

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary



HMIC Inspection Report

Durham Constabulary

Major Crime

July 2008



Durham Constabulary – HMIC Inspection Report
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Introduction to HMIC Inspections

For a century and a half, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been charged with examining and improving the efficiency of the police service in England and Wales, with the first HM Inspectors (HMIs) being appointed under the provisions of the County and Borough Police Act 1856. In 1962, the Royal Commission on the Police formally acknowledged HMIC's contribution to policing.

HMIs are appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Home Secretary and report to HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, who is the Home Secretary's principal professional policing adviser and is independent of both the Home Office and the police service. HMIC's principal statutory duties are set out in the Police Act 1996. For more information, please visit HMIC's website at <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/>.

In 2006, HMIC conducted a broad assessment of all 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales, examining 23 areas of activity. This baseline assessment had followed a similar process in 2005, and thus created a rich evidence base of strengths and weaknesses across the country. However, it is now necessary for HMIC to focus its inspection effort on those areas of policing that are not data-rich and where qualitative assessment is the only feasible way of judging both current performance and the prospects for improvement. This, together with the critical factor that HMIC should concentrate its scrutiny on high-risk areas of policing – in terms of risk both to the public and to the service's reputation – pointed inexorably to a focus on what are known collectively as 'protective services'. In addition, there is a need to apply professional judgement to some key aspects of leadership and governance, where some quantitative measures exist but a more rounded assessment is appropriate.

Having reached this view internally, HMIC consulted key stakeholders, including the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Association of Police Authorities (APA). A consensus emerged that HMIC could add greater value by undertaking more probing inspections of fewer topics. Stakeholders concurred with the emphasis on protective services but requested that neighbourhood policing remain a priority for inspection until there is evidence that it has been embedded in everyday police work.

HMIC uses a rigorous and transparent methodology to conduct its inspections and reach conclusions and judgements. All evidence is gathered, verified and then assessed against specific grading criteria (SGC) drawn from an agreed set of national (ACPO-developed) standards. However, the main purpose of inspection is not to make judgements but to drive improvements in policing. Both professional and lay readers are urged, therefore, to focus not on the headline grades but on the opportunities for improvement identified within the text of this report.

HMIC Business Plan for 2008/09

HMIC's business plan (available at <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/business-plan/>) reflects our continued focus on:

- protective services – including the management of public order, civil contingencies and critical incidents phase 3 of the programme in autumn 2008/spring 2009;
- counter-terrorism – including all elements of the national CONTEST strategy;

- strategic services – such as information management and professional standards; and
- the embedding of neighbourhood policing.

In addition, we are currently developing a scrutiny of strategic resource leverage, and are liaising with the Audit Commission on a methodology for the anticipated inspection of police authorities.

HMIC's priorities for the coming year are set in the context of the wide range of strategic challenges that face both the police service and HMIC, including the need to increase service delivery against a backdrop of reduced resources. With this in mind, the business plan for 2008/09 includes for the first time a 'value for money' plan that relates to the current Comprehensive Spending Review period (2008–11).

Our intention is to move to a default position where we do not routinely carry out all-force inspections, except in exceptional circumstances; we expect to use a greater degree of risk assessment to target activity on those issues and areas where the most severe vulnerabilities exist, where most improvement is required or where the greatest benefit to the service can be gained through the identification of best practice.

Programmed Frameworks

During phase 2 of HMIC's inspection programme, we examined force responses to major crime, serious and organised crime and neighbourhood policing in each of the 44 forces of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

While this document includes the full graded report for the major crime inspection, the inspection relating to serious and organised crime is detailed in a separate thematic report.

Major Crime

This framework covers the force effectiveness and efficiency in dealing with homicide and other major crimes that will normally require a force to set up a major incident room. There is only one statutory performance indicator at present, although other indicators shown in the report facilitate appropriate comparisons of performance between forces; the indicators suggested give some context regarding the volume of such crimes, success in detections and trends over time, but they need to be interpreted with care. The assessment is primarily qualitative, with a judgement as to the extent to which the force predicts and prevents major crime as opposed to solely discovering and reacting to such crime. Major crime includes any investigation that requires the deployment of a senior investigating officer and specialist assets.

The grading system has changed this year to allow for a single ACPO threshold standard against which forces will be assessed as compliant, not compliant or exceeding compliance. It is recognised that collaborative arrangements can be used where appropriate. At a high level, the ACPO lead summarises the threshold standard as set out below:

- Intelligence – Compliance with the 2005 ACPO National Intelligence Model guidance on the shared understanding of and response to the risks and demands of the major crime threat, with effective intelligence and data sharing internally, with neighbouring forces and with key partners.

- Prevention – Effective proactive partnerships to prevent major crime in compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights; this includes precursor offending and options such as Osman warnings.
- Enforcement – Compliance with the 2006 ACPO *Murder Investigation Manual* and guidance in the 2005 ACPO major incident room standardised administrative procedures, having sufficient resources to meet and manage the predicted demand and contingency to meet extraordinary demand from major crime investigation and review.
- Performance management and resilience – Efficiency through robust performance measures linking costs/resources, inputs and outputs to goals (ie the outcomes of reduction and prevention, detection and conviction work).

Future Programmed Inspections

Following these serious and organised crime and major crime assessments, HMIC plans work in the following areas:

Inspection area	Dates
Neighbourhood policing	April 2008 – September 2008
Developing citizen focus	April 2008 – September 2008
Civil contingencies	September 2008 – May 2009
Public order	September 2008 – May 2009
Critical incidents	September 2008 – May 2009
Professional standards	June 2009 – December 2009
Information management	June 2009 – December 2009
Leadership	June 2009 – December 2009

The Grading Process

HMIC has moved to a new grading system based on the national standards; forces will be deemed to meet the standard, exceed the standard or fail to meet the standard.

Meeting the standard

HMIC uses the ACPO agreed standards as the starting point for its SGC. The standards against which forces are measured are communicated to all forces and police authorities some time before the inspection starts. The standards are set at a level that ensures that risk to the public is identified, managed and mitigated as far as is feasible; all forces should find the standards achievable.

Exceeding the standard

Where a force can demonstrate capacity and capability that exceed the agreed national standards, it is expected that risk assessment and business cases justify the availability of 'additional' resources, and that they are deployed appropriately. For example, some forces require a higher level of capacity/capability to counter extraordinary threat levels or to discharge a regional or lead force remit. Without such a rationale, an over-investment would almost certainly represent poor value for money and thus attract criticism.

Failing to meet the standard

This assessment is appropriate when a force cannot provide evidence that it meets a number of significant criteria that correlate with the ACPO national standards. Where evidence is provided to confirm that the particular issue has been properly risk assessed and the risk is being managed, then the report may not necessarily draw an adverse conclusion. The assessment may also give some credit in situations where a force has the ability to remedy any deficiencies promptly, in terms of time and investment levels needed.

Developing Practice

In addition to assessing force performance, one of HMIC's key roles is to identify and share good practice across the police service. Much good practice is identified as HMIC conducts its assessments and is reflected (described as a 'strength') in the body of the report. In addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit more detailed examples of its good practice. HMIC has therefore, in some reports, selected suitable examples and included them in the report. The key criteria for each example are that the work has been evaluated by the force and the good practice is easily transferable to other forces; each force has provided a contact name and telephone number or email address, should further information be required. HMIC has not conducted any independent evaluation of the examples of good practice provided.

Force Overview and Context

Geographical Description of Force Area

Durham Constabulary polices the area of County Durham and Darlington Borough, which together occupy an area of 2,429 sq. km. The area is predominantly rural, with more than half of its residents living in settlements of less than 10,000 people. There are 12 main towns and over 260 small towns and villages, many of which are former colliery villages.

Demographic Description of Force Area

The population of the area is estimated to be 585,435 (2001 Census data), of which 1.2% are from ethnic minority groups. Recent national trend of Polish and other European immigrants have been replicated in the area. The minority ethnic population is not evenly distributed across the force area; some wards in the south of the force area have a significantly higher proportion of residents from minority ethnic groups.

Recent years have seen an outward migration of young economically active people, changing the age profile of the area significantly with the proportion of residents aged over 60 likely to increase, creating a more mature demographic profile. Over the past 20 years a decline in large scale industry across the area has had a major impact upon the local economy and social status

Partnership work involving a wide range of professional agencies is now enabling a new industrial base to take shape providing a local economy which has a more diverse structure built upon the manufacturing and service sectors. The decline in the industrial infrastructure has been partly offset by an increase in the number of visitors to the area. Tourism is still a thriving and developing business within the region and County Durham is promoted to tourists as 'The Land of the Prince Bishops', a fitting reminder of its remarkable history. The area's industrial past also plays a key role in the growing tourism industry. Lead mining and other industrial heritage sites across County Durham and Darlington are now fascinating visitor attractions; reinforcing the area as a quality tourism destination.

The Index of Deprivation 2004 has highlighted the fact that the region experiences one of the highest rates of disability and long-term sickness, and educational attainment is well below the national average in some areas. Much has already been done to transform the environment and economy of the county, but the drive for further achievements remains as strong as ever. Over the last 12 months, Durham Constabulary has seen a substantial reduction in the number of recorded crimes and an increased detection rate, consolidating County Durham and Darlington as one of the safest areas to live and work in the country.

Structural Description of Force including Staff Changes at Chief Officer Level

The Constabulary is policed by two area commands, North and South, which are coterminous with local authority areas. The North Area incorporates Derwentside, City of Durham, Chester-le-Street and Easington Local Authorities. South Area includes Wear Valley, Teesdale and Sedgefield local authorities, as well as Darlington Unitary Authority. Although this is geographically the larger of the two basic command units, it is predominantly rural and less populated than the North Area. Both North and South Areas are further broken down into six police sectors with each having their own neighbourhood policing team led by an inspector who is responsible for identifying and addressing, at a local level, crime and disorder and the range of 'quality of life issues' that have a negative

impact on our communities. The neighbourhood inspectors are supported by designated beat officers, police community support officers, CID, special constables and partners in their endeavour to find solutions to such issues.

The chief officer Mr Jon Stoddart has been in post since 2006. Mr Gary Barnett is the deputy chief constable whilst Mr Mike Barton was recently appointed as assistant chief constable in June 2008 having previously worked in Lancashire. His predecessor temporary assistant chief constable Mr Michael Banks has been seconded to the Government Office North East and was present throughout this Inspection process. Mr Melia remains in post as the ACO.

There is a supportive, open, and business-like relationship with the Police Authority. As well as the full Police Authority meetings there are a number of sub-committees and panels which have executive officer attendance: continuous improvement panel; community safety and engagement panel; finance and audit panel; complaints committee; human resources panel; performance management panel; as well as special meetings of the full Authority convened to discuss major issues such as the strategic force review, and any budget issues. There is a liaison meeting between the executive officers and the Chair/Vice-chair, Clerk and Treasurer of the Police Authority. Police Authority members are also linked to specific departments and areas and regular meetings are held so that there is an understanding of the policing business demands and performance. The Police Authority is involved in all strategic planning days and is represented on each project and programme board. The executive and the Police Authority have worked closely together and taken lead roles in developing the Country Durham Local Area Agreement.

Strategic Priorities

Durham Police Authority and Durham Constabulary regularly obtain the views of local people about policing and community safety. The Constabulary have always valued the opportunity to consult with the people who live and work within County Durham and Darlington, as well as those of key stakeholders. The Police Authority holds police community consultative groups (PCCGs) throughout the year, at different venues across the Constabulary area, to engage directly with the public the issues arising from the strategic assessment were considered by the Police Authority in conjunction with feedback from public consultation forums held throughout the year. Together these were mapped against the strategic policing priorities as determined by the Home Secretary. This process identified a list of seven priority areas for the Authority to consult upon:

- improve the efficiency of the force by making better use of available resources;
- make our communities safer through effective neighbourhood policing and tackling anti-social behaviour, working in partnership with other agencies;
- protect our communities from the threat of terrorism;
- protect vulnerable people from serious harm e.g. abuse, assault or injury;
- provide an effective citizen focused approach to our service delivery which is responsive to the needs of the individual, ensuring that we engage with the diverse communities within County Durham and Darlington;
- reduce the harm caused to our communities by organised crime groups; and
- reduce the harm to our communities caused by the effect of alcohol and drug abuse.

Consultation Process

Engaging with local communities and a wide range of groups across the Constabulary area the consultation process and subsequent discussion between the Constabulary and the Police Authority identified four key priority areas for 2008/09.

- making our communities safer through neighbourhood policing and tackling anti social behaviour, working in partnership with other agencies;
- reduce the harm caused to our communities by organised crime groups;
- protect vulnerable people from serious harm e.g. abuse, assault, injury; and
- reduce the harm to our communities caused by the effect of alcohol and drug abuse.

These priorities will be underpinned by the commitment to providing a citizen focused approach to service delivery which is responsive to the needs of the individual, ensuring that the Constabulary engage with the diverse communities within County Durham and Darlington. Extensive consultation has taken place between the Authority and the Constabulary to develop a performance matrix to measure against the four local priorities. In identifying specific targets for improvement two indicators have been identified against which specific targets have been set:

Indicator 1 Percentage of victims satisfied with updates/feedback/follow up.

Indicator 2 Percentage of domestic abuse incidents resulting in sanction detections.

Force development since 2007

Over recent years Durham Constabulary has embraced the Governments reform agenda on police reform and workforce modernisation. This has included the provision of more visible and accessible policing services, a workforce modernisation programme, extensive civilianisation of police posts, increased multi-agency working and significant investment on our internal and external IT support systems.

In 2005/06 Durham Constabulary faced a £10 million budget gap across 3 years, over and above Government efficiency savings targets, which were exacerbated by the cap on the Police Authority precept element within the Council Tax. Given that Durham Police Authority had the lowest percentage contribution per head of population of any shire force, this situation was set to deteriorate further.

Consequently the Constabulary entered in to a three year remodelling programme designed to identify areas of service provision which could be modernised without a reduction in the quality of service provided by the constabulary, therefore allowing annual budgets to be balanced and savings to be reinvested in to protective services. This programme of change has seen small reductions in the numbers of police officers and significant increase in the numbers of police staff providing support functions. Year 1 of the remodelling programme has provided savings across the force in the region of £1.5 million and reinvestment of £700k in to protective services, with a similar level of savings predicted for year 2. Examples of outcomes from this process are the formation of a MOPI review and linking team to service MOPI requirements which will come on line in October 2008 and the establishment of a diversity unit within headquarters community safety branch.

