house enquiries, interview the landlord and retrieve and dispose of the cannabis plants. Scene of crime officer photographed the scene and collected evidence. Crime report filed and a neighbourhood officer assigned to identify and trace any suspects.

7 police officers + 1 scene of crime officer + 1 neighbourhood officer

What else happened today...

39 arrests were made

204 Customer Service Desk calls out, and 53 calls received

10 anti-burglary hotspot patrols took place

42 cold calls and curfew checks were made on known offenders

Reactive policing work | Planned prevention work

8 crime operations were run

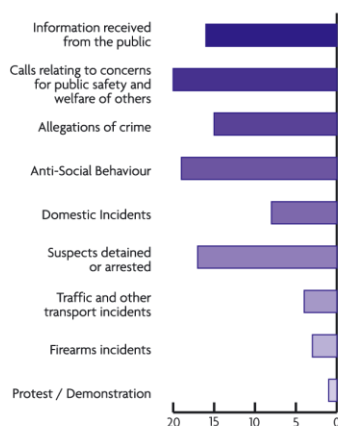
7 officers attended court (to give evidence and obtain warrants)

24 hour snapshot of demand: Norwich City Centre District Unit, Norfolk Constabulary

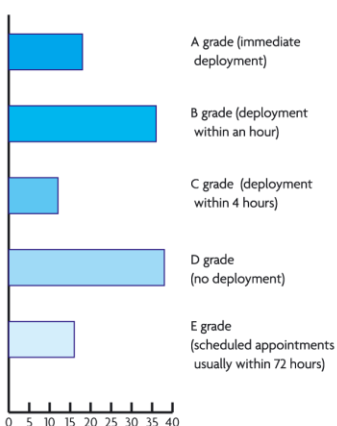
In order to illustrate the demands on the police, HMIC conducted case studies in three forces over a 24-hour period. These are the results for Norwich City Centre District Unit.



Calls from public (by type)



A-E grade deployment



235

public enquiries received at the public enquiry office of Bethel Street Police Station, Norwich

39

reported crimes investigated

7

Crime scenes investigated to gather fingerprints and other forensic evidence

Blood on a stairwell



Police called to block of flat where a trail of blood leads to a flat door. Officers force door; ambulance on standby and officers phone local hospital admissions; officers establish a crime scene; search conducted of

block; sergeant identifies workplace of flat owner and send officer; CID briefed by phone. Flat owner at work with cut hand, says he hit own car window after fight with girlfriend. Girlfriend visited and checked to ensure safety.

4 police officers + 1 member of police staff

Shoplifter



Safer Neighbourhood Officers advised of woman detained by store detectives. PC arrives and makes arrest. Suspect taken to police station: she is searched, and DNA, fingerprints and photographs are taken. Officers record their evidence.

PC requests authority to search house for other stolen goods; Inspector grants this. Suspect interviewed by Custody Investigation Team; charged and kept in custody to appear in court the next day.

5 police officers + 2 members of police staff

Fight outside a bar



Special Constable on patrol sees the fight; makes an arrest, three colleagues arrive to help and take witness statements. Suspect taken to police station: he is searched, and DNA, fingerprints and photographs are taken. Held overnight as too drunk to be interviewed. Officer records his evidence. Suspect interviewed, admits his offence and receives a formal recorded warning.

7 police officers + 1 member of police staff (+ 2 paramedics)

What else happened today...

