

# Best Value Review of Police Training

Force: Dorset

Date of Inspection: 22–23 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	700,000	
Number of police officers	1437	
Number of police staff	812	
Number of special constables	209	
Budget for training for the financial year:	Financial Value	Percentage of Overall Force budget
2003/04	not asked	3.3%
2004/05	£3,126,783	3.08%

## Performance

A baseline assessment of the Force was undertaken between September and December 2004.

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

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/dorsbaseline0604.pdf>

Further details of the Force performance can be found at [www.dorset.police.uk](http://www.dorset.police.uk)

For details of the rationale and methodology for the Best Value Reviews and inspection of police training please visit <http://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. There is more detail within the evaluation aspect of the document than necessary, which tends to make it more tactical than strategic.
QUALITY OF COSTED TRAINING PLAN	The majority of Force training is contained within the plan and the omissions have been identified with a view to inclusion in next years' plan.
MONITORING COSTED TRAINING PLAN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR	Variation between actual and planned delivery of training is undertaken by the Organisational Development Unit (ODU). The Head of ODU has delegated authority to make minor variations to delivery plans and major exceptions are reported to the Force Training Board quarterly.
TRAINING NOT INCLUDED IN THE COSTED TRAINING PLAN	HM Inspector found the costed training plan represented a high percentage of training to be delivered, but was concerned to find that some specialist training (especially crime training) and some aspects of divisional training are excluded from the CTP. This is due in part to the absence of a crime training manager and a robust reporting and planning protocol. HM Inspector acknowledges that a business case for the crime training manager is being made to the Police Authority.