In addition Durham Constabulary is also engaged in the workforce modernisation project as a national demonstration site. Through this project the Constabulary is reviewing pre-arrest

and post arrest processes to iron out inefficiencies and instituting workforce modernisation through mixed economy teams. Thus the project will increase efficiency in working practices through creating a suspect and offender management unit, which will enable the effectiveness and quality of service to customers to be improved.

Visible and accessible community based neighbourhood policing teams consisting of dedicated beat officers and PCSOs are now embedded in all communities. Working with partners within the crime and disorder partnerships, they are directed towards providing a visible presence in our communities and in providing long term problem solving solutions to local policing problems.

A dedicated headquarters team based with in the community safety department has provided support to areas in embedding neighbourhood management across all communities. Work streams include support for the setting of neighbourhood priorities and accountability systems and the development of links to CDRPs to streamline tasking and coordination of partnership resources in line with the national intelligence model.

Following the collapse of the force strategic mergers the Home Office has encouraged forces to consider their position in relation to closing the gap in protective service provision. In order to provide the financial head room required to invest in protective services, Durham Constabulary has entered in to a programme of collaboration with Cleveland Police, Northumbria Police and Cumbria Police which seeks to scope common business areas suitable for regional collaboration.

Consequently a small project team consisting of staff from all four forces is based at Durham Constabulary Police Headquarters, each force reporting to their respective Deputy Chief Constables. Since July 2007 the team have examined 101 functions which demonstrated potential for collaboration, of which 27 were considered for closer examination. Proof of concept models and business cases are being examined in detail around provision of public order training, external recruitment, and driver training, whilst other areas of business are being considered for examination.

Additionally, Durham Constabulary and Cleveland Police have received a Home Office grant of £446K to support collaboration as a national demonstrator site in regard to the provision of joint working solutions around firearms interoperability between the two forces. The project aims to review current firearms capacity and capability with a view to establishing standardised firearms policies and operating procedures, tactics, command protocols and equipment. This will allow greater interoperability between the two forces as well as reduce bureaucracy.

Significant business change requirements are also affecting the Constabulary.

An information department led by a chief superintendent has been created to support compliance with MOPI. This is further supported by a £4 million investment in the development of an information systems data hub which will provide operational officers with a one stop search facility for existing and future information systems.

On going work is also being conducted in regard to the introduction of a new crime management system, a review of the existing estate requirement with particular reference to new area command headquarters and custody facilities, and the development of the citizen focus programme.

Throughout all of these major challenges, the constabulary has continued to maintain its good level of performance and deliver against its priorities and business change requirements.

Major Crime

GRADE	Meets the standard
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Contextual factors

This element of the inspection report details Durham Constabulary's capacity and capability to identify and assess the risks from major crime, as well as the way it seeks to prevent and investigate these crime types, prioritising those that pose the greatest threat to individuals or communities.

	2006	2007	Change	MSF** group mean
Life-threatening & gun crime per 1,000 population	0.340	0.440	+29.41%	0.593
Number of abductions per 10,000 population	0.000	0.000	0.00%	0.000
% of abduction crimes detected/convicted	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of attempted murders per 10,000 population	0.017	0.067	+294.12%	0.059
% of attempted murder crimes detected/convicted	200.00%	75.00%	-125pp*	92.14%
Number of blackmail offences per 10,000 population	0.067	0.017	-74.63%	0.111
% of blackmail offences detected/convicted	50.00%	100.00%	+50pp*	46.18%
Number of kidnappings per 10,000 population	0.167	0.267	+59.88%	0.335
% of kidnapping crimes detected/convicted	60.00%	87.50%	+27.5pp*	60.45%
Number of manslaughter crimes per 10,000 population	0.033	0.033	0.00%	0.024

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% of manslaughter crimes detected/convicted	100.00%	50.00%	-50pp*	33.33%
Number of murders per 10,000 population	0.200	0.050	-75.00%	0.097
% of murders detected/convicted	75.00%	100.00%	+25pp*	106.89%
Number of rapes per 10,000 population	1.770	1.837	+3.79%	2.313
% of rapes detected/convicted	32.08%	46.36%	+14.28pp*	33.54%

**pp' is percentage points*

*** MSF group for Durham is: Gwent, Humberside, Lancashire, and South Wales.*

From the SPI data contained in the table above, it can be seen that Durham is not really under threat from any of the crime types considered under major crime. Although the constabulary is above the MSF average for attempted murders and manslaughters, the rates of offences for these crime types are not high when England and Wales are considered as a whole.

The SPI data also indicates that major crime investigation in Durham is strong in comparison to the MSF group. Durham is performing at a level above that of the MSF average for all crime types except attempted murders, where the sanction detection rate is below the MSF, after a significant drop in 2007.

The NPSAT, published in September 2007, indicated that Durham was facing either a low or a medium demand with regard to homicide, rape and kidnapping offences, and as such no NPSAT charts have been included in this report.

Intelligence

Durham Constabulary has sufficient dedicated analytical resources to meet the identified demands from major crime and analysis supplies dynamic intelligence products that drive the constabulary's energies. The constabulary has committed itself to major crime investigation with the requisite staff and funding.

Strengths

- Analytical capacity is examined at the headquarters CID meeting in order to meet the identified demand. This includes proactively developing intelligence around the identified OCGs.
- There has been significant additional investment in the intelligence product through the force intelligence unit (FIU), regional intelligence unit (RIU) and the area commands, and through the creation of a MoPI unit. The investment totals some £1 million. The investment has been part of the constabulary's remodelling process and has principally created capacity for a strategic analytical team dedicated to strategic assessment/analysis of risk to communities. Other business benefits include analytical teams to support reactive and proactive investigations in line with the major crime investigation policy, field intelligence officer resilience, the creation of a confidential unit, and greater support for level 2 tasking and co-ordination.
- The South area command is to benefit from the appointment of three CDRP researchers to work on Level 0 intelligence. Staff will interface with the area analyst, researchers, etc to build a detailed intelligence picture from level 0 to level 2/3.

Work in progress

- At the time of inspection, the constabulary intelligence function did not have analytical resources dedicated to major crime analysis, due to resourcing constraints. However, analytical resources are assigned through the TCG process to provide analytical support to major crime investigations, as necessary. Additionally, analytical resources are assigned to ensure inclusion of major crime, threats to life, and violent crime, etc in the constabulary's strategic assessment, as well as to produce problem profiles, as appropriate. One intelligence analyst attended the pilot of the NPIA major incident analysis course.
- Durham was recruiting additional analytical resources across the constabulary, including two senior analysts, three analysts and three researchers for the FIU. One of the senior analysts will have responsibility for a team of analysts that includes dedicated major crime analysts and researchers. This will facilitate compliance with the constabulary major crime policy of ensuring that four analysts are trained and experienced in major crime analysis. FIU analysts are due to attend the major incident analysis course during this financial year, and a further two from the area commands in the next financial year.
- The constabulary threats to life problem profile, the threats to life policy and the issue of Osman warnings will be captured on Memex, which can be researched in wider analysis.
- Managers within the MCT reported developing intelligence arrangements both internally, with special branch, and externally with the RIU.

- Analysis of community information will take place on area commands, involving analysts and three community researchers. The constabulary will provide a product to partners; however, its partners have not provided any support in respect of provision of resources.

Area for improvement

- Capacity issues have been identified regarding the analysis of ANPR data. The FIU does not have sufficient time to perform this task. Data is used as a research database rather than as a tool for the identification of potential targets. In the South area command, ANPR data is not routinely analysed.

The constabulary seeks and shares intelligence in respect of level 2/3 major crime types through partnerships.

Strengths

- Intelligence about these crime types is sought and shared with partners and other agencies, including through engagement with minority groups. Evidence includes the following:
 - homicide review policy/group – the constabulary’s review of murders includes consultation with partners; joint recommendations have ensued and findings are included in the constabulary’s strategic assessment;
 - its major crime resourcing policy outlines requirements for intelligence structures and processes;
 - development of key individual networks – under the neighbourhood policing project, area commands have developed KINs, which provide liaison with key community representation, both proactively and reactively;
 - independent advisory groups – corporate development leads on maintaining liaison with minority and hard-to-reach groups through the IAGs;
 - use of community impact assessments; and
 - threats to life problem profile – collection plan including partners and other agencies.
- The constabulary has invested to ensure effective representation on and commitment to the North East RIU in the development of prioritised intelligence and enforcement activity. The constabulary has witnessed a sea change in its collaborations activity, eg collaboration with regional forces in operations undertaken (Operation Bombay).
- The DAAT has a ‘control of supply group’, which looks at supply networks, the street cost of drugs and the supply/demand trends on the streets. There is a willingness to develop and enhance the relationship with the constabulary and to improve the flow of information to assist both the DAAT and the constabulary in delivering on their respective targets. A change of the chair of the DAAT has seen a broader based approach to tackling the problems associated with drug and alcohol abuse, with more emphasis being placed on partnership working.
- Durham has negotiated an information exchange with the DAAT, which provides the constabulary with information on the drugs markets from a user perspective. This has enabled a more accurate assessment of the threats associated with this type of criminality.
- The sexual assault referral centres (Meadowfield and Darlington) are jointly funded by Durham Constabulary, Durham and Darlington Social Care and Health, the North and South Primary Care Trusts, supported by other local funding and sponsorship streams. A steering group on sexual assault is in place, and it includes the above organisations plus Victim Support. Working relationships are excellent and (within the bounds of victim-based contracts) information sharing is very good. The primary care trusts do not attend the steering group as often as the other members, and therefore information sharing on their part is not as effective.
- The Darlington sexual assault referral clinic (SARC) has a full-time manager and a victim support worker who is shared between the SARC and the rape and sexual advice counselling centre in Darlington. This is often a primary point of contact for

victims of sexual assault, and a number of referrals are passed on from this group to the SARC.

- The SARC manager has built up a good working relationship with a Durham University lecturer, who is chair of national Rape Crisis. This has allowed the creation of a partnership to provide advice and guidance on preventive and reactive measures for sexual assault within the university. This is supported by a late-night help line run by university staff.
- The prison liaison officers (PLOs) across the constabulary are able to feed intelligence into the constabulary system from a range of sources. The management of prolific and other priority offenders (PPOs) in prison and the exit interviews with prisoners are vital to this effort.
- 'Dreamspace' (an inflatable structure sited at the Riverside Park in Chester-le-Street) demonstrated the constabulary's response to a critical incident. The structure became detached from its fixings while members of the public were still inside. It snagged on a CCTV camera and came to rest in the park. Two people were killed and many were injured. This was a major incident, with all the emergency services involved. The incident received worldwide press coverage and had a significant impact on the family and friends of those involved, and on the community as a whole. A community impact assessment was conducted, and then was constantly reviewed and amended as the investigation continued. Part of that assessment was maintaining links with the community, and it included press releases and the involvement of KINs. This proved to be very successful.
- Operation Vilify provided effective evidence of how the different functions of intelligence, covert resources, surveillance, CHIS and test purchase came together to resolve a neighbourhood problem involving the supply of Class A drugs. The SIO for the operation was the local neighbourhood inspector. Test-purchases operatives were supplied by both Northumbria and Cumbria forces for the operation. The CPS was consulted during the operation, and a community impact assessment was completed. On the day of the operation, key individuals from the community were invited to the briefing, along with the local press, and were present when the strike was called. This was followed by intervention by the local authority tenancy team and then by a neighbourhood meeting. A further impact assessment was completed, and it identified that crime had fallen, with offences of criminal damage and anti-social behaviour significantly reduced.

Work in progress

- This is a developing area of work that will be supported by significant investment in the production of the constabulary's strategic assessment, where major crime issues will be specifically referenced. The constabulary is working towards the establishment of an executive strategic management board of multi-agency partnerships with a focus on protecting vulnerable people from threats to life and serious injury. One of the work streams will be centred on information sharing.
- The constabulary is piloting MARAC in one area, with the intention of rolling this out across the area.
- All area command major crimes are dealt with by an experienced SIO in line with MIR principles, and community impact assessments are completed to ensure that effective relationships are maintained. Effective use of the press is a relevant strategy utilised in all such cases.

- The threats to life problem profile was produced with the intention of understanding the drivers of homicide.
- Although not an aim of the IAGs, information and intelligence has been sought through these groups at times of heightened national tensions (eg the terrorist threat at Glasgow airport).
- The constabulary questions the return of investment in respect of suspicious activity reports (SARs). However, it continues to make use of the reports, and the detective superintendent (reactive) is to develop improved business processes for their receipt, assessment and prioritisation.
- From 2008, the submission of intelligence reports will cease to be a performance indicator, and it is anticipated that this will increase the quality of the intelligence submissions.
- The partnerships unit has responsibility for a number of key areas: LCJB (attended by the Chief Constable), criminal justice reform team, community safety, and diversity. The unit is line-managed by the head of corporate development. The administration of justice unit stands alone, reporting directly to the deputy chief constable (DCC). There appears to be a lack of connectivity between these two areas, and the constabulary will need to review this remodelling to provide resilience and to ensure appropriate consideration of the citizen focus agenda (to include neighbourhood policing, quality of service, call handling, etc, resulting in a 'cradle to grave' approach).

Areas for improvement

- Staff from within the intelligence function expressed concerns about the confusion over the intelligence requirements in the constabulary and the need for all staff to be educated in intelligence submissions (in respect of quality, citizen focused).
- Partners, such as the NHS, are often reluctant and/or unable to provide required data to support intelligence collection. Intelligence collected through neighbourhood and partnership arenas need to be consolidated within the constabulary's intelligence system. There are no formal/structured ways of getting information from minority community groups.
- Strategically, intelligence-sharing protocols need to be agreed with key partners. On a practical basis, the development of a strategic analysis team will enable a focus on the collection of relevant intelligence from key partners. The constabulary intelligence system is currently going through an upgrade (due to be implemented by April 2008), which will enhance the capability of accessing and researching partner and neighbourhood intelligence.
- The RIU, working with the DAAT, has identified a gap in intelligence that identifies drug-related activity around the misuse of heroin across the constabulary area.