Reactive policing work | Planned prevention work

17 arrests were made

13 home visits to people identified as potential risk offenders

6 Safer Neighbourhood Team patrols took place

2 officers attended court to give evidence

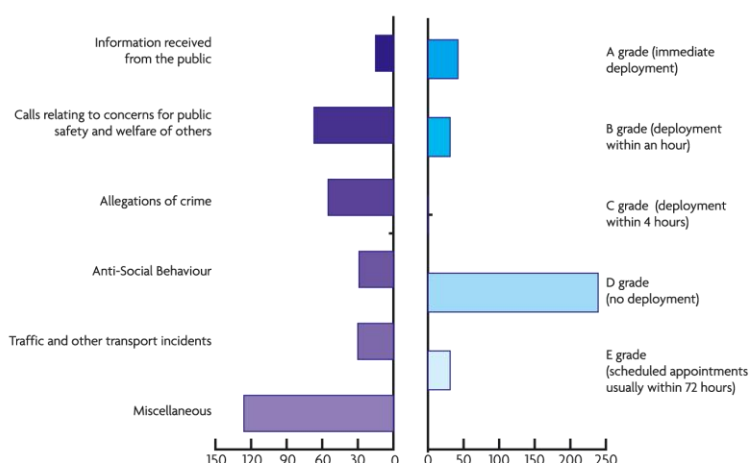
12 special constables patrolled the city centre



24 hour snapshot of demand: Wandsworth Borough Division, Metropolitan Police Service

In order to illustrate the demands on the police, HMIC conducted case studies in three forces over a 24-hour period. These are the results for Wandsworth Borough Division.

Calls from public (by type) **A-E grade deployment**



178
public enquiries received at police station front offices

25
arrests made

96
crimes recorded

House fire



A house fire is reported. 2 officers deal with closing the road off and managing the scene, while 4 officers search the area for the house owner. He is found nearby, very drunk, and arrested for being drunk and disorderly. The custody sergeant and gaoler book him in to custody for the night.

6 police officers + 1 custody sergeant and gaoler (and 2 London Ambulance Service units + 2 London Fire Brigade Units)

HGV crash



An HGV (heavy goods vehicle) crashes into a railway bridge in Tooting. 2 4x4 + 2 solo traffic vehicles attend and cordon off the area. 2 traffic officers, British Transport Police Officers, 2 integrated borough officers and 2 London Transport double-crewed cars investigate and make the route safe for vehicles to pass.

17 police officers

Vehicle hijacking



A car jacking is reported. 2 officers make contact with the victim and carry out initial investigations. 4 officers search the area for the stolen vehicle and the suspects. They locate the tracking device discarded from the stolen vehicle, and prepare it for forensic examination. The victim is returned to his place of work, and information about the stolen vehicle is circulated. A crime report is filed for further investigation by the CID Priority Crime Unit.

4 police officers

What else happened today...

Reactive policing work | Planned prevention work

21 child protection contacts were made

18 road traffic collisions were attended

25 prisoners were detained in Wandsworth and Battersea Police Stations

12 officers attended court (9 to give evidence and 3 as court liaison officers)