Area Examined	Findings
<b>CLIENT/CONTRACTOR ARRANGEMENTS</b>	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to find an effective client/contractor structure in place that supports the clear view of the Force of the need for a central client role to coordinate the training requirement. HM Inspector was concerned that some key crime training being progressed by the Crime Standards Board is not being subject to this coordination process. However, it is recognised that there are plans in place to ensure the crime prioritisation process connects with the Force prioritisation process.</p> <p>A lack of clarity of the structure was expressed by some staff, but HM Inspector acknowledges the review of roles and responsibilities that is taking place to enhance the client/contractor structure.</p> <p>The PA is not represented on the TUG or the Training Board, but it is acknowledged that there are plans to do so.</p>
<b>MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING</b>	<p>The Head of Organisational Development Unit (ODU), a superintendent, has responsibility for the Force's learning and development. There are plans to extend the responsibility of the post to being the Head of Profession for all training but at the time of inspection operational training operated independently of the central training function.</p> <p>A difference in shift patterns between divisions means that the western BCU have no training day within their cycle whilst the other BCUs do. HM Inspector recognises a Force-wide review is currently underway.</p> <p>HM Inspector was pleased to see that the probationer training officers also give about 20% of their time to delivering divisional training, under the management of the Head of Training.</p>
<b>IMPLEMENTATION OF:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing Learning</li> <li>• Training Matters</li> <li>• Diversity Matters</li> <li>• Foundations for Change</li> </ul>	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to see many of the aspects of <i>Managing Learning</i> have been implemented in previous training actions. The relevant <i>Training Matters</i> recommendations have been signed off by the Force. <i>Diversity Matters</i> and <i>FfC</i> each have action plans/matrices, which are being implemented. The <i>Diversity Matters</i> matrix is updated every three months by the Diversity Training Board.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<b>CURRENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN</b>	<p>The BVR improvement plan 2003 is mostly completed but there is no other all encompassing IP for the training function that reflects current or future development. Several action plans are in place in the Force that affects the Training Department, including liP and Centrex QA Approval. Amalgamation into one IP would improve communication, ease monitoring and provide consistency.</p>
<b>MONITORING THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN</b>	<p>The Continuous Improvement Board, ACPO and Police Authority routinely monitor the BVR IP by exception reporting. This is conducted every three to four months.</p>
<b>QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES</b>	<p>The Force has recently achieved Centrex QA Approval and there are good associated policies in place for the Force training function. These processes are embryonic in nature and are yet to be tested and applied to all training.</p> <p>There is a lack of awareness of the QA process among some training staff.</p>
<b>EVALUATION OF TRAINING</b>	<p>There is a new evaluator in post and a strategy to support the evaluation process. However, the evaluation strategy is not being implemented across all training.</p> <p>There is consistent Level 1 activity by means of reaction sheets, although there is no audit trail available to evidence this.</p> <p>Level 2 evaluations are not being consistently conducted or documented. Level 3 evaluations are tasked by the Training Board in accordance with Force priorities. There is one level 4 evaluation taking place within the diversity domain.</p> <p>HM Inspector acknowledges that at the time of inspection the Force was adopting 'easiquet' software to assist the capture of evaluation data.</p>
<b>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TRAINING</b>	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to see that a Black and Ethnic Minority Advisory Panel (BEMAP) is being developed that will help to improve community involvement and consultation in training.</p> <p>There are specific examples of liaison taking place with community groups through probationer training events. Some CID training involves a community project to further its learning objectives. Diversity training is well advanced within the Force, and all training has the 'golden thread' of diversity within them.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
COLLABORATION – EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	There are many good collaborative events associated with the Force, including joint investigation with social services, Princes Trust, CPS, and Canterbury College Kent: – Certificate in Education, Diversity Theatre companies and collaboration to produce NVQ opportunities with Bournemouth, Poole and Weymouth Colleges.
NOTEWORTHY PRACTICE	HM Inspector was impressed by the developing ‘Modern Apprenticeships’ programmes in two areas, Administration and Vehicle Technician, which were also highly regarded by the Adult Learning Inspector.
COLLABORATION – OTHER POLICE ORGANISATIONS	There are many examples of collaboration, including Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, Avon and Somerset, Hampshire, Metropolitan Police Service (Commissioners Leadership Program.) Skills for Justice (PSSO), Critical and Major Incident Management.
ADOPTION OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE	There is little knowledge of <i>Models for Learning and Development</i> and little evidence of implementation. There are some aspirational TNA and design ideas to separate out these aspects from the training delivery role, but the potential to achieve this is limited because of resourcing issues.
MAIN AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FORCE	<p>To improve community involvement.</p> <p>To develop e-learning as an alternative to classroom based training.</p> <p>NVQ role-out across all training.</p> <p>Define the IPLDP framework.</p> <p>Apply QA to all training in Force.</p> <p>Review resources (staff and accommodation) for training.</p> <p>To secure better guidance regarding funding priorities.</p>
APPLICATION OF THE 4Cs SINCE THE REVIEW	Both the IIP award and Centrex QA Approval demonstrate the Force has continued to challenge its business methods against national standards. HM Inspector would encourage greater use of NCM management information to compare their training function with regional partners.

Area Examined	Findings
<b>INTEGRATION OF THE INTEGRATED COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK</b>	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to see the Force has fully implemented the national PDR and all police officers have an ICF role profile. Police staff will soon be in the same position.</p> <p>All recruitment, internal selection, promotion and HR processes utilise competency-based selection against the ICF. Some elements of training have been mapped across to NOS and new training incorporates NOS as the baseline for design.</p>
<b>MONITORING PROCESS AND COMPLETION OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS FOR POLICE OFFICERS AND POLICE STAFF</b>	<p>The PPP (PDR) system is centrally monitored by the ODU. In addition each department and division has local responsibility for monitoring completion and quality. Reviews all take place between March and May. Compliance rates are high.</p>
<b>BUSINESS PLANNING FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING</b>	<p>The business planning cycle for training complies with HOC 53/2003, has clear timelines and integrates with the corporate planning cycle. Costs for new training have been developed from zero based costing and have informed budget setting, but HM Inspector would encourage the Force to apply this costing process to all training in the plan and consider illustrating maintenance and growth costs separately.</p>
<b>PRIORITISATION MODEL FOR TRAINING</b>	<p>Training needs are prioritised into four levels. This prioritisation process enables the Force to target available resources to the areas of greatest business need. At the time of inspection however, HM Inspector was concerned that some important crime training was not engaging with this prioritisation process. It is acknowledged that arrangements have been put in place to ensure that crime priorities follow the Force prioritisation model.</p>