The strategic assessment has analysed the trends in relation to major crime, and consequently the control strategy is found to be similarly thorough. Problem profiles are used as appropriate, and there is evidence that the constabulary understands the threat posed by life-threatening issues.

Strengths

- Major crime is considered within the constabulary's strategic assessment and other intelligence products. This includes the full range of precursor offences, the links with these being clearly visible in constabulary and area command plans. Intelligence products comply with ACPO guidance on NIM 2005.
- The constabulary's strategic assessment analyses the key areas – ie threats to life, domestic abuse and counter-terrorism, etc – from the national and constabulary perspective, taking account of emerging trends, future issues, key findings, intelligence gaps and recommendations. The assessment takes account of current organisational priorities, together with operational priorities at both a constabulary and an area command level. PESTELO issues are also considered, and the assessment contains a risk/threat matrix, again at a constabulary and an area command level. A socio-demographic analysis is also included.
- The findings and recommendations from the strategic assessments and the threats to life problem profile have informed the control strategy priorities of threats to life and violent crime (including violence against the person and domestic abuse), at both level 1 and level 2, as well as specific strategies such as the crime, drugs and alcohol strategy.
- Standard management information has been amended in relation to these crime types to show actual finalisations and current open investigations. The threats to life priority is included in the constabulary's tactical assessment on a monthly basis.
- The constabulary commences a consultative exercise approximately two months before the strategic assessment is set. Consultation takes place at all levels in respect of targeted activity using level 1 and 2 assets, researchers and analysts (resources are not seconded in but are used to inform some of the areas).
- Identified priorities are allocated to 'leads', who use the strategic assessment to inform the development of a control strategy. Intelligence requirements are then developed at area command level, taking into account the fact that the constabulary may already have a relevant 'strategy', eg on drugs.
- The constabulary has a strategic intelligence requirement, and the intelligence requirement is reviewed on a monthly basis, to ensure a more focused requirement that is dependent on identified threats or risks.
- The area command tactical assessment and NIM daily management meetings are also used to monitor, analyse and action incidents and trends of serious violence/threats to life and other major crime issues, including terrorism. Within the area tactical assessment, a dedicated section has been introduced to specifically focus on threats to life, in line with constabulary priorities. There are also mechanisms in place to initiate and action response plans for such incidents, particularly high-risk domestic abuse cases, eg persons believed to be involved in this crime type or signal offences are considered for subject/problem profiles.

- Domestic violence remains the most significant threat to life (20% of all serious violent crime is domestic related). There is evidence of good work by the dedicated domestic abuse courts, which use a specially trained domestic violence advocate to try and reduce the attrition rate of domestic abuse prosecution cases.
- The aim and purpose of the constabulary's strategic assessment is: to provide an accurate picture of the long-term issues affecting the constabulary, taking into account national, regional, constabulary, area command and CDRP objectives; to review crime and disorder across the constabulary area, focusing on the specific areas covered by the existing control strategies and predicting how this will develop in the future; to inform the level 1 and level 2 strategic tasking and co-ordination meeting and support strategic decision making with regards to the area and constabulary control strategies; to facilitate the review and amendment of the existing area and constabulary control strategies and redefine, if necessary, the relevant intelligence, enforcement and prevention priorities for the policing plan. The assessment will link with the constabulary business planning and strategic risk register to provide corporate focus.
- The crime related actions and programmes of work for the crime, drug and alcohol strategy have been documented in business areas, which reflect the HMIC policing domains of volume crime investigation and reduction; managing critical incidents and major crime; tackling serious and organised crime; improving forensic performance; protecting vulnerable people; NIM; and terrorism.
- The drug and alcohol related actions and programmes of work have been documented in business areas reflected in the Home Office drug strategy: young people; communities; treatment; and availability.
- For each area, a number of actions with timescales/KPIs for audit, etc have been established. In relation to managing critical incidents and major crime, a number of actions have been identified, including having the detective chief inspector (FIU) produce a constabulary strategic assessment that references incidents of major crime and other critical incidents, in order to assist in identifying the resource allocation required, commensurate with risk. Furthermore, the strategic assessment should address the demographic and geographic profile of vulnerable communities and locations and threats to life.
- The detective chief inspector (FIU) has the role of ensuring constabulary compliance with referrals to specialist intelligence systems, in particular the serious crime analysis system (SCAS), Operation Liberal database, the national compromise database and the kidnap and extortion database.
- In relation to tackling serious and organised crime, the following actions are included: the head of CID is to ensure constabulary representation on and commitment to the North East RIU in the development of prioritised intelligence and enforcement activity; detective chief inspector (organised crime team) is to undertake formal debriefing procedures following the conclusion of operations, in order to provide continuous learning and development of corporate knowledge and best practice.

Work in progress

- The constabulary has acknowledged that some staff feel that there is a need for greater knowledge and understanding of the threats to life process; for this to be effectively monitored and addressed, it needs to be included in the level 1 tactical

assessments. Resourcing shortfalls have meant that these issues have not been dynamically monitored or analysed. However, the constabulary is currently recruiting senior analysts, analysts and researchers within the FIU. This is to enable the creation of dedicated teams to provide ongoing analysis of major crime and related issues at both a strategic and a tactical level. The constabulary continues to develop the standardisation in NIM procedures.

- The ACC is looking to develop formal protocols for regional collaboration in times of exceptional demand.
- The constabulary is currently in the process of determining both the organisational and the operational priorities as part of the strategic assessment and planning process. While the exact terminology and the final priorities have yet to be agreed, the initial findings have been established.
- Operation Harlequin is the constabulary's response to the Security Service intelligence requirement regarding the 'rich picture'. This is an ongoing, sustained, proactive community engagement exercise to introduce counter-terrorism intelligence gathering to all areas in a structured format.

Areas for improvement

- The constabulary's strategic assessment has identified a number of key findings: the constabulary is looking to strengthen partnership working arrangements and to promote improved information sharing between partner agencies; steps are being taken to ensure that reported incidents of domestic abuse are risk assessed; the recording of domestic abuse incidents by vulnerability units remains reliant upon officers submitting a COMMS REL 87 form; problems continue to be encountered across the constabulary in terms of accurately recording domestic abuse; this effectively hampers both analysis and the creation of a comprehensive victim profile, taking account of demographic factors as well as socio-economic and multi-agency information; domestic abuse remains a widespread problem across the constabulary, and an increase in incidents can be anticipated.
- A number of information gaps have been identified: the constabulary represents a key focal point for the provision to other agencies of data on the extent and nature of domestic abuse. However, there is a gap in the knowledge of the constabulary with regard to data held by other agencies, such as the outreach agencies. The constabulary has developed a new domestic violence risk assessment within the MARAC programme, to provide more information from victims on the nature of domestic abuse. It is anticipated that this data will be available on the PROTECT system. However, the search functionality on PROTECT is not sufficiently robust to enable full use to be made of the data being gathered; it is unclear if analytical work to produce subject profiles on prolific domestic abuse offenders is having a positive impact upon offender behaviour.
- The constabulary's strategic assessment makes two recommendations in respect of sexual offences: consideration should be given to commissioning a strategic analytical product, examining the scale and nature of sexual offending across the constabulary, including the identification of at-risk communities and offender profiling; and further work under the reassurance strategy should be undertaken to strengthen information sharing across agencies and partners and to identify opportunities to engage with potential victims from Asian, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) and other 'hard-to-reach' communities.

Trend analysis and problem profiles are shared with partners and BCUs. Information sharing protocols are in place with key partners. Durham can demonstrate that it is on track to reach MoPI compliance by 2010.

Strengths

- Information-sharing agreements are in place with a number of agencies including SOCA, RIU, MARAC, MAPPA, HMRC, Trading Standards and the DAAT. In addition to day-to-day liaison, these and other partners are represented at level 2 TCG and intelligence managers' meetings, and at the regional TCG meeting.
- MAPPA arrangements are a clear example of the constabulary's commitment to information sharing: regular MAPPA meetings are held, and the system is well established through the public protection unit (PPU) structure. Detective chief inspectors attend all level 3 MAPPAs, where all agencies share intelligence on the subject. Information is fed into the NIM process, and where a person is at liberty or is shortly to be released, then a subject profile is created (DCIs are the strategic plan owners for all MAPPA level 3 profiles) and the progress of action taken to manage the threat is monitored through the TCG process and reported back to the MAPPA.
- The constabulary submits intelligence to SCAS, co-ordinated through a SPOC in the authorisations unit. A constabulary template on the submissions made is auditable (as the national SCAS documentation suggests the constabulary does not comply – this is not seen as the case – SCAS saying submissions do not meet the criteria). The constabulary, when required, makes use of national support structures such as Genesis, NPIA specialist advice and other matters.
- The NPIA conducted a peer review of the constabulary during October 2007. It identified the following: an action plan agreed as part of the first peer review process has been actioned and completed; the constabulary action plan was complete at the time of the review; and the constabulary has a good project board structure to ensure progress towards compliance with MoPI. Evidence was provided that the project management methodology Projects in Controlled Environments 2 (PRINCE2) is utilised and the constabulary is on target to achieve compliance by 2010.
- The constabulary enjoys a good working relationship with neighbouring forces at all levels relating to major crime/planning. This includes joint training, with exercises and information sharing. Durham South borders on three forces, and there are good systems and procedures in place to deal with ongoing cross-border incidents and crimes.

Work in progress

- Information and security issues around MoPI and vetting have been moved out of the PSD and placed under the information management structure. The head of department (chief superintendent level) reports to the DCC. A security group meets every two months to discuss vulnerability issues.
- MoPI training is being delivered to all new recruits to ensure that there is accuracy of information being submitted.
- The NPIA suggested a number of areas for development, including the idea that the constabulary may wish to carry out a risk assessment of business systems, in order to ensure that appropriate priority is given to the highest-risk areas. It is undoubtedly

the case that implementation of the RRD process represents a significant challenge for the constabulary.

- Although statistical information relating to domestic abuse incidents assists in building a picture of domestic abuse across the constabulary, this must be balanced against the findings of a National Standards for Incident Recording (NSIR) audit conducted in February 2007, which found that 61.5% of the sample were correctly tagged for domestic abuse. Recording of domestic abuse incidents has also been identified by HMIC as an area for improvement.
- An examination of ways to improve the reporting of domestic abuse within the area tasking and co-ordination process by the North Area indicates difficulties in reporting, which revolved around delays in CID10 forms being completed and input into the crime system, and delays in PROTECT entries being submitted. Reference is also made to the reliance on officers submitting a COMMS REL 87 in respect of domestic abuse incidents.
- It is noteworthy that only 18% of reported domestic disturbance incidents were subsequently reported as a crime. Of these, assault occasioning actual bodily harm (AOABH) was the most commonly recorded crime. This corroborates analysis previously undertaken to inform the 2006 strategic assessment, which confirmed that more serious assaults were the most commonly recorded crime as a result of a reported domestic incident. From this it can be inferred that Durham mirrors national trends in terms of under-reporting, with victims repeatedly experiencing a number of incidents of domestic abuse prior to reporting the matter to the police.

Area for improvement

- Partners' internal data recording and retrieval practices can limit the availability of intelligence; the RIU is developing a sub-regional GAIN-type partners' meeting, which will identify and feed formal law-enforcement intelligence and TCG processes. Recommended action includes the continuing influence given to intelligence exchange regarding partner's internal data recording and retrieval practices.

In respect of major crime, the profiling of vulnerable locations and communities is developing, with evidence that the impact of OCG activity is understood. Future risks and threats across the area are identified.

Strengths

- Analysis of data from open sources is informing the constabulary of the changing demographics and communities within County Durham and Darlington. Since the accession of some eastern European countries to the EU, there has been an influx of people, particularly into the Polish community. Intelligence suggests involvement in Class A drugs distribution, and this has led to a need for information from the DAAT to be mapped against emerging communities.
- In area commands, every beat has its own profile document, written and maintained by the beat officer (on the instruction of neighbourhood inspectors). The profiles contain details of local organisations and individual contacts (including KINs). They also include an assessment based on the NIM model of political and social factors, etc. As part of that assessment process, threats to the community are identified. The document is based on the results of contact with the community (recorded formally in Memex reports) and with local representative groups (conducted through formal representation at meetings).
- For any specific issues identified, community impact assessments are carried out. The application of the NIM process within the area commands seeks to identify these issues and to address them through tasking and co-ordination, and through the creation of target profiles, problem profiles and response plans.
- Further partnership work with other local partner organisations (eg primary care trusts, social services, housing providers, etc) assists in both the identification and addressing of issues of vulnerability within the community.
- The DAAT has supplied information to the constabulary to inform the strategic assessment.

Work in progress

- The constabulary is in the very early stages of fully profiling and understanding its communities, including vulnerable communities. Durham is currently able to reach specific groups through IAGs and KINs; however, there are difficulties in identifying emerging groups due to a lack of dynamic demographic information and the absence of intelligence pooling from relevant partner agencies. The monitoring/updating of profiles can be intermittent and needs improvement.
- Some analytical scoping has been carried out to assess vulnerable communities, and inclusion of this, as well as the work of the IAGs, is included in the FSA (area-based analysts are part of the team responsible for the development of the FSA).
- In order to address the above, the constabulary has recommended the following action: ensure access to the most relevant and current demographic information, including that relating to vulnerable sections of the communities; ensure that intelligence from partner agencies and IAGs, as well as from neighbourhood arenas, is accessible to inform a central profile; introduce processes/procedures to improve/strengthen the use of neighbourhood profiles.

- Neighbourhood profiles are being developed, since the current profiles are generic and do not provide sufficient information on demographics. Profiles are being developed at area command level to reflect socio-economic profiles of neighbourhoods and risks emerging as threats.
- The SARC manager recognised that, while there are few (if any) rapes reported by students at the local universities, it is felt that these individuals are at greater risk, and that some offences may have gone unreported through lack of knowledge and understanding. It was also acknowledged that there was an opportunity to raise awareness of issues concerning sexual assault at an early stage. An awareness campaign was carried out in October 2007 (Freshers' Week), providing advice and guidance to students on how to avoid becoming a victim of sexual assault, and the steps to take if they do fall victim.