10 anti-burglary hotspot patrols took place

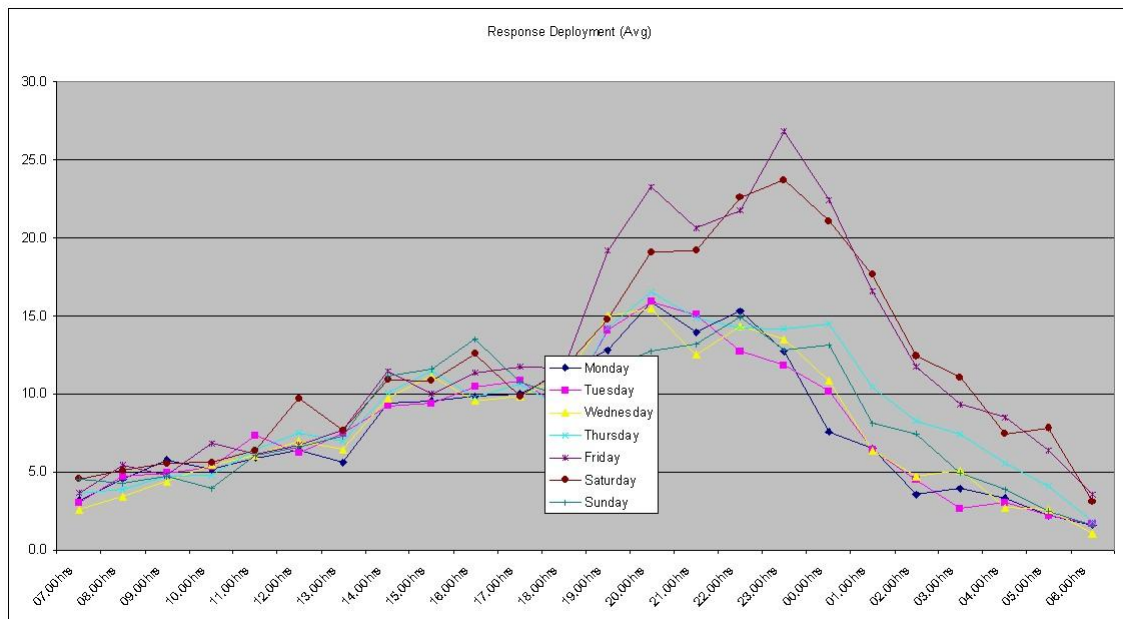
16 crime scenes were investigated

Ten dedicated schools constables worked with **17** secondary schools, sixth form colleges, independent and special schools

Officers met with **5** repeat domestic violence victims

Is officer availability matched to demand?

The chart below shows how one aspect of demand – emergency call volumes – varies over time of day for different days of the week.³²



This indicates that the volume of calls increases as the evening progresses, reaching a peak between 9:00pm and midnight.

HMIC collected data on officers visible and available at three times. The data shows that, on average across England and Wales:

- 16% were visible and available on a Monday morning at 09:00am.
- 11% were visible and available on a Wednesday evening at 7:00pm.
- 9% were visible and available on a Friday night / Saturday morning at 00:03am.

Taken together with the chart above, these data indicate that the proportion of officers visible and available is not matched to the incoming calls from the public. The case studies indicate this is a consequence of much of the workforce being deployed on preventative work during the day. In order to increase public perception of police visibility, forces would need to think about matching deployment of their workforce with those times of the day and week when the greatest proportion of the public are likely to see them. These issues are worthy of careful consideration locally.

³² Example kindly provided by Merseyside Police and shows calls requiring an immediate response plus calls requiring a response within 1hr, per hour and averaged over a year.

Conclusion

HMIC was asked to find common ground for a definition of the front line in policing. We propose a working definition that comprises those who are in contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law.

We have been able to find a measure of agreement on which roles are front line. There is not, however, complete consensus. This is unsurprising, given that there has been no standard operating model showing where police resources are, nor a debate as to how best they should be arranged to serve the public. We have therefore now identified police roles and categorised them as visible, specialist, middle office or back office, allowing the issue to be debated locally, and on a more informed basis.

Based on our consultation work, there is a fair degree of agreement that visible and specialist members of the police workforce (61% of the total police workforce) are front line, and that those in back office roles are not. But there is less certainty about where middle office roles fit (ie those in which operational and support functions overlap).

Taking into account all the elements we examined, we conclude that around two-thirds of the workforce is on the front line. This provides an indication of the resources deployed for the public – but not about the quality of the service provided, or how it might be transformed in the future.

Our snapshot surveys show that there is a demand from the public to respond to or proactively prevent a diverse range of incidents. Meeting this demand necessarily requires a wide range of expertise, which is provided by those in specialist policing roles.

Our analysis found a significant degree of variation between forces in the proportion of their workforce that was visible and available to the public at key times. This indicates that there is real scope for some forces to improve the efficiency with which they make officers available to the public at times when demand is highest.