# Recommendations

## Recommendation 1

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 2

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

## Recommendation 3

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

## Recommendation 4

HM Inspector recommends that the Force further develop a comprehensive Quality Assurance process for all training, irrespective of where or by whom it is provided. The Quality Assurance process should be regularly monitored

## Recommendation 5

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops the existing Tutor Units into Professional Development Units across the Force, which are professionally managed by the ODU (Head of Training), with appropriate service level agreements to assist the central training function and meet Force demands

### **Recommendation 6**

**HM Inspector recommends that the Force considers the appointment of a crime training manager, as a matter of priority, to effectively coordinate all crime training needs, planning and delivery**

### **Recommendation 7**

**HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a robust evaluation function for all training, with a tasking and reporting process independent of the Training Department. This should include a clear mechanism for commissioning and actioning evaluation projects and their recommendations**

# Judgements

## Judgement 1:

The training strategy and plan clearly sets the direction for training, supported by an effective client/contractor structure. There is comprehensive identification and gathering of the training need. Some areas of training provision are budget led, although new training directly informs the budget setting process. QA and evaluation is not consistently applied across the Force and at the time of inspection training was fragmented, with no overall professional management of all training functions. However, there is clear commitment at all levels to achieve consistency of standard and prioritisation.

HM Inspector concludes therefore that the quality of the service is **‘good’**

## Judgement 2:

The Force has produced a revised improvement plan that is comprehensive, clear, challenging and significantly, seeks to impact on front-line performance. There is active and positive leadership from both ACPO and the Police Authority, which also includes routine scrutiny of the progress of the improvement plan recommendations. Consequently, the priorities for future improvement and resourcing have been clearly laid out. Key areas of crime training that directly link to organisational performance are now being captured in the training planning process.

HM Inspector concludes therefore that the prospects for improvement are **‘excellent’**

**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 ([LINK](#))**

# 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**

- The Force does not routinely collect data about achievement or success rates for courses that are not externally validated or subject to national regulation. In training sessions covering new stop and search regulations, learners made good progress and developed a sound understanding of legislation.
- Probationer constables were involved in exercises around scenarios drawn from operational activities, and took an active part in discussions, demonstrating a good understanding of the work. They took part in group work and were able to relate material to their own operational situation.

### **Quality of education and training**

- All of the training observed during the inspection was satisfactory or better. Half the observed sessions were good. Observed training sessions for probationer constables were good. In the best sessions, learners were fully involved in activities and quickly developed new skills and understandings. Stage one probationer training involved consideration of police conduct and misconduct through group discussions of realistic and challenging scenarios. Trainers encouraged learners to question commonly held assumptions about police attitudes and behaviour. Learners were encouraged to challenge one another within a supportive and positive environment, and were led by trainers to ask perceptive and challenging questions about police standards and behaviour. There was a clear growth in learners' confidence and understanding, and all members of the group contributed to discussions and plenary elements.
- Diversity training involved sessions where members of the traveller community spoke to staff and officers about their lifestyle and culture. Trainers led a useful discussion about attitudes and stereotypes, which drew skilfully upon the experiences outlined by the guest speakers. Most learners found the session very interesting and challenging, however there were some learners who were not involved in discussions and who were not given sufficient opportunity to contribute to the plenary session.