Areas for improvement

- Community profiles are basic at this time, mainly looking at community tensions and emerging issues. This work will need to be developed to make them more comprehensive, involving all partners and encompassing neighbourhood management objectives. This will give a better intelligence picture of each neighbourhood. The senior analyst will seek to improve and forge relationships across all partners, so that there is added value to statistics, analysis and the hypotheses produced.
- Emerging migrant communities have been identified in the constabulary's strategic assessment (September 2007). The size, nature and location of BME groups are unknown. The constabulary needs, with the assistance of partner agencies, to accurately define these groups. This will put it in a stronger position to define any threat that will be posed to/by any particular section of the community, and crucially will help to deliver citizen-focused policing.
- The constabulary's strategic assessment has identified a number of limitations. The new requirement for joint strategic assessments produced by the CDRPs was expected to provide a very useful source of information for the latest assessment. However, for various reasons, these joint strategic assessments have not been available on this occasion. It is anticipated that this will be addressed in time for the next strategic review, due in May 2008. Furthermore, consideration of neighbourhood and partnership data is not as advanced as would be ideal, since access to this intelligence has proved problematic. It is anticipated that this will be improved upon prior to the next review period.
- The strategic assessment makes four recommendations on child protection issues: consideration should be given to commissioning analysis of the links and impact of domestic abuse upon children and consequent child protection issues; through the strategic executive management board for safeguarding vulnerable persons, efforts should be made to correct the existing deficiencies in terms of information sharing and the intelligence cycle; through the reassurance strategy, efforts should be made to encourage reporting of child abuse/neglect from within Asian and other 'hard-to-reach' communities, promoting the use of third-party reporting centres as a means to facilitate communication between the Asian and other 'hard-to-reach' communities, and the constabulary; and the recommendations arising from the review of the protection of children from sex offenders should be incorporated into organisational business plans at the earliest opportunity

The strategic risk register is reviewed at chief officer level through the strategic risk management group. Actions are assigned to lead officers in order to ensure implementation.

Strengths

- The constabulary has developed a process to assess threats and risk that is based on NCPE guidance.
- Durham Constabulary embraces the identification of strategic risks at constabulary, area command and departmental level. The constabulary has a strategic risk management group that has a strategic risk register, and each department and area command retains its own risk register. The strategic risk register is actively managed by the strategic risk management group, which reports to the constabulary management group on a six-weekly basis. Actions to prevent, control or reduce threats identified through risk assessment are assigned to lead officers to implement.
- A formal review of the strategic risk register, and of risks, scoring and control measures, has taken place. In terms of the strategic assessment, it was agreed that data quality and the intelligence cycle should be included. There was a discussion of demographic issues and the risk of failing to deliver citizen focus to minority communities. It was felt that neighbourhood policing/community profiling dealt with this issue.
- The head of CID is a member of the constabulary strategic risk management group, and, in discharging his role as head of profession, examines the strategic risks surrounding major crime and organised crime protective service issues. Within the headquarters CID, the senior management team members report monthly to the head of CID at a business planning meeting where the headquarters CID departmental risk register is a standing agenda item. Departmental and strategic risks are discussed, documentation prepared and control measures progressed. If matters cannot be progressed at headquarters CID departmental level, then these risks can be taken forward to the constabulary strategic risk management group. In this way, the head of profession for major crime and organised crime can co-ordinate risk management and advise the constabulary on how those risks should be either controlled or nullified.
- Within the headquarters CID departmental risk register there have been numerous examples of risks raised in the area of tackling major crime and organised crime, eg further appointments and resilience around dedicated staff for intelligence development; support for major enquiries; capacity of the authorisations unit to meet projected demand; the introduction of a programme of inspection and audit of the intelligence system; integration of IT systems into the constabulary data warehouse; and the impact of resources required to investigate suspicious activity reports.
- Utilising the identification of risk, the head of CID has progressed these matters either through constabulary remodelling, existing programme board arrangements or through business cases at the constabulary management group.

Work in progress

- From the strategic environmental scan and previous discussion, the following additional risks were identified and will be captured in the strategic risk register: capacity to deliver policing priorities (critical mass of officers); compliance with national custody standards; integrity operations; and FME provision.

- A constabulary-wide business impact analysis is under way as part of a project to take a corporate approach to business continuity management. This process includes within it risk assessment of potential threats and vulnerabilities that could affect capacity and capability to continue service delivery in the event of an interruption.
- It is intended to strengthen the links between the current strategic risk management framework and the strategic planning process by jointly considering business and operational risk as part of the strategic assessment and NIM process. The subsequent development of the control strategy will then be risk assessed and include both inward and outward-facing risk issues. Risk management templates will be reviewed to ensure a greater focus on tracking implementation of risk control actions.
- The protective services development plan includes a risk register that identifies key areas of risk across County Durham and Darlington for development within the protective services arena, and documents the relevant control measures that are in place to mitigate them. The supporting documentation on identified risks and controls is maintained within the remodelling programme board, which considers these issues in relation to all constabulary development, and ensures that risk assessments are updated on a regular basis.
- The constabulary is going through a process of identifying all its operational contingency plans and updating them accordingly. A process of risk assessment has taken place with the plans, to prioritise the order in which plans should be updated. Once they are fully reviewed, a future review date is built in.

Area for improvement

- The likelihood of a CBRN attack is not considered in the corporate risk register.

Durham is collaborating with the other forces in its region to provide the same level of access and interrogation of intelligence systems across the region through the RIU.

Strengths

- Every two months an intelligence forum is held, where issues concerning relationships between the centre and the area commands are discussed.
- Durham is the second highest user of the INI outside the Metropolitan Police, which demonstrates a good and effective use of this data system.

Work in progress

- HOLMES is currently a standalone system. The constabulary is researching a system (i-Bridge) which will facilitate the intelligence staff's ability to research the HOLMES database. As an interim solution, a number of FIU researchers and managers have received training in researching (read only) data held on the HOLMES system.
- HOLMES is predominantly used in the constabulary for homicide investigations; however it is also utilised for other complex investigations, including serious sexual offences.
- As HOLMES is currently a standalone system, it is not possible, with the exception of nominals, to search across all accounts, and there is a need for a researcher to access each separate HOLMES account held.
- In relation to interchange with other forces, the three North East forces (Durham, Cleveland and Northumbria) have agreed to a sub-regional HOLMES database read-only account for Operation Pentameter 2. This will allow sub-regional interrogation of intelligence fed nationally into Operation Pentameter.
- To ensure a regional exchange of intelligence, Durham Constabulary has invested with Cleveland and Northumbria forces in an RIU. The unit has representations from each force, HMRC, the UK Border Agency and SOCA.
- Additionally, the three forces have agreed to pipe their independent intelligence systems (Memex for Durham) to the RIU, in order to allow sub-regional intelligence work around level 2 and level 3 criminality. Durham and Northumbria have already achieved this.
- Again sub-regionally, Durham has agreed to finance (with Cleveland and Northumbria) work by ABM to achieve a link between the RIU and the Scottish intelligence database, thereby improving level 2 and level 3 intelligence.
- The constabulary ANPR back-office function works to national standards and passes intelligence to other forces. The constabulary was due a national ANPR upgrade, which would allow interrogation of ANPR nationally, including the National Data Centre.
- A confidential unit is to be created within the FIU. The unit will be responsible for providing a cohesive co-ordinated resource that can process intelligence from all covert sources (eg test-purchase and undercover operatives, CHIS and intercept), and for sanitising it before feeding it into the regular constabulary intelligence systems. Intelligence from HOLMES accounts will be included in this work.

- Durham Constabulary has in excess of 2,000 civil contingency plans, which are maintained on an Excel™ database. Staff believe that these would be better sited within a bespoke data management system. The benefits are currently being evaluated.
- The constabulary intelligence system Memex is due to be upgraded in 2008. This will enhance the organisational memory, intelligence tasking and results analysis.
- The constabulary has an 'operations 99 database', which prevents 'blue on blue' situations occurring. The database will be incorporated into the Memex upgrade and will include a 'results' feature.

Areas for improvement

- The duty management system (DMS) and command and control are not interoperable. This creates problems in identifying which staff with the appropriate skills are on duty. Additionally, it is reported that the DMS is not kept sufficiently up to date with the skills held by staff, meaning that staff are inappropriately contacted on occasions. Operational staff are confirmed as being on duty when they turn on their radio; however, there is a tendency for some staff to remain invisible to control room staff for extended periods of time before logging on.
- Command room facilities are considered to be fit for purpose, although there was a desire for more of the terminals to be linked to the constabulary radio system.

The force has a case review policy that is applied, ensuring that current major crime cases are reviewed in accordance with ACPO guidance; the policy is effective.

Strengths

- The constabulary has a major crime review policy, which complies with national guidelines. Undetected offences of homicide, attempted murder, stranger rape, abduction/kidnap (including product contamination), blackmail (including product contamination), fatal road traffic collisions and offences of terrorism are subject to review procedures.
- SIOs are required to provide current situation reports on all undetected offences subject to the review process. Those investigations that have been closed down will be reviewed each year on the anniversary of the offence and will take into account developing techniques. The HOLMES team maintains an independent database, operating a diary system to highlight the requirement for a review, and recording and retaining documentation that relates to such reviews.
- The 'Dreamspace' major incident (July 2006) involved fatalities and resulted in a full criminal investigation. This was a unique incident for the constabulary, and the early involvement of partners (the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), local authority) with the HSE using its full powers, as well as its own laboratories, was a critical success factor. A community impact assessment was completed and a 'gold group' established to manage the incident. Valuable lessons have been learnt, particularly by the police and the HSE with regard to pre-briefing and the handover of investigations.
- Durham complies with requirements to submit returns to the NCPE, and seeks to determine good practice at every opportunity.

Work in progress

- The constabulary has completed an NIM review. The review looked at both the organisational intelligence and the organisational memory resulting in a risk management plan which identifies areas such as training (MoPI), marketing and plan ownership.

The constabulary's tasking and co-ordination process functions to deliver suitable responses to manage major crime threats. At the time of inspection, the implementation of NIM was undergoing a review in order to build on the understanding the constabulary has of historical/current demands faced in identifying predictable demand.

Strengths

- Threats to life, including major crime and the precursors, are included in the strategic assessment, and a strategic problem profile has been produced regarding threats to life. In addition, area commands produce and utilise problem profiles on specific major crime and precursor issues relevant to their locality. They are also included in the level 2 tactical assessments, and all level 2 major crime operations are monitored through this process. Every week, headquarters CID managers discuss and monitor ongoing major crime issues and events through the departmental meeting, in addition to the daily TCG meetings. Subject profiles are produced for all domestic abuse targets at level 1, and MAPPA 3 individuals are specifically monitored through the level 2 TCG, in addition to MAPPA processes.
- The area command TCG processes follow NIM principles. The inspection team attended the North Area tasking and co-ordination meeting, which covered all the key areas, including domestic violence (with identified links to mental health) and drink/drugs. Specified Osman warnings, trigger plans and prisoner releases also featured, as did street drinking and links to alcohol abuse and suicide. The tasking meeting has attendance from a wide range of policing disciplines, including road policing, the dog section, PVP, neighbourhood policing inspectors and intelligence. The meetings take place on a fortnightly basis.
- The constabulary (at area command level) is targeting drink driving within the Polish community, and a dedicated poster campaign has been launched. The Polish member of the LCJB independent advisory group has been involved in the campaign.
- ANPR assets can be tasked in respect of both level 1 and level 2 activities. The strategic roads policing intelligence officer located within FIU acts as a conduit in respect of the asset. ANPR is used as a proactive tool to target level 1 activity that may escalate to level 2 criminality.

Work in progress

- Resourcing shortfalls have meant that headquarters CID has been unable to provide dedicated analytical/research or FIO/PLO support to major crime. This has resulted in ad hoc analysis of issues and an inability to ensure that all intelligence opportunities relating to major crime are exploited. However, through constabulary remodelling, there is to be an investment of an additional detective sergeant and FIOs to add to the existing resources.
- The intelligence stored on HOLMES is currently inaccessible to the FIU (aside from individual analysts who have worked on specific cases); this results in a large pool of intelligence being lost. However, the development of a confidential unit is intended to place HOLMES account intelligence into a Memex-accessible product.
- The implementation of NIM is currently undergoing a full review within the constabulary, which will include assessing whether or not the appropriate processes, staffing and structures are in place and are being effectively utilised. Mechanisms for

rendering HOLMES intelligence accessible are currently being explored – including the i-Bridge. This builds on the understanding the constabulary has of historical/current demand to identify predictable demand.

- The constabulary is undertaking a CHIS review, to be completed in late 2007 or early 2008. The terms of reference have been established. The constabulary has a focus on a number of key areas in respect of intelligence and source handling, including: level 2 control arrangements; realigning source handlers under special operations remit; resilience for handlers under FIO recruitment; and opportunities for tasking through the generation of target profiles and the headquarters CID weekly operational meeting.

The constabulary recognises the needs of diverse communities during major crime investigations. At the time of inspection, the constabulary was delivering race and diversity training across the whole workforce, and was embarking on the race and diversity learning and development implementation strategy, through which investigators will be suitably accredited.

Strengths

- Two detective superintendents provide regular training to staff attending ICIDP and road policing SIO courses on the major crime investigation process, which includes awareness of diverse community needs, and specifically community impact assessment. Both superintendents are PIP level 3 trained and are currently mentoring other SIOs. Community engagement is an essential part of this assessment. Area staff assisting in major crime investigations have received the relevant ICIDP training.
- The detective superintendent (proactive) is the constabulary lead on critical incident management, and provides regular training to the core leadership programme. The case study is a real case involving the travelling community.
- The constabulary has facilitated training on 'honour-based violence', in order to better inform staff of the implications/impact on individuals, families and the community.
- Officers within neighbourhood policing teams have received an input from the major crime team on neighbourhood policing team training days. This focused on investigation requirement for major crime enquiries and the particular role of neighbourhood officers in supporting information sharing through community contacts and networks. Community inspectors have received specific guidance on community impact assessments, and will be allocated this responsibility during investigations.
- The constabulary has invested in test-purchase officers, with one member of staff having obtained a certificate in education through part-time study at university. This enables training to be delivered by a practitioner. Training includes the complexities of operating within minority communities and an understanding of the impact that operations may have on communities.

Work in progress

- At the time of inspection, the constabulary was delivering the Police Race and Diversity Learning and Development Programme (PRDLDP) across the whole workforce.
- The constabulary is embarking on the race and diversity learning and development implementation strategy (RDLDIS), through which investigators will be suitably accredited.
- New communications centre staff receive training on critical incidents as part of their induction course. Supervisors are given a two-day critical incident command training course. This training is ongoing and does not capture existing staff. There is considerable pressure on supervisors to ensure that this training is cascaded to their staff in the interim.

- The constabulary is to provide a two-day mentor's course to NVQ level (delivered by GMP). Supervisors are to be trained as A1 assessors.

Prevention

Durham makes use of IAGs/key individuals and maximises the contribution of partners in the management of major crime investigations.

Strengths

- The constabulary makes effective use of partners in managing major crimes/incidents, and opportunities are maximised in respect of key individual networks. The effective use of KINs was evidenced in a missing from home/crime enquiry in the Barnard Castle area involving the Teesdale Fell Rescue, staff at a local school, identified members of the community and Cumbria Constabulary.
- The County Durham and Darlington criminal justice board IAG has been formed as a result of a recommendation from the Morris report and the identification of a need for stronger community links with the police in relation to the investigation of major/critical incidents. The criminal justice board has introduced four IAGs on a themed basis: black and minority ethnic; lesbian, gay and transgender; disability; and youth. Terms of reference have been established for all four groups. Durham Constabulary makes a full and active contribution to the IAGs under the direction of the Chief Constable, who chairs the criminal justice board.
- The black and minority ethnic IAG is the best established of the IAGs and comprises a cross-section of members from the Sikh community, the Chinese community, the traveller community, the Muslim community, the Polish community and Victim Support, as well as independent members. During the inspection process, HMIC attended a meeting of the group, which had a detailed agenda covering a wide range of issues. The meeting discussed a number of determined actions (action summary; achievement record; training; Inside Justice Week reflections; feedback from the national IAG conference; Chinese kidnaps; recruitment; and security issues at Durham Tees Valley airport. The group was also given a presentation by a member of Durham Constabulary on BME confidence. In respect of the research highlighted in the presentation, the Chief Constable, who was present at the meeting, proposed that he be held to account for development of the finding through both the IAG and the constabulary race and diversity programme board.
- The LCJB black and minority ethnic IAG was fully engaged by the constabulary during Operation Seagram. Members of the group were engaged at gold level, meeting with chief officers in what was seen as an effective and dynamic way.
- Two members of the BME IAG have been used to inform policy and action in one critical incident, and are currently being consulted on what the constabulary might do within the current national operation to combat human trafficking and prostitution.
- The current IAG members have recently had national training funded by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform (OCJR). This involved a two-day course with dedicated trainers, looking at policies, responsibilities and professional development.
- The constabulary has identified the Polish community as the largest developing community, and is attempting to develop links through KINs. In addition, a Polish national day was organised in December in order to develop contacts.
- Each neighbourhood within the North Area has established an effective KIN mechanism, which has been used to inform policy and actions within major crime investigations – for example, during a homicide investigation in the Peterlee area

(Operation Newhall City), where an elderly lady died as a result of a neighbour dispute. KIN members provided valuable information on family and community tensions. As a result, sensitive police interventions were possible, thus preventing an escalation of tension and disorder.

- Operation Cutler was an investigation into the sudden death of a disabled male in council-assisted care. Following early consultation with Durham County Council, the HSE, HM Coroner and the CPS, the police investigation was handed over to the HSE in line with existing protocols.
- The annual report of the Darlington Refuge for 2005/06 indicated that its accommodation for victims of domestic abuse had run with an occupancy rate of 100% over the previous year. The charity works in partnership with the South Area to provide the Freedom Programme, a training programme for victims of domestic abuse. Additionally, the Bishop Auckland refuge is constantly full, and the manager currently assists in facilitating the perpetrator programme running from Bishop Auckland police station.
- SIOs regularly make use of partners in major crime investigations. An example involved work with the HSE in the 'Dreamspace' incident in the Chester-le-Street Riverside Park. In this case, the police have primacy in a joint investigation, making good use of the HSE laboratories to examine key processes. Other joint working with the HSE included a van explosion in Wolsingham and the death in a healthcare setting in Bishop Auckland.
- SIOs use the forensic science service (FSS) in the interpretation of crime scenes and analysis of samples. Indeed, significant results have been achieved at court as a result of this engagement in reinforcing the SIO hypothesis and subsequent interpretation delivered to the court by the legal team.

Work in progress

- The partnerships unit has responsibility for a number of key areas: LCJB (attended by the Chief Constable), the criminal justice reform team, community safety, and diversity. The unit is line-managed by the head of corporate development. The administration of the justice unit stands alone, reporting directly to the DCC. There appears to be a lack of connectivity between these two areas, and the constabulary will need to review this remodelling to provide resilience and to ensure appropriate consideration of the citizen focus agenda (to include neighbourhood policing, quality of service, call handling, etc, resulting in a 'cradle to grave' approach).

Areas for improvement

- The disability, youth and LGBT IAGs need to develop. The LGBT IAG has had difficulties with recruitment, and all the IAGs require training in relation to their role in critical incidents (area staff have limited awareness of the IAGs and the role they can play).
- There is no IAG representation on major incident training (they need to be included in Operation Madre once they are better established).

Contingency plans are in place to minimise the impact of any escalation of a major crime incident. Golden hour principles are understood by call management staff and first responders.

Strengths

- The constabulary has a designated business continuity manager. The post holder oversees the development and regular maintenance and testing of business continuity plans, in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The headquarters CID department is in the final stages of producing the departmental business continuity plan. Following the introduction of the Act, Durham invested resources in contingency planning, and policies are in place to minimise risk to communities/public service utilities.
- The constabulary works to the ACPO Emergency Procedures Manual and the 'Home Office Counter Terrorist Contingency Planning Guidance.
- Call management staff are all trained to PIP level 1 standards for initial response under the NOS. The initial response has been tested using the national K&E unit and child rescue alert procedures. Call-handling scripts have been developed for response to murder, abduction, kidnap, rape and 'bogus official' crime.
- Systems and procedures for managing the initial response to incidents have been evaluated and updated. Question sets have been devised by the constabulary SIOs and added to command and control, providing communications staff with a clear aid to memory when dealing with critical incidents and major crime. The system has capacity to call up additional question sets, should incidents develop beyond their initial description. A sensible approach is taken between answering prompts and deploying resources, and early evaluation shows the system to be fit for purpose. Operators taking the initial call for a critical incident will contact the communications room inspector as a matter of course. Processes have been tested during a number of exercises, eg an exercise relating to child rescue.
- Contingency plan hard-copy manual files are held locally in the communication centres, with electronic versions on Steria Storm, linked as standard operating procedures (SOPs).
- The constabulary practised its response to a child rescue alert, focusing on call handling, deployment and MIRWEB. This has been the subject of a debrief at the critical incident command forum.
- Minimising impact, multi-agency links are well established with partner agencies, including British Transport Police, Government Office for the North East, community cohesion unit (CCU), local authority and the HSE.
- Relevant ICIDP training emphasises the golden hour principle, and the constabulary arranges for frequent lectures/talks on relevant issues, eg Soham or honour killings. There is a published call-out system, where detective sergeants and detective inspectors are contacted at an early stage of any relevant incident, so that they can assess and take charge of it.
- Operational staff, including PCSOs, have received training on major incidents. Generally, they show a good awareness of golden hour principles and understand the SAD CHALET mnemonic, safety, scene preservation and cordons. There is a need for continuous training to ensure that skills are maintained.

- The number of individual response plans or trigger plans for specific risks/threats is increasing, and these are seen to work very well – particularly in relation to domestic violence incidents. Plans can be attached to a name or address field on the command and control system, and the full plan is accessible as soon as that field is completed.

Work in progress

- The constabulary has process mapped its response to major incidents and a detailed aid to memory exists for staff. The document is accessible on the constabulary intranet, and there are plans to develop this further, with hyperlinks to more detailed information on individual roles and responsibilities.
- Constabulary action plans are in the process of being updated, and the order of priority is risk based. Those plans that have been updated are of a high standard (high risk/most used), but some inaccuracies remain in the older plans. Staff are aware of this and a number of plans carry a 'warning'.
- The role of silver commander has been developed beyond the initial response to firearms incidents. Communications inspectors have been given additional training to carry out the role.
- The constabulary has itself identified the need for closer liaison with operations contingency planning, in order to maintain contingency planning documents and develop training issues.
- Durham is taking steps to ensure that staff recognise the potential of criminality in their initial dealings with incidents, in particular in respect of scene preservation.

Areas for improvement

- Communications room staff highlighted the difficulties of dealing with major incidents/major crime in respect of access to resources. Comment was made that there is a noticeable lack of resources/supervision on the ground. This is seen, in part, to be due to the shift system being worked, which does not fit the demand profile for the constabulary. To maintain cover in the communications room at the appropriate times, there is a need to recruit additional staff on specific shift patterns.
- Updating of command and control is carried out by a support team that only works during office hours. If a high-level risk is identified outside this time, then command and control cannot be updated, and any potential situation has to be managed by briefing the control room staff verbally.

Threats from precursors to major crime offending are analysed effectively.

Strengths

- Crime and the precursors are included in the strategic assessment, and a strategic problem profile has been produced regarding threats to life. In addition, area commands produce and utilise problem profiles on specific major crime and precursor issues relevant to their locality. They are also included in the level 2 tactical assessment, and all level 2 major crime operations are monitored through this process. Every week, headquarters CID managers discuss and monitor ongoing major crime issues and events through the departmental meeting, in addition to the daily TCG meetings. Subject profiles are produced for all domestic abuse targets at level 1, and MAPPA 3 individuals are specifically monitored through level 2 TCG, in addition to MAPPA processes.
- The domestic homicide review policy aims to reflect upon response to major crime, organisationally and from a multi-agency perspective. In addition, it seeks to identify precursor issues and appropriate preventive tactics.
- Against the backdrop of increased numbers of reported incidents, there must be an awareness of the number of homicides where the offender and the victim have been involved in ongoing domestic abuse. For example, in the period from January 2006 to September 2006, there were six homicides that were domestic related (two-thirds of homicides). In the period from October 2006 to September 2007, there was only one homicide that was domestic related (out of a total of five).
- The constabulary continues to target domestic abuse at area command and constabulary level, and a number of initiatives have been developed. Both North and South area commands now produce subject profiles on the most prolific domestic abuse offenders, and accountability at a local level is ensured through area tasking and co-ordination meetings. While not all domestic violence officers (DVOs) are ICIDP trained, this has been identified in the South Area business plan for progression. Furthermore, systems are now in place to ensure that civil orders/injunctions, etc are kept up to date and are accessible to officers via the communications department.
- During a Home Office visit to the specialist domestic abuse courts in the constabulary area, three courts were identified as among the best performing in the country. The constabulary has seen a 70% success rate at court during 2007. The work to provide training continues to be co-ordinated by the strategic co-ordinator.
- The constabulary is attempting to change offender behaviour through a voluntary perpetrator programme, with assistance from four external facilitators. An evaluation of the programme will take place on completion of the 32-week programme.
- In area commands, analysis to identify emerging trends within categories of sexual offence, serious violence and domestic abuse is undertaken in preparation of the tactical assessment. This includes threats posed by the possession and criminal use of knives and firearms.
- Under a national operation neighbourhood officers have completed actions to fulfil the intelligence requirement on meeting places and religious establishments.
- Initiatives such as the 'lessons learnt review', involving partner agencies drawing on the findings of homicide reviews, are to be applauded. Areas are also producing

subject profiles on the most prolific domestic abuse offenders, and the ownership of these sites with area command tasking and co-ordination.

- The DAAT has a focus on a number of key areas, including treatment centres; intelligence gathering to identify problem/hotspot areas; and the identification of drugs markets – information that can be shared with partners.

Work in progress

- The constabulary has proposed the creation of a strategic executive management board for safeguarding vulnerable people. The primary focus of the group would be on risk of serious harm and threats to life. It is proposed that the executive board would be in addition to the current arrangements for the County Durham and Darlington domestic abuse forum, MAPPA strategic management board, local safeguarding children boards, safeguarding adult boards, and local criminal justice boards (MARAC). These boards would report to the executive management board. A number of business benefits are anticipated, including rationalisation of strategic thinking across the vulnerability agenda, progress in building on the existing partnership arrangements and in securing joined-up strategic thinking, moves to approach vulnerability holistically and to challenge the 'paradigm of silos', and measures to challenge existing working practices and business processes. Membership of the group is proposed at executive level, with the constabulary representative being the Chief Constable.
- Analysis undertaken to inform the constabulary threats to life problem profile identified that at least one wounding offence in six is directly attributable to a domestic incident. Further analysis also identified that at least 16% of all reported female rape was committed by the victim's partner, which suggests that non-consensual sex within established relationships represents a significant threat to women across County Durham and Darlington. It is believed that such offences also suffer from under-reporting. The constabulary seeks to address this issue through initiatives such as the development of a standardised intelligence flow between the victims and the witness unit to capture intelligence from victims who do not wish to pursue their case with the police. It is anticipated that this will help to improve the gap in knowledge that exists.
- As a result of inward migration, the definition of minority communities has widened from the 'traditional' black, Asian, traveller, gay, lesbian and transgender communities to incorporate 'new' minorities, such as the Polish and Latvian communities. The constabulary has formed a racist incident group (RIG) to monitor hate crime and provide a focus for policy, strategy and best practice.
- The DAAT is developing a targeting and resourcing strategy based on intelligence/activity. The location of resources from the offender management unit at Peterlee will assist the constabulary response to individuals who are identified as persistent offenders. The initiative will be subject to an impact assessment.
- The criminal use of firearms is currently limited to criminals threatening or intimidating each other, as opposed to using firearms to commit crime. This is being continually monitored for its impact on OCGs. Work is going on to identify the scale and nature of the supply of firearms, as this has been identified as an intelligence gap (mirroring the national picture).

- The constabulary is developing an enhanced security facility within the Durham Tees Valley airport. The constabulary is looking to have a uniformed police presence on a 24/7 basis in support of special branch officers.