Annex A: Methodology – Police Roles

1. Summary

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and HMIC worked together to produce a model mapping out the police workforce in its entirety on one page. The model has two purposes; it provides:

- a new lens through which efficiency becomes more transparent for the service.
- a simple way to explain the breadth of policing to the public

2. Process

An ACPO technical group led by Chief Superintendent Rob Price met during December 2010 and January 2011. The group undertook a four stage process:

- Reviewed the concept and agreed sub-headings
- Developed principles for allocating functions to the sub-headings
- Allocated functions
- Applied professional judgement to calculate the percentage splits of activities in the 'middle office'.

Functions were separated into Public Facing and Supporting Processes. Below this, six sub-headings were used to group activities:

Sub Heading		Decision Criteria
Visible		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uniform• General (continuous) patrol• Seen daily by the public (role involves engagement)
Specialist		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accredited specialist skills• Higher complexity• Work tends to be pre-planned
Middle Office	Process Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set direction• Prioritise tasks• Analyse information• Enable delivery
	Process Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Administration• Standardised processes
Back Office		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corporate support functions• Others

3. Notes

- The 'Resource Use' model is based on commercial sector thinking (direct/indirect principles). It also utilises research undertaken by The Work Foundation in 2010.³³
- The middle office is an artificial construct – it provides a new way to identify/disentangle transactional from operational resources.
- In order to minimise bureaucracy, Annual Data Return (ADR) classification definitions have been used to allocate which functions come under each heading.
- The technical group used professional judgement to calculate the percentage splits of activities that have been judged to fit into the 'middle office' for the generic model. The true percentage will vary from force to force.
- The model can be populated with ADR data to show force/authority allocation choices.

TECHNICAL GROUP MEMBERS

The people listed below kindly gave up their time to assist with the development of the model:

Chief Supt Carl O'Malley (Essex)	Chief Supt Guy Darby (HMIC)
Chief Ins Nicholas Bailey (Cheshire)	Mr Keith Striblehill (NPIA)
Chris Haseldene (Devon & Cornwall)	Dave Hays (NPIA)
Chief Supt Paul Brandon (Kent)	Ms Laura Welsh (NPIA)
Michelle Grondona-Kempson (Surrey)	
Peter Langmeade-Jones (ACPO)	
Mr Glen Martin (Cheshire)	
Ms Cathy Butterworth (GMP)	
Chief Supt Dave Leeney (Surrey)	
Ms Bethan Page-Jones (NPIA)	
Chief Supt Rob Price (ACPO Team Lead)	

³³ *Public Perceptions of Policing Roles – The Work Foundation October 2010*

Annex B: Methodology – Public Survey

HMIC Front line Policing Survey, February 2011 Weighted and Coded Topline Results – FINAL 15/02/11

- This document shows final weighted and coded topline results and is based on face-to-face interviews with 1,007 adults aged 15+.
- Fieldwork took place across England and Wales between 4th and 10th February 2011. Interviews were conducted in-home using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI).
- The data has been weighted by age, gender, ethnicity, social class, tenure, working status and region to reflect the population profile.
- Demographic questions are shown at the end of the topline.
- Where results do not sum to 100, this may be due to multiple responses, computer rounding or the exclusion of don't know/not stated.
- Results are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated.
- An asterisk (*) represents a value of less than one half or one percent, but not zero.

We are going to describe to you a number of roles carried out by the police. For each one, we would like you to tell us whether or not you consider the role to be a front line policing role.

We are not going to give you any definitions of 'front line', and there is no right or wrong answer.

Q1. Would you describe the following as front line roles?

	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
The neighbourhood officer who patrols your local high street	72	22	6
The finance director who decides a police force's policy on claiming overtime	12	79	10
The police officer who comes to the scene of a serious road traffic accident	90	7	3

Q2. Now, imagine you come home and find that you've been burgled. Would you describe the following as front line roles?

	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
The person who takes the call when you dial 999	65	31	4
The officer who arrives at your house following your call	88	9	3
The officer who comes to your house the next day to take your statement	64	32	4
The person who files your statement in the police station	27	69	4
The person who comes to your house the next day to take fingerprints	64	31	5
The person who analyses data from your case together with other burglaries in the area to identify trends	40	53	7
The detective who identifies and interviews suspects	83	13	4

Q3. Imagine now that the police catch and arrest the person who burgled your house. Would you describe the following as front line roles?