- In less successful sessions, there was insufficient involvement of learners, who were silent and static for long periods. Trainers dominated large parts of some sessions, talking almost continuously with little student involvement. In such sessions, there was insufficient questioning to check on understanding and to ensure learning had taken place.
- In the observed sessions, learners were aware of the operational impact of their training, and knew what the expected outcomes of their training should be. However, at the start of some sessions and courses, learners have not been given a course outline or description of learning outcomes. Learners in these cases did not always know what they would be doing, nor did they have a satisfactory understanding of the skills they were expected to develop or demonstrate.
- There are good resources to support learning at the Organisational Development Unit at police headquarters. Rooms are well-maintained, spacious and well lit, with appropriate furniture and audio-visual resources used by trainers during sessions. Trainers have a good range of operational and other experience, which is recognised and valued by learners. Trainers currently hold nationally recognised assessor awards, or have undertaken a relevant Centrex course.
- Trainers have produced some good quality learning materials that are used effectively to enhance courses. In the best observed sessions, trainers distributed and made use of well-produced handouts to reinforce learning and provide learners with summaries of topics covered. In the less successful sessions, trainers worked directly and, in some cases, read to learners directly from Centrex materials. In these cases the sessions lacked pace and content was not sufficiently related to Force and local factors.
- At divisional training sites, accommodation is satisfactory, but is sometimes poorly maintained and managed. Rooms for divisional training do not always contain dedicated ICT or audio-visual teaching resources, and some rooms are not easily adapted for a variety of learning activities.
- There is a well-stocked and well-maintained library and study room at Force headquarters. Reference works, journals, research project reports and a wide range of police-related educational materials are available. Learners make use of books, CDs, video and tape-based learning packages in the library or at home through a lending system. There are plans to develop e-learning opportunities throughout the Force, but these are at an early stage.
- There is insufficient use of initial assessment to identify learners' needs and prior skills or experience. Managers or supervisors select learners for attendance on courses and there are no checks of prior knowledge or understanding. Formal assessments are not used to monitor progress or establish individual learning needs, unless required by external validation or awarding bodies.
- Informal assessment takes place on most courses and occurred at appropriate points in observed sessions. Trainers used questioning to measure progress and provide learners with checks on their own progress. In probationer training, trainers used a variety of questioning methods to develop learners' understanding and promote wide ranging debate and discussion. In diversity training sessions discussions were used to allow most learners to share understanding and concerns about cultural stereotyping.

- There are good opportunities for development and training of police staff. A partnership scheme exists with two local colleges to provide suitable applicants to join the Force for Apprenticeship training. Currently there are five learners in business administration, two motor vehicle mechanics and plans are in place to enrol an ICT learner in the near future. The scheme has been used successfully to provide opportunities for women in traditionally male-dominated employment areas. One female learner has been enrolled on the motor vehicle scheme and another is enrolled on the business administration scheme at the Force's transport garage. In addition, the Force operates a scheme to provide skills upgrading for staff so that more senior or specialist administrative posts may be filled from the Force's own staff. Training courses are available to staff so that they may build their skills in anticipation of posts becoming available in future. The scheme has so far resulted in a number of high-level promotions from amongst the workforce.
- Learner understanding of training structures, training availability and training priorities is poor. Amongst some trainers there is poor understanding of the ways that the Force is directing its training to meet operational and other priorities. Managers or supervisors select learners for attendance on courses and there are no checks of prior knowledge or understanding.
- Learners are frequently unclear why they have been sent for training, and some learners have been sent on courses many months after application, when their circumstances and Force priorities with regard to their training have changed. For example, learners have been sent on heavily over-subscribed training courses immediately before they were due to transfer to another force.
- The Force is currently developing e-learning capacity to meet some training needs, and there are now some useful e-learning packages available in the Force training library. However, there is currently an unsatisfactory reliance on the Force intranet to support some divisional training. Courses are partially delivered by trainers and then learners are referred to intranet-based materials to complete their courses, often by reading further material and carrying out multiple-choice tests. Many officers have difficulty accessing terminals at stations, and find it difficult to complete courses when operational duties intervene.
- Trainers gave good support to learners during observed sessions, and most learners felt that their skills were being developed. Probationer and diversity training sessions allowed learners to extend understandings and discuss concerns and uncertainties in a supportive environment. However, the Force PDR process is poorly understood, and many staff and officers do not understand the links between appraisal and training.

- There is currently ineffective evaluation of training. A Force evaluator post exists, and plans for evaluation are outlined in the Force training strategy, but the post was recently created and major development has yet to be undertaken. Most evaluation of training involves learners in completion of a simple questionnaire. The questionnaires are sometimes poorly reproduced, and do not allow learners sufficient opportunity for reflection or comment about training quality and the impact of training on their job roles. There is currently no systematic and effective analysis of the impact of training on learners' job preparedness. Many learners do not understand what happens to evaluation questionnaires, and feel little confidence that improvements to training will result from their comments. Some training sessions, particularly those delivered in divisions, are not evaluated at all.



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