Areas for improvement

- Threats to life was adapted within the control strategy in 2006. The constabulary has examined categories identified by the Home Office in respect of threats to life and has researched historic data to establish trends. However, there remain some gaps in respect of mental health and suicide and the precursor events that may lead up to a critical incident involving such incidents.
- Intelligence gaps have been identified, particularly around the creation of heroin markets and the criminal supply/use of firearms.
- The identification of vulnerable communities and locations is currently focused on a neighbourhood level and on fulfilling the rich picture requirement. There are currently no products to provide an aggregated overview of communities (the purchase of Mosaic has been authorised so that it can assist in this overview, and within the strategic assessment there is a specific recommendation for strategic analysis of vulnerable communities and locations, which has been actioned); longer-term analysis (longer-term threats) is not carried out in area commands. This is a staffing issue, and priority is given to here-and-now issues.

At the time of inspection, the constabulary had a draft threat to life policy, although threat to life was adapted within the 2006 control strategy.

Strengths

- The constabulary's processes for dealing with individuals at risk and relevant police responses is regarded as effective, including the use of Osman warnings. There are good examples of Osman warnings and other tactical options having been used to reduce the risk to life at a constabulary and area command level.
- The constabulary has a domestic homicide review policy. Reviews have been carried out into two recent homicide investigations to learn lessons and initiate preventive action in future cases. The constabulary also identifies risk to domestic violence victims using a MARAC process, which can be linked to the MAPPA process as required.
- The constabulary's response to areas such as kidnap and dangerous offenders where a threat to life exists is fully considered, including such preventive actions as are deemed appropriate.
- At level 2 tasking and co-ordination meetings, the tactical assessment focuses on the control strategy priorities of tackling terrorism and organised crime. Under the latter, firearms issues are a priority for discussion. This is also a standing item on the RIU tactical assessment, which encompasses the three regional police forces and a range of partners. The criminal use of firearms was commented upon in the threats to life problem profile. The constabulary does not have a gun crime problem linked to homicide and injury, and a firearms suppression policy is not considered necessary.

Work in progress

- The head of CID is to ensure the application of a constabulary critical incident review policy to proactively prevent critical incidents and evaluate the effectiveness of the police response. The detective superintendent (proactive) has been tasked with producing a policy.

Durham has a witness protection capability, though staff are not dedicated to the role. The constabulary operates to a policy that is promulgated to all staff. The constabulary collaborates with other forces as necessary.

Strengths

- The provisions of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 have been introduced by the constabulary to all practices that relate to ABE. These measures deal with vulnerable and child witnesses and provide a number of special measures, which are adequately documented elsewhere.
- The constabulary has published an anonymous witness policy to cover situations where witnesses are capable of giving meaningful evidence but will not do so unless police (and subsequently the courts) address their fears by providing and preserving anonymity at various stages throughout the legal process. The policy was ratified in 2006 and utilised within a month of publication. A witness protection policy has also been written and is currently awaiting ratification. Durham has collaborative arrangements in place with Northumbria Police.
- Within area commands, officers are aware of the support and advice available from the witness protection unit within special operations. This has been used within area commands previously, when witnesses were given new identities and moved from the North East. Officers are also aware of the special measures afforded to witnesses at court, utilising ABE interviews and liaising with the CPS.
- In relation to maintaining security of police tactics, staff are fully aware of the need to protect tactics. To this end, the deployment of covert tactics is risk assessed to ensure that tactics are not compromised. This is particularly relevant in relation to any deployments involving 'bad on bad' incidents. Additionally, all staff involved in covert operations are required to sign indemnities at the commencement of an operation, to ensure that operational tactics are not disclosed.

Work in progress

- The constabulary is developing a confidential unit in the FIU, which will be the gatekeeper for the sanitisation of intelligence from diverse covert sources and will then populate the constabulary's intelligence system (Memex) with the product.

Area for improvement

- Durham does not have dedicated resources for witness protection, and officers fulfil a number of roles. This has the potential to impact on their availability and puts undue pressure on staff to balance what are challenging and demanding situations. The situation also has the potential to impact on the understanding of staff within the area commands. Acknowledging the situation found at the time of inspection, the constabulary is to provide additional resources. The constabulary needs to ensure that the requirements placed on staff are not too demanding.

Durham has adequate processes to monitor the impact of preventive and enforcement activity. There is evidence that the broad range of community policing assets are used to help understand levels of harm in the community.

Strengths

- Indicators currently utilised by Durham include: firearm authorities monitored by firearms logistics; Osman warnings issued by the appropriate officer and monitored through level 2 TCG; PPOs assessed and monitored by PPO co-ordinators at level 1 (PPOs are a local priority for 2007/08); OBJTs monitored through the constabulary performance framework; public opinion surveys and fear of crime surveys co-ordinated by corporate development and results delivered through the FMG; police and community consultation group (PCCG) meetings held twice a year in each locality; hate crime monitored and addressed through the policing performance assessment framework (PPAF), level 1 TCG and IAGs; SARs involving the movement of finances monitored to indicate levels of criminality and potential risks; signal crimes monitored at level 1 through community profiles and analytical teams, with the reports subsequently discussed and actioned through the CDRP problem-solving groups; emerging issues around threats to life monitored by the level 2 TCG to ensure that intelligence collection, preventive and enforcement activity is undertaken.
- Area commands utilise an extensive network of community contacts to regularly measure harm within a community, and this information then informs the follow-up enquiries/assessments, eg a subsequent community impact assessment.
- There are good links to partner agencies such as the DAAT, Trading Standards and HMRC. The DAAT has assisted in the intelligence requirement for information in respect of cocaine and heroin supply/use within the constabulary.
- Work has commenced to introduce a joint performance monitoring framework with the DAAT (initially Durham), covering recidivism, success of treatment, trigger offences and perception measures. There is evidence of good working relationships with the DAAT in terms of the investigations into drug-related deaths in the constabulary area. In incidents where it is suspected that poor-quality drugs are readily available, with the potential to harm users, there has been excellent communication within the community to warn of the dangers.
- There is evidence of beat inspectors/sergeants on the area commands who have developed their skills to manage covert tactics, including RIPA authorisations and test-purchase work, aimed at disrupting level 1 and level 2 criminality. Evidence of this is supplied by a number of operations which have used the assets of the constabulary in an effective manner to obtain excellent results (specialist operations/proactive CID/inter-agency working). These examples involved the effective use of community impact assessments and the tasking of the wider policing family to good effect.
- Durham has a strategic domestic abuse co-ordinator, who is rolling out a training programme across the constabulary. This is taking place alongside a full review of domestic abuse performance indicators.

Work in progress

- Suicide prevention has been highlighted as an area requiring attention by the constabulary and its partners, primarily the PCTs. This is because of the number of

people committing suicide in prison, on the rail network, etc across the constabulary area.

Area for improvement

- The constabulary has identified the need to explore potential opportunities to provide a co-ordinated harm assessment, utilising national best practice to further improve service delivery.

Durham has a reactive approach to professional standards, with no effective proactive capacity to identify risk and threat to the constabulary.

Strengths

- In respect of the security of police buildings, all stations are key coded, and within headquarters all officers/staff enter by means of the warrant card. This allows analysis of who is entering the building. Arrangements are made for special branch CT trained staff to periodically check police buildings for security vulnerability issues.
- The constabulary has a confidential reporting line, confidential email, post box and paper system for staff to report areas of concern to the PSD.
- The PSD has linked up with community safety in the True Vision initiative to raise public awareness about the department and make use of contact opportunities. In addition, the department has a service confidence policy, which was reviewed in 2007, to explain the role of managers in the organisation and which details their responsibilities with regard to professional standards.
- The constabulary carries out testing on a number of operations throughout its geographical area. This takes place in conjunction with the head of CID and the authorising officer. Feedback in relation to this proactive approach is provided, and any breach is dealt with.

Work in progress

- Within the recently approved constabulary crime, drug and alcohol strategy there is an action which recognises the influence of serious and organised crime networks in the targeting of staff working with intelligence and enforcement agencies and the potential for corrupt practices as a consequence of this activity. The action is that the head of CID is required to maintain regular dialogue with the head of professional standards to ensure the maintenance and integrity of police intelligence and operations across the workforce. This action has been appended to the headquarters CID business plan and is auditable through the head of CID providing a yearly update as to progress. In addition to these arrangements, the constabulary authorising officer provides updates to the head of CID whenever there are covert authorisations targeted against members of the constabulary. In making the links with strategic risk management, the head of CID has previously raised concerns about the circulation of intelligence bulletins on the constabulary intranet, which included at one time the circulation of the names and addresses of registered sex offenders in one area command. These concerns were progressed by the head of CID through the service delivery programme board and were supported by the constabulary information security officer. As a consequence, the constabulary is introducing an upgrade to its Memex intelligence system that offers extra security for intelligence bulletins, which can only be accessed by those who are authorised to do so.
- The introduction of a confidential unit is considered to further enhance the sanitisation of intelligence from covert operations.
- The constabulary is exploring opportunities for the PSD to work 'off site'. Security is a particular issue, and the arrangements for confidential interviews are compromised by the present location of the unit (within headquarters).

Areas for improvement

- Durham has a reactive approach to professional standards, with no effective proactive capacity to identify risk and threat to the constabulary.
- The constabulary has identified the need to proceed with the upgrade of Memex because of the security implications that surround intelligence. Due to the limited resources in the integrity unit, testing does not occur as often and as regularly as it should.
- A limited amount of vetting takes place (at time of offer of employment only) and the constabulary is not aware of the level of security risks employees pose. The vulnerability of vetting is now on the constabulary risk register. There are issues surrounding the levels of vetting taking place during the recruitment of PCSOs, in particular with associates and family members. An area of frustration is the sheer volume and protracted nature of the vetting required for a large number of posts. It is an issue nationally that those organisations that are tasked with carrying out vetting do not have sufficient resources in place to meet the demand.

Enforcement

Governance arrangements for major crime investigations are effective, with appropriate use made of independent advisory groups and community membership of gold command support groups.

Strengths

- The constabulary's corporate plan has two elements: 'business planning' and 'business change'. This differentiation enables the constabulary to distinguish between 'delivery and performance' activities and 'developments for the future'. The business planning level shows how the constabulary's vision is delivered through the range of constabulary strategies, the actions from which are fed into each appropriate area and departmental business plan. The performance management framework measures progress against each part of the corporate plan to provide the accountability mechanism required to demonstrate that, across the constabulary, each individual team is working to deliver the constabulary's vision, as well as to show accountability for the delivery of each constabulary strategy. The business change level illustrates how developmental work helps to achieve the aims of the constabulary vision. The constabulary has in place a programme board structure to effectively manage development work. There are currently five programme boards in existence; each one is directed by a member of the constabulary executive and oversees a number of relevant constabulary corporate projects.
- Service delivery programme board: this board, chaired by the assistant chief constable, meets every two months and co-ordinates activity in relation to all projects and work streams that have an impact upon service delivery. The police authority is represented on this board.
- Remodelling programme board: chaired by the Chief Constable and meeting monthly, this programme board oversees the progress of all initiatives agreed as part of the remodelling programme, including internal investment in capacity and capability in relation to protective services assets.
- Police authority protective services working group: this working group is a sub-group of the police authority performance management panel and oversees progress in relation to developments around the constabulary's capacity and capability (together with appropriate partners) to respond to identified strategic risks within the protective services arena. The membership of this group consists of the police authority chair and vice chair, two additional police authority members, the police authority executive director and deputy clerk, the ACC, the detective chief superintendent (crime) and superintendent (operations). The group holds the Chief Constable to account for ensuring that the programme meets its objectives and realises expected benefits. While the working group is part of the police authority's performance management governance framework, there are strong links and interdependencies with the authority's continuous improvement panel, which is in place to oversee change management associated with the constabulary's workforce modernisation programme. Responsibilities and key tasks include: to be a key stakeholder in shaping the vision, outcomes and strategy for protective services and to demonstrate clear leadership throughout the life of the programme; to work with the constabulary to raise awareness of the protective services agenda among all key stakeholders, without raising the fear of crime; to promote collaborative working; to monitor the level of investment required to set up and run the programme and to make sure that the desired benefits are realised; to play a key role in setting

priorities in the light of consultation with stakeholders and the public through the police authority's community safety and engagement panel; to make sure that responsibilities and lines of communication are clear throughout the life of the programme and that all interested parties (the stakeholders) are involved; to monitor work planning and resource management to ensure that projected benefits are delivered on time and within budget; to monitor the management of issues and risks; to monitor quality management processes through relevant and timely programme information; and to make appropriate recommendations to the performance management panel in relation to protective services.

- The police authority has been involved with the constabulary in deciding priorities that arise from the strategic assessment. There is an expectation that these priorities are channelled through the public consultation process.
- The executive director of the police authority has been in post since March 2007 and was instrumental in the appointment of a 'policy and engagement officer', who is now in post and is positioned to be at the table with the LAA, building capacity with meaningful dialogue with partners.
- The constabulary has an appropriate structure in place to mobilise gold support, involving representation from local communities which help direct resources.

Work in progress

- The protective services working group has drafted detailed terms of reference, which are in the process of being finalised (amended to reflect the capacity and capability of intelligence and the ability of this to identify and capture risk). The role of the group is to monitor and maintain the constabulary's protective services project, which sits within the service delivery programme board and covers eight strands/project work streams: major crime investigation; serious, organised and cross-border crime; counter-terrorism and domestic extremism; civil contingencies; critical incidents; public order; strategic roads policing; and protecting vulnerable people. The authority is to give consideration to vetting requirements.
- The authority is looking for the members to be more proactive and to demonstrate their added value. This is seen as a culture change for the authority. An example of this is the protective services working group, in which the authority has significant involvement and responsibility.
- The authority is looking to progress a number of key areas, including 'learning and development'; links to 'organisational development'; and 'business process improvement' with an emphasis on quality outcomes. Progress is also being made on a member's appraisal scheme to give more local accountability, and on streamlining a number of processes, including vetting.
- The police authority is seeking to recruit a 'performance management officer' and a 'partnerships officer' in early 2008. This will enable the authority to participate more strongly in a joint engagement strategy with the constabulary to hear the voice of the community more effectively. These changes will ensure that the authority receives a 'full picture' in terms of performance across the whole business.

The head of crime is fully trained and competent in the management of linked and series crime. This officer is supported by staff who have undergone comprehensive training.

Strengths

- The head of CID is trained in the management of linked and series crime. The post holder has been a member of the national ACPO homicide working group for seven years; he is an experienced senior investigating officer and has provided support to other senior investigating officers while they move through the tier 3 PIP accreditation.
- The constabulary has four senior investigating officers accredited to tier 3 standards, and there are a further three officers who have commenced the programme. These officers are based in both area command and headquarters CID. The detective superintendent (proactive) has been assigned the constabulary lead, for the purposes of projects, for managing critical incidents and major crime. Reporting to the constabulary service delivery programme board, the detective superintendent is progressing a constabulary project on critical incident training, which embraces community impact assessment. Within the constabulary crime, drug and alcohol strategy, there is a specific section on managing critical incidents and major crime, and there are actions within this which identify links with critical incident command. In particular, there are actions to identify an ongoing training and awareness programme for all relevant staff in the identification of a critical incident; to develop response plans and ensure that they are regularly rehearsed and fit for purpose; to construct a programme of regular review and inspection of the management of incidents requiring a firearms response and of the ability to co-ordinate a casualty bureau and MIRWEB; to apply a constabulary critical incident review policy to proactively prevent critical incidents and evaluate the effectiveness of the police response; to identify, initiate and regularly review debriefing processes for post-incident learning; and to consistently apply and use community impact assessments following major crime or critical incidents. The progression of these actions is captured either through updates in business plan processes or through an audit regime. A personal objective for the detective superintendent (proactive) has been set for the production of a constabulary critical incident review policy.
- The constabulary continues to provide national support in respect of the ACPO homicide working group, through the Chief Constable and head of CID. This is supported by the SIOs undertaking work in areas such as policy files and infant death.
- The constabulary has a structure in place to mobilise a strategic gold group to oversee resources. The strategic co-ordinating group was used in an incident at Wolsingham, which involved an acetylene gas cylinder explosion and resulted in a fatality.
- The Chief Constable chairs the local resilience forum, which meets on a quarterly basis and is attended by senior executives of the local authorities and utility companies. The forum is supported by a joint emergency liaison group.
- There is a series of operations during the year to test the constabulary response to critical incidents. These are table-top exercises, using the other emergency services and representatives from the local authorities.

- The constabulary has experience of dealing with a serial offender/series crime, and appropriate processes are in place, including chain of command, etc.

Work is in progress to ensure that the constabulary's performance in the investigation of major crime is monitored through a regime that reviews each operation in terms of costs, outputs and outcomes.

Strengths

- The constabulary has instigated a critical incident command forum (CICF), chaired by the ACC and convened on a quarterly basis or as otherwise determined by the chair. The purpose of the CICF is to debrief/review any incident in the preceding quarter that had either the potential to develop into a critical incident (across the whole spectrum of policing activities) or that actually did so, and to identify any areas of learning arising as a result of that incident. The standing members of the CICF include members of the area senior management teams and the heads of central departments (or, in their absence, an appropriate replacement), including the head of CID.
- On occasions, in order to assist in the debriefing/review of a particular incident, it will be beneficial to the CICF to have 'key players' present to discuss specifics surrounding the incident and, if deemed appropriate, an officer with the requisite knowledge and 'expertise' to assist in the debriefing/review. The attendance of such officers will be at the request of the ACC or forum members.
- Although by debriefing/reviewing incidents the CICF may identify 'learning points', the forum itself is not a policy-making forum. Any such recommended change to current constabulary policies should be referred by the CICF to the relevant policy-making forum for that subject matter, outlining the incident, the learning obtained from the incident and the suggested change to current constabulary policy. The CICF does not replace the formal debriefing process of any critical incident, which should be undertaken as determined by a member of the constabulary executive or the SIO.
- The constabulary undertook an exercise to test its response to a child rescue alert. The findings from this exercise have been presented to the CICF.
- Criminal justice issues have been targeted to enhance skills in evidence content, points of law and presentation. The CPS is an active partner, and the impact in respect of improved performance, reduced discontinuance, etc will be fed back to the constabulary.
- Scientific support staff highlighted an effective working relationship with SIOs, who were receptive to the expertise offered. Staff highlighted the fact that their good work/efforts were recognised and acknowledged by SIOs on a regular basis. An understanding of their expertise was less evident at area command detective inspector/chief inspector level.
- The constabulary has significantly increased the budget of the scientific support department over the last 12 months, and this has been matched by a continued improvement in service delivery. The department has a detailed performance management/quality of service structure.
- Call-handling staff are PIP accredited (level 1). In support of service delivery and personal development, the superintendent (communications) is identifying a continuous development and training programme for call-handling staff in the first response to the management of critical incidents and major crime.

Work in progress

- Within the crime, drug and alcohol strategy there is recognition that investigations into serious and organised criminality, by their very nature, can involve the use of protracted covert policing techniques and resources, which need to be prioritised against other competing demands. There is an action underpinning this statement for the detective superintendent (proactive) to ensure that there is a continuous management review of operations, assessed against operational aims, cost inputs and outputs. Furthermore, there is an action for the detective chief inspector (organised crime) to undertake formal debriefing procedures following the conclusion of operations, in order to provide continuous learning and development of corporate knowledge and best practice. It is anticipated that these actions will culminate in the production of a standard template for the operational review of investigations, and that this template would be utilised for both major crime and organised crime investigations.
- The detective superintendent (reactive) is overseeing the restructuring of the economic crime unit, to further develop money laundering and financial investigations and intelligence.

Areas for improvement

- It is not considered that the constabulary's current position satisfies the requirements to rigorously manage performance of major crime activity, including an operational review of each individual investigation. Furthermore, this is not linked to cost inputs and outputs.
- The constabulary acknowledged that it is not fully compliant with the standard in this area; however this has been recognised within the crime, drug and alcohol strategy and actions have been identified to progress the matter. These actions will be audited through routine business plan updates.
- The constabulary is looking at a number of initiatives in order to further improve quality of service/cost-effectiveness. These include the introduction of digital photography and the in-house examination of mobile telephones.
- Durham has undertaken an internal audit and has been subject to an external PDQAR audit, both of which confirmed that the constabulary significantly under-records incidents of domestic violence. The main reason is identified as officers failing to submit CR87 forms.
- SARs are dealt with via a standalone system in the constabulary, which is the same system used by SOCA. There was evidence that this area could be extended further by adding more resilience, which would enable a greater number of referrals to be developed.

Performance Management and Resilience

Durham has sufficient investigative capability to meet the predictable demands of major crime investigations.

Strengths

- The constabulary has a resourcing of major crime policy, which was reviewed and substantially updated in 2006.
- The structure and establishment of the MCT is seen as fit for purpose. The MCT operates a desk-based approach. Training has been provided to staff across a range of disciplines, including family liaison officers (FLOs), SOLOs, PIP, ABE, CCTV, etc. There are no dedicated financial investigators within the MCT: staff are brought in on a case-by-case basis.
- The constabulary has made significant investment in specially trained interview advisers and specialist suspect interviewers, and the intention is to extend this training to specialist witness interviewers.
- The constabulary has established a detailed outline of activities for major incidents in respect of first officer actions; actions of bronze; actions of silver; and dedicated personnel to fulfil critical roles (eg evacuation, etc). Managers within the MCT were satisfied with the level of initial response to major incidents on the part of call takers, front-line officers (including area CID) and scientific services.
- An audit of skills within the organisation takes place and the skills gap is discussed at the training user group (TUG). This takes place some four months prior to the end of the financial year, allowing training requirements to be built into the forthcoming financial year. All departments are profiled annually.
- PIP is delivered on site and the ICIDP has also attracted students from neighbouring forces under a collaborative arrangement. The head of learning and development attends a regional head of training meeting, which provides opportunities for collaborative approaches to training issues. As there is no accredited course for road policing investigations, the constabulary has developed a roads policing SIO course, and a collaborative approach ensures that opportunities and skills enhancement are available regionally. The constabulary has been visited by 15 forces interested in how the PIP process has been delivered in Durham, and they have taken away a number of areas of good practice.
- There is an appropriate level of training for all staff working within the intelligence functions. Staff have received training in i2 strategic analysis.
- Organisational learning is being extended to the other emergency services, in particular the fire service, which is aware of the potential forensic recovery opportunities presented at critical incident scenes.
- The constabulary has delivered five critical incident command courses aimed at inspector level and above to enhance staff awareness of the considerations around threat to life, preservation of life and the collection/preservation of evidence.
- FIOs in area commands and in the FIU are to be trained as expert witnesses (drugs). The constabulary will expand this to develop expert training for FLOs.

- The constabulary has identified areas for development using HMIC constabulary/BCU reports, and has developed a series of courses to enhance skills in incident management and investigation for core, beat and road policing unit staff. The constabulary has dedicated days for constables/supervisors, aimed at skills development. The process has been adopted by West Yorkshire and the PSNI.
- SIOs have attended HYDRA training in a range of competence areas, including kidnap and extortion.
- Durham delivers its own six-day residential test-purchase course. Students are provided with material to read ahead of the course, and they are put through 'real-time' scenarios. The constabulary has a two-day training event held every 18 months, in which test-purchase operatives train together with a drug referral worker.
- Officers have attended UKP4 courses on CT provision in surveillance.
- There is evidence that the constabulary is providing training and accreditation opportunities for staff in the key roles within call handling, eg constabulary incident manager.
- The constabulary has trained core policing staff to carry out the role of SOLO. This includes both female and male officers. SOLOs attend all reports of sexual offences and carry out the initial stage of investigations. Staff are available 24/7, and there is a call-out rota when staff are not immediately available. The SARC is accessible to staff 24/7, using passes held at the vulnerability units.
- The constabulary has an appropriate number of operational scientific support staff (CSIs and VCSIs) spread equally across the two area commands. Staff are deployed from four stations (Darlington, Bishop Auckland, Peterlee and Stanley). A career structure is in place, with opportunities to develop and advance from VCSI, through CSI and CSM to AFM. The training and equipment provided are regarded as effective and fit for purpose. Training involves a structured programme of development.
- The SARC manager's role is primarily that of a co-ordinator/manager. However, the role has expanded to include some awareness training and increased interaction with victims. The post holder recognised that, to carry out the additional functions, it would be beneficial to have a greater awareness of the role of the SOLO and some counselling skills. The constabulary has quickly provided training in this, and the manager is now able to provide a wider and better-informed role.
- Due to the size of the constabulary and the profile of reactive major crime investigations, it is necessary for some specialised resources to be retained on area command strength, undertaking core policing duties until required for major crime deployment. To ensure training, retention, up-to-date roll calls, etc, the constabulary has nominated SPOCs for the following specialist activities: FLO, HOLMES indexers, interview co-ordinators, SOLOs, statement readers, disclosure, exhibits, house to house co-ordinators, analysts, telecom SPOC, and Casweb/casualty bureau staff.
- In terms of road traffic fatal and life-threatening collision SIOs, the constabulary has a number of PIP accredited officers at inspector and chief inspector rank.
- The constabulary evaluates the training delivered, ie tier 5 interview adviser/co-ordinator course, on a regular basis.

- There are regular exercises at all COMAH sites and at the Durham Tees Valley airport to test emergency service response to an incident. This ensures that plans are reviewed, that staff skills are enhanced, that any lessons can be learnt and that relationships with partners are enhanced.

Work in progress

- From 2008, scientific support staff are to move to a new shift pattern, which will offer greater resilience. Staff were fully consulted in the process to agree an appropriate shift pattern.
- The developing structure within the intelligence function is identifying individuals to take up key roles. The constabulary is reviewing the required skills and competencies, and staff are being provided with development opportunities. Staff have visited SOCA with a view to developing work around a confidential unit. The process being utilised should ensure that staff have the necessary skills and competence to undertake their role.
- The constabulary understands that the golden hour principles require regular reinforcement, and a programme of training aimed at newly promoted sergeants has commenced, which includes an appropriate focus on sensitive areas and communities. This will ensure that supervisors who are the first to command an incident are fully aware that a critical incident has the potential to be a crime scene and make the necessary arrangements for the security of the scene and the retention of evidence.
- The constabulary has identified a gap in the skills of officers in respect of interview technique, and is exploring opportunities for obtaining skills provision.
- Technology is being developed to have a database, linked to the National Strategy for Police Information Systems (NSPIS) human resources (HR) system to identify skills and PIP accreditation of individuals within the organisation. This will assist in building teams to undertake specific tasks in investigations.
- The constabulary is introducing the post of development officer (January 2008) to enhance the training and development of all staff.
- Work still has to be completed to accurately define role profiles. The integrated competency framework (ICF) is not regarded as fit for purpose. Profiles should be linked to national occupation standards (NOS).

Areas for improvement

- The standard of the police estate was highlighted as a significant concern. This related to two specific issues: the provision of major incident rooms and the provision of interview facilities. In respect of major incident rooms, the constabulary is not equipped at this time to deal with a Category A murder. The South Area has a partially equipped facility at Bishop Auckland, which is not regarded as fit for purpose at this time. In respect of interview facilities, the constabulary is not able to comply with the requirements of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 in respect of video/DVD interviews (Durham City police office is the only police office to have monitoring facilities).
- Scientific support staff highlighted the tagging of incidents requiring their attendance as an area for improvement. Incidents of crime scenes (including scenes where

police officers/police staff are in attendance) not brought to their attention were highlighted. Staff propose the use of email as an alternative.

- While opportunities exist for senior managers to attend contingency planning exercises, attendance is not compulsory and a number of staff are not taking the opportunity to develop their skills. The constabulary needs to put in place a more formal process to ensure that all managers have the appropriate training and that opportunities are maximised.
- The constabulary has limited undercover resources at present; however, there is a proposal to increase this following the accreditation of additional staff.
- There is some 'double hatting' within the test-purchase unit, with staff being test-purchase operatives, welfare officers and having responsibility for witness protection provision. This has an impact on the unit, as there is a substantial commitment required from officers when a witness protection issue is identified.
- The command structure for major incidents is set up as determined by an ongoing assessment of risk. There are some issues with gold and silver commanders getting sucked too closely into the wrong role and not having sufficient overview of the incident. A gold, silver and bronze structure is written into every planned operation at constabulary level, and this generally works well. However, in the majority of cases, gold commanders will not dictate the strategy, leaving this to the operations planning group to devise. There are no gold commanders trained in CBRN issues.
- There are concerns about the resilience of supervisory staff. There are large numbers of acting sergeants, many of whom have been in the role for in excess of 12 months.
- The duty management system is not kept fully up to date with regard to skills and expertise of staff, making it very difficult to identify the appropriate resources when needed.
- Durham has contracted the services of 12 medical advisers (FMEs), all trained to NPIA sexual offence examination standards. There are significant difficulties in obtaining the services of the trained FMEs during office hours, as they manage their own surgeries and also do the custody visits. While service outside office hours is generally very good, it is not uncommon for a victim to wait more than four hours for examination during office hours. As well as adding to the trauma, a number of victims have been on the point of leaving, and have had to be persuaded to wait for the FME.
- The SARCs have two examination suites based in the North and South, and there are seven ABE interview suites (four in the North, two in the South and one at headquarters). While they are able to accommodate most requests for interview facilities on a 24/7 basis, there is a process for booking slots to allow victims and witnesses to work on an appointment basis. The booking form is held by the SARC manager; however, at present the booking form is not accessible online or outside office hours. An IT solution is being prepared to resolve this.
- Procedures for call-out of specialist staff is consistent between the North and the South. However, there are some concerns about the time it takes to establish gold/silver control for incidents, as there is a tendency for the control room inspector to be left in command of incidents for longer than necessary.

- The mobile command centre is considered to be too old and no longer fit for purpose. A proposal was submitted to fund a replacement, but this was refused. Alternative options are being considered.

Specialist and covert investigations are resourced through an infrastructure that is effective. The inspection found evidence of use of these assets across a range of offences.

Strengths

- The head of CID was the author of national guidance on the resourcing of major crime investigations, and this guidance is contained in the constabulary's major crime resourcing policy. Resources required are linked to the SIO's line of enquiries and will be scaled up or down accordingly. Inevitably, because of resilience issues, resources will be required from area commands to supplement major investigation teams. However, area command resources are returned at the earliest opportunity. The major crime team also takes responsibility for the investigation throughout the criminal justice process; this includes file preparation, in so doing minimising abstractions from area command. In addition, dedicated detective superintendents within headquarters CID minimise abstractions of senior detectives within area command, although occasionally the function of deputy SIO is required. While this resilience is an issue, there are benefits in the progression of investigators through tier 3 accreditation as an SIO. The establishment of major incident rooms is in accordance with major incident room standardised administrative procedure (MIRSAP).
- The constabulary has agreed a major crime resourcing policy. This policy identifies the specialist assets that should be required for any major investigation – for example, interview advisers, disclosure, ABE, statement readers, indexers, to name but a few. This is a corporate policy, which is an integral part of constabulary business and requires area command and departments to maintain the identified numbers of specialist assets. Within these arrangements, there are constabulary leads on these specialist assets, and these constabulary leads are required to ensure that these minimum levels of resilience are maintained, as well as to ensure progression of their associated training. Within the crime, drug and alcohol strategy, there is recognition that the constabulary will be required to maintain a response capability for major crime and critical incidents and to identify appropriately trained resources to meet predictable demand. There is an action for area commands and departments to carry out a quarterly review of their agreed contribution to the constabulary major crime resourcing policy, so as to ensure that appropriately trained officers and police staff resilience is maintained. The constabulary has been proactive in ensuring resilience for specialist disciplines. For example, there are officers trained in IOCA tactics, telecommunications, SPOC, CROPS and covert method of entry, to name but a few.
- The headquarters CID weekly meeting reviews all ongoing operations and considers operational options. This includes the seeking of intelligence from all available sources and the proactive use of all available resources, eg CHISs, surveillance, financial.
- There is evidence of collaboration from neighbouring forces in dealing with incidents at Durham Tees Valley airport. Exercises to test capability and response from all forces are held annually. Collaborative arrangements are also in place with regional forces, with each using the resources of the others in dealing with sensitive investigations/surveillance requirements, etc. An SLA is in place with the regional forces in respect of firearms incidents, dynamic entry, mobile armed surveillance and air support. A collaborative approach for strategic roads policing is in the process of being developed.

- Durham has a significant number of trained POLSA officers and an appropriate number of search advisers, who provide 24/7 cover through a call rota. The constabulary has a mobilisation plan, which was tested in Operation Ichor, where 600 officers were mobilised to undertake a series of arrests/searches relating to offenders who were responsible for ATM thefts across the region. The logistical arrangements for the operation were made in line with the contingency plan.
- Durham has a number of accredited test-purchase officers. The constabulary works collaboratively with other forces, and there is a reciprocal arrangement in place for resources to be provided for test-purchase operations.
- Durham is well prepared to deal with disaster victim identification. The constabulary has a trained senior investigation manager, a mortuary manager (undergoing training in March 2008) and a number of CSIs trained to national standard (Dundee course).
- A difficulty identified with training (IPOC and APOC) is the accreditation of individuals involved. There is a very fine balance between having sufficient numbers of trained staff to perform the roles and having a sufficient number of incidents to enable the individuals to gain accreditation and maintain their skills.
- Durham has a fully staffed firearms cadre (superintendents level) covering a five-week rota. The constabulary is currently involved in collaborative arrangements with a neighbouring force to provide cover.
- Durham is the fourth-highest user in the country of TASER as a non-lethal option to resolve firearms incidents and other incidents involving risk to life. This is considered to be a positive use of the tactical options available. The constabulary is one of only two in the country that have chosen not to take part in the programme of extending use of TASER to non-firearms personnel. This is based around concerns about the use of TASER in incidents where there is not a clear command structure.
- The constabulary has invested in additional staff in the authorisations unit, thus giving more resilience. This enables staff to be more proactive in their approach.
- The OSC has made the assessment that, although Durham is a small force, it makes significant use of CHIS, with positive activities aligned to good productivity.
- Area commands have forensic researchers who scan all forensic evidence recovered from crime scenes, and who develop and action forensic packages which are held on the constabulary's intelligence system.

Work in progress

- Since the collapse of the Government's strategic force merger proposals, the responsibility has fallen on the constabulary to make improvements in its ability to 'protect and connect' with communities across County Durham and Darlington from within existing resources.
- The *Closing the Gap* report has been acknowledged to be a broad-brush approach to evaluating protective services capacity and capability, and more recent work by HMIC on benchmarking protective services has encouraged a risk-based self-assessment process, using prescribed criteria based around its developing baseline assessment process. The constabulary has completed a 'health check' on this benchmark document, on behalf of the service delivery programme board against

the HMIC inspection SGC, which has resulted in the identification of actions to address those issues deemed to be highest risk. These actions form the basis of outline plans for improving the capacity and capability of the constabulary in relation to protective services that are currently being progressed at a number of levels.

- The constabulary has plans to invest £2.7 million in protective services over the next two years (details outlined in serious and organised crime report).
- The head of CID has been proactive with his counterparts in neighbouring forces, and has commissioned a scoping exercise on the availability of all specialist covert assets in the North East forces to identify resilience issues and, at the same time, to minimise unnecessary training costs. The ACCs have agreed in principle that there can be a collaborative exchange of these assets on an operation-by-operation basis. Furthermore, work is going on in relation to the North East sub-regional response to crimes in action, covert forensic retrieval and the examination of high-tech crime. These initiatives have been captured within the collaboration matrix.
- In respect of major crime, the risk assessment of the current capacity and capability within the constabulary indicates that no additional investment is required. A modernisation programme involving HOLMES indexers has been agreed. This position is subject to regular review. A constabulary major crime resourcing policy has been agreed, which is intended to secure resilience across many functions.
- The constabulary is continuing to drive forward ways to address the threat posed by sexual offences. Following the HMIC report *Without Consent*, Durham has undertaken a review of rape investigation, and 19 recommendations have been made. The recommendations have been reviewed by the operations/crime conference, and will be incorporated into departmental business plans. In addition to the review of rape investigation, a rape policy has also been drafted.
- In an attempt to address the issue of under-reporting, the constabulary aims to develop a self-referral process based at existing SARC facilities at Darlington and Meadowfield. In a bid to improve the evidence-gathering process, early evidence kits have also been introduced (available at custody suites for use at designated locations).
- A review of the CHIS function across the constabulary has begun looking at structures, effectiveness, value for money, intelligence gaps and the reward authorisation matrix.
- A specific issue for Durham is that the constabulary area houses five HM prisons, one of which is a Category A prison (HMP Frankland). Less than 8% of the prisoners in these five establishments are domiciled in the Durham constabulary area. This needs careful managing via the FIU/PLOs due to the high number of requests from outside forces. HMP Frankland poses a resilience risk for the PLO due to the numbers of CT prisoners it holds from across the country and the number of requests for assistance this creates.

Areas for improvement

- Acknowledging the additional resources to be given to the provision of witness protection, the constabulary needs to ensure that the demands placed on staff are not excessive and that staff are skilled to undertake the specialist roles asked of them.

- The ANPR function needs to be reviewed in terms of its effective use as an intelligence tool (proactively/reactively). The coverage of ANPR across the constabulary needs to be improved to take account of strategic routes, the use of covert ANPR and the funding issues.
- ANPR is seen to be used effectively in reactive investigations, but not in proactive operations due to a lack of resources and restricted coverage.

Reviews are carried out in accordance with the constabulary policy; however, Durham does not see a requirement for a dedicated review team. Case review work is effective.

Strengths

- Reviews are carried out in accordance with the major crime review policy. Durham does not have a 'dedicated review team'. The constabulary believes the profile in homicide/major crime investigation does not justify resources being dedicated to this function.
- In relation to road traffic collisions, the head of strategic road policing acts as a coordinator of all fatal and life-threatening collision investigations. This officer has the responsibility of overseeing all such investigations, and this includes a formal reviewing process of the investigations within timescales laid down in line with the constabulary fatal and life-threatening investigation policy, which is fully compliant with the national policy.

Areas for improvement

- Should the requirement arise, through a process of collaboration a review could be commissioned with Northumbria Police, which has a dedicated review team. Consideration should be given to introducing a formal collaborative agreement between the constabulary and Northumbria Police, or between the three regional forces.
- The constabulary has acknowledged the need to ensure that there is a continuous management review of operations, assessed against operational aims, cost inputs and outputs. This does not happen at the present time.

The inspection found evidence that the force is compliant with relevant ACPO standards of the Murder Investigation Manual (MIM) and the Major Incident Room Standardised Administrative Procedures.

Strengths

- The constabulary is fully compliant with both the MIM and MIRSAP. Compliance is documented in the constabulary's resourcing of major crime policy. This policy details the constabulary's response to MIRSAP staffing recommendations, and lists area and department responsibilities for maintaining staff trained in relevant specialisms.
- Evidence in relation to compliance with the MIM is available for every major crime investigation. The MIM is available in the constabulary library and is held by every SIO and deputy SIO.

Work in progress

- Within the crime, drug and alcohol strategy, the detective superintendent (proactive) has been actioned to identify an ongoing training and awareness programme for all relevant staff in the identification of a critical incident. In support of this, the constabulary has introduced a critical incident training programme at inspector level, involving NPIA.

Area for improvement

- The need for investment in MIR facilities has been highlighted.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ABE	achieving best evidence
ACC	assistant chief constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
AFM	administration and finance manager
ANPR	automatic number plate recognition
AOABH	assault occasioning actual bodily harm

B

BCU	basic command unit
BME	black and minority ethnic
BOF2	back office facility 2

C

CBRN	chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear
CDRP	crime and disorder reduction partnership
CHIS	covert human intelligence source
CICF	critical incident command forum
CID	criminal investigation department
CLDP	core leadership development programme
CLO	community liaison officer
COMAH	control of major accident hazard
CPD	child protection department
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CSI	Crime scene investigator
CSM	crime scene manager
CT	counter-terrorism

D

DAAT	drug and alcohol action team
DCC	deputy chief constable
DCI	detective chief inspector
DMS	duty management system
DSU	dedicated source unit
DVO	domestic violence officer

F

FIO	field intelligence officer
FIU	force intelligence unit
FLO	family liaison officer
FME	force medical examiner
FMG	force management group
FSA	force strategic assessment
FSS	forensic science service

G

GAIN	government agencies' intelligence network
GMP	Greater Manchester Police
GONE	Government Office for the North East

H

HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
HOLMES	Home Office large major enquiry system
HR	human resources
HSE	Health and Safety Executive

I

IAG	independent advisory group
ICF	integrated competency framework
ICIDP	Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme
INI	IMPACT nominal index
IOCCO	interception of Communications Commissioner's Office
IT	information technology
K	
K&E	kidnap and extortion
KIN	key individual network
KPI	key performance indicator
L	
LCJB	local criminal justice board
LSCB	local safeguarding children board
M	
MAPPA	multi-agency public protection arrangements
MARAC	multi-agency risk assessment conference
MCT	major crime team
MIR	major incident room
MIRSAP	major incident room standardised administrative procedures
MoPI	management of police information
MSF	most similar force(s)
N	
NCPE	National Centre for Policing Excellence
NIM	national intelligence model
NOS	national occupational standards
NPIA	national policing improvement agency

NPSAT national protective services analysis tool
NSIR national standards for incident recording
NSPIS national strategy for police information systems

O

OBTJ offence brought to justice
OCG organised crime group
OCJR office for criminal justice reform
OCT organised crime team
OSC Office of Surveillance Commissioners

P

PACE Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
PCCG police and community consultation group
PCSO police community support officer
PDR performance development review
PESTELO Political, environmental, social, technological, economic, legal and organisational
PIE prevention, intelligence and enforcement
PIP professionalising the investigative process
PLO prison liaison officer
POCA Proceeds of Crime Act 2002
POLSA police search of area
PPAF police performance assessment framework
PPO prolific and [other] priority offender
PPU public protection unit
PRDLDP police race and diversity learning and development programme
PRINCE2 Projects in Controlled Environments 2 (project management methodology)
PSD professional standards department
PSNI Police Service of Northern Ireland

PVP protecting vulnerable people

R

RART regional asset recovery team

RDLDIS race and diversity learning and development implementation strategy

RIG racist incident group

RIU regional intelligence unit

S

SAR suspicious activity report

SCAS serious crime analysis section

SGC specific grading criteria

SIO senior investigating officer

SLA service level agreement

SOCA Serious Organised Crime Agency

SOLO sexual offences liaison officer

SOP standard operating procedure

SPI statutory performance indicator

SPOC single point of contact

T

TCG tasking and co-ordination group

TP test purchase

TSU technical support unit

TTCG tactical tasking and co-ordination group

TUG training user group

U

UKHTC UK human trafficking centre

UKIS United Kingdom Immigration Service

V

VCSI Volume crime scene investigator