	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
The sergeant in charge of the cell block at the police station where the burglar is held	53	42	5
The person who rings to let you know that someone has been charged	32	62	5
The senior officer who oversees the case as a whole, and decides who should be working on it, and for how long	56	39	5

- Q4. Given the spending cuts affecting all public services, police forces will have to make decisions around how to make cost savings.

With this in mind, how important do you think it is for the police to retain current numbers of front line police officers?

Essential	% 52
Very important	37
Fairly important	7
Not very important	1
Don't know	2
Essential/very/fairly important (NET)	96%
Very/fairly important (NET)	44%

- Q5. Thinking about the rest of the work a police force does which is not front line, which words would you use to describe this?

<i>NB. Mentions above 5% only</i>	%
Admin/paperwork/clerical/ office based/back office/finance	27
Behind the scenes/back up work/support service/not on front line	13
Other neutral	8
Important/equally important work	6
Necessary/vital/essential work	5
Very important work	5
None/no answer	6
Don't know	20
Neutral mentions (NET)	52
Positive mentions (NET)	20
Negative mentions (NET)	10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender

	%
Male	50
Female	50

Age

	%
15-24	15
25-34	16
35-44	18
45-54	15
55+	36

Daily newspaper readership

	%
Broadsheet	16
Mid market	12
Tabloid	17

Ethnicity

	%
White	90
Non white	9

Social grade

	%
ABC1	56
C2DE	44

Working status

	%
Working: Full time	44
Working: Part time	11
Not working	46

Access to internet

	%
Home	78
Work	26
Total	80
No access	20

Government Office Region

	%
East Midlands	7
Eastern	11
London	14
North East	6
North West	13
South East	15
South West	9
Wales	6
West Midlands	11
Yorks and Humber	7

Annex C: Methodology – Availability

Data on the location of police resources can be difficult to obtain, as functions change rapidly and resources are moved to meet new threats and risks.

The purpose of this survey was not to undertake a forensic review but to obtain a snapshot of actual 'availability'.

Definitions

1. Visible – refers to staff who wear uniform and mainly work in public.

This group comprises police officers and PCSOs in the following roles:

- Response teams
- Neighbourhood and Community Safety teams
- Traffic Officers
- Probationers
- Firearms Officers
- Dog Handlers
- Mounted Officers

2. Available – means police officers and PCSOs who are actually ready for duty (i.e. deployable in their substantive role as opposed to on a training course or attending court).

Data Collection

Forces were asked to complete a questionnaire reporting the number of police officers, PCSOs and police staff who were available for duty at three key times:

Monday 09:00 – post weekend crime reporting

Wednesday 19:00 – mid week anti-social behaviour

Saturday 00:30 – Friday night time economy

Quality Assurance Process

1. Data Collection:

- The data return was completed by forces themselves
- Returns were signed off by a force chief officer

2. Receipt of Data by HMIC Analytical Team:

- Returns were forwarded to HMIC analytical team.
- ADR numbers (used as the base) were independently checked on the spreadsheet.
- The availability numbers for Visible Police (Response, Neighbourhoods/Community Safety, Firearms, Traffic, Dogs, Mounted and Probationers) were checked on the spreadsheet and a log made of authorising chief officer for each force.
- Outliers for each of the three sample times were identified, queried and response recorded (whether changed or not + who spoken to).

3. Local Review:

- The HMIC Lead Staff Officer for each force was asked to review the visible/available results and to check with the force (a) whether the numbers were accurate and (b) there was any reason the period chosen was untypical

4. Force Visits:

- Eight forces were visited (four from each end of the results table) to discuss issues arising from availability snapshot and identify good